

Legalized Abortion Debate Flares After Irish Woman's Death

The debate over **legalizing abortion** in Ireland flared Wednesday after the government confirmed a miscarrying woman suffering from blood poisoning was refused a quick termination of her pregnancy and died in an Irish hospital, the Associated Press reports:

"Prime Minister Enda Kenny said he was awaiting findings from three investigations into the death of Savita Halappanavar, an Indian living in Galway since 2008 who was 17 weeks along in her pregnancy. The 31-year-old's case highlights the bizarre legal limbo in which pregnant women facing severe health problems in predominantly Catholic Ireland can find themselves.

"Ireland's constitution officially bans abortion, but a 1992 Supreme Court ruling found it should be legalized for situations when the woman's life is at risk from continuing the pregnancy. Five governments since have refused to pass a law resolving the confusion, leaving Irish hospitals reluctant to terminate pregnancies except in the most obviously life-threatening circumstances.

"University Hospital Galway in western Ireland declined to say whether doctors believed Halappanavar's blood poisoning could have been reversed had she received an abortion rather than wait for the fetus to die on its own. In a statement it described its own investigation into the death, and a parallel probe by the national government's Health Service Executive, as 'standard practice' whenever a pregnant woman dies in a hospital. The Galway coroner also planned a public inquest."

Where do you stand on life? Do you think doctors should make

exceptions for termination when a mother's life is clearly in danger?