

THE SPECIAL PROTECTION GROUP (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2019

Relevant for: Security Related Matters | Topic: Various Security Forces & Agencies and their mandate

- The Special Protection Group (Amendment) Bill, 2019 was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Amit Shah, on November 25, 2019. The Bill amends the Special Protections Group Act, 1988. The Act provides for the constitution and regulation of the Special Protection Group (SPG) to provide security to the Prime Minister, former Prime Ministers, and their immediate family members.
- Under the Act, the SPG provides security to the Prime Minister and his immediate family members. It also provides security to former Prime Ministers and their immediate family members for a period of one year from the date on which they cease to hold the office. Beyond this period, the SPG security is provided based on the level of threat as decided by the central government. The threat must: (i) emanate from a military or terrorist organisation, and (ii) be of a grave and continuing nature.
- The Bill amends this provision to state that the SPG will provide security to the Prime Minister, and members of his immediate family residing with him at his official residence. It will also provide security to any former Prime Ministers, and his immediate family members residing with him at the residence allotted to him. This security will be provided for a period of five years from the date on which he ceases to hold the office of Prime Minister.
- The Act provides that if the SPG security is withdrawn from a former Prime Minister, it will also be withdrawn from his immediate family members, unless the level of threat faced by the immediate family member warrants such security. The Bill removes this condition to state that if the SPG security is withdrawn from a former Prime Minister, it will also be withdrawn from his immediate family members.
- The Act provides that any former Prime Minister, or any immediate family member of the Prime Minister or a former Prime Minister may decline SPG security. The Bill deletes this provision.

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