

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3471
ANSWERED ON:16.04.2008
GENDER TESTING KITS
Vijay Krishna Shri

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether gender identification kits are available for sale in the country by a US based company;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE(SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) to (c) A news report in the Hindustan Times dated 23.11.2007 indicated that Gender Testing Kits from the U.S. and Canada were available in certain up-markets of Punjab for Rs.15 to 20 thousand and that certain Genetic Centres were importing/purchasing such kits online in response to the web ads of such kits and selling them to their clients.

The Customs Wing and the Department of Revenue were requested on 29.11.2007 and 5.1.2007 respectively to examine the possibility of intercepting such Gender Determination Kits when imported into the Country under the Customs Act, 1961 and furnish details of the importers of such kits to facilitate Government to take appropriate action against them under the Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994.

In response to the above request of the Health Ministry, the Customs Department suitably alerted their field formations not to release the imported Gender Testing Kits and to take appropriate action under the Customs Act, 1961, vide the Finance Ministry's reply to Unstarred Question No.531, dated 4.3.2008.

The Central Board of Excise & Customs (CBEC), by way of their input to a Court Case, have indicated that as per the reports received from their major Port Customs, no import of goods described as sex determination (gender testing) kits had been noticed during the last three years. Further, having regard to certain difficulties encountered by them in intercepting such kits, CBEC have made certain suggestions for consideration of this Ministry in order to facilitate them to intercept the Gender Testing Kits when imported into the Country,vide their letter dated 1.4.2008. It is proposed to request the Directorate-General of Health Services to examine the above suggestions of the CBEC and furnish their comments thereon on priority basis.