

Flipkart Removes Publications Promoting Sex Selection

New Delhi, 23rd April: Flipkart, India's largest e-commerce market place has finally de-listed all the publications promoting sex selection from its website after Girls Count initiated an online petition against the sale in February 2015. Over 11,900 supporters had endorsed the petition which led Flipkart to take note of the discriminatory practice.

The books which have been delisted by Flipkart are Infant Gender Selection & Personalised Medicine: Consumer's Guide (paperback and ebook); Pre-Selection of Desirable Gender Progeny: Son or Daughter (paperback); and Gender Selection: Learn How To Conceive A Boy Or Girl (ebook). These publications were available for sale on Flipkart until the last week.

Sex selection is one of the worst forms of gender discrimination. In India, the practice of sex selection results in the loss of nearly 5 lakh girls every year. According to the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Law no person can issue, publish, distribute, communicate any advertisement, in any form, including on the Internet, regarding facilities of sex selection.

However, the law has blatantly been ignored over the years. The online shopping platforms and search engines have been promoting sex selection by allowing access to publications and products and that provide information relating to selection of the sex of the foetus. The Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed in the Supreme Court of India in 2008 urging prohibition on advertisements on sex selection is an evidence.

No doubt delisting of publications on sex selection by Flipkart has sent a very strong message to all the online retailers that the sale of products promoting sex selection is discriminatory and above all, illegal. Moreover, after the directives of the Supreme Court in 2015 any kind of advertisement on sex selection by any means should be considered as a contempt of Court.

On the other hand, even today a quick search on Amazon shows that there are at least 4 publications promoting sex selection and the prices of these publications range from Rs.399/- to Rs.26,557/- These publications are Choose the Sex of Your Baby: The Natural Way (paperback); Girl Or Boy: Your Chance to Choose (paperback); How to Choose the Sex of Your Baby; and The Preconception Gender Diet (hardcover).

After the Supreme Court's directives in January 2015, search engine Google uploaded the court directives on its Ad Policy page under 'Regulated Products and Services' (<https://support.google.com/adwordspolicy/answer/6023676>). We strongly believe that it is not at all sufficient to upload the court directives but it is imperative for Google to ensure that

its policy on 'pre-natal gender discrimination in India' (as defined by Google) is strictly followed by all advertisers, promoters and sellers in the country and action is taken against violations.

About Girls Count

Girls Count is a national level coalition of civil society organizations and activists committed to addressing factors that lead to a decline in the child sex ratio in India. With a membership of more than 200 civil society organisations from different parts of the country, the coalition enables collective action to challenge patriarchy, stop sex selection and enhance the overall status of women and girls. To know more, visit www.girlscount.in

For more information please contact us at 011-24379542, 9654445452, 8527703575