

## Legal current affairs

### Supreme Court of the United States overturns Roe v. Wade case and abolishes the right to abortion

The Roe v. Wade historic ruling was overruled by the Supreme Court of the United States of America (SCOTUS) on Friday, essentially ending the country's constitutional right to abortion.

By a vote of 5-4, the SCOTUS reversed the 1973 ruling, leaving it up to the individual states in the USA to decide whether or not abortion is lawful.

The judgement said, *"The Constitution does not confer a right to abortion; Roe and Casey are overruled; and the authority to regulate abortion is returned to the people and their elected representatives."*

By a vote of 6-3, the Supreme Court upheld a Mississippi legislation that forbids abortions when a foetus is more than 15 weeks old.

While voting against overturning Roe v. Wade, Chief Justice Roberts supported the statute.

In particular, he held on the law that

*"Ample evidence thus suggests that a 15-week ban provides sufficient time, absent rare circumstances, for a woman "to decide for herself" whether to terminate her pregnancy."*

On the contrary, it was held in Roe v Wade held that, *"I would decide the question we granted review to answer—whether the previously recognized abortion right bars all abortion restrictions prior to viability, such that a ban on abortions after fifteen weeks of pregnancy is necessarily unlawful. The answer to that question is no, and there is no need to go further to decide this case. I therefore concur only in the judgment."*

The *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization case*, in which the State of Mississippi tried to overturn Roe v. Wade and empower elected authorities to choose whether abortion should be legal or illegal, resulted in the court's ruling.

The Dobbs ruling maintained a 2018 Mississippi legislation that prohibited abortions for women who were 15 weeks pregnant or more, or about two months earlier than the Roe v. Wade decision permitted.

Roe v. Wade was not codified into law, and abortion is still a contentious topic in American politics. Given the Court's present membership, which includes a majority of conservative justices, it looked ready to uphold the Mississippi legislation and return the debate over abortion to the states.

The court may be getting ready to overturn Roe and eliminate federal safeguards for abortion rights, according to an initial draft ruling in the case that was leaked last month.

States had already begun enacting stringent abortion regulations before the verdict.

Florida's 15-week abortion ban was enacted by Republican Governor Ron DeSantis in May 2022.

The state of Kentucky outlawed abortions beyond 15 weeks and required abortion facilities to abide by exceedingly stringent rules.

Abortion is a felony offence under Oklahoma law, which carries a ten-year jail sentence and a \$100,000 fine for those found guilty.

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