

South Korea court strikes down six-decade-old abortion ban

In a 7 to 2 vote, Seoul's Constitutional Court overturned a 66-year-old ban on abortion, which denied abortion except for in cases of rape, **incest** or if the mother's health is at risk. The **verdict** paves way for South Korea to legalize abortion, knocking down one of the most **stringent** abortion bans in the developed world.

incest 乱伦

verdict 结论

stringent 严厉的

Under the now-overruled regulation, women could be fined or jailed for a year for having abortions, while doctors who assist with them could face up to two years in prison.

However, a survey by Korean Women's Development Institute last year of 2,006 women aged 15 to 44 found one out of five **respondent** have received abortion—97 percent of them illegally.

respondent 被告; 回答者

Lee Han-bon of Lawyers for a Democratic Society said individuals were rarely punished for abortion unless deliberately reported to the police, usually by boyfriends or husbands seeking **reprisal**. "The premise of the abortion law was protection of unborn children, but in reality the restriction just made women vulnerable to fear of punishment."

reprisal 报复

Outside the verdict was met with cheers from abortion rights **proponents**. There were also angry outcries at the court from opponents led by small, but vocal minority of Catholics and other Christian **denominations**.

proponent 支持者

denomination 教派

"Now a woman can be respected for her own decision about her body," said Lee Yu-rim of Sexual and Reproductive Rights Forum.