

## Adultery site back in business in South Korea with vengeance

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA: The global adultery hook-up site Ashley Madison on Tuesday dubbed further efforts to ban it from South Korea as "futile" as customers greeted its return to the country with enthusiasm...



South Korean customers seem to have welcomed the return of the hook-up site aimed at those who are short of excitement in their marriage. (Image: Wikimedia Commons)

Ashley Madison is "no different than many other communication platforms and to ban us will be a futile attempt if the purpose is to ban infidelity", its vice president Paul Keable told journalists in Seoul.

"We are no different than Samsung, we're no different than Google and we're no different from Facebook. If you ban us, you have to ban all those companies' sites," he added.

Citing a 1953 statute that criminalises adultery, The Korea Communications Standards Commission blocked access to the site in April last year, only weeks after it went online in South Korea.

It had garnered 50,000 subscribers and \$300,000 of revenue two weeks after its inauguration.

But South Korea's Constitutional Court in February struck down the statute which had criminalised adultery in an attempt to protect traditional family values.

And a state watchdog last month permitted access to the Korean site of Canada-based Ashley Madison, whose slogan is: "Life is short. Have an affair."

In two weeks since the lifting of the ban more than 100,000 new members in South Korea have signed up, the firm's international affairs director Christoph Kraemer said at the same press conference.

By the end of this week, the company is expected to have made \$1m in revenue, he added.

Singapore banned the site over a year ago, citing a "flagrant disregard of our family values". Philippine officials have said they will seek to ban it.

And last month a group of 12 South Korean lawmakers presented a parliamentary bill proposing to close down such sites.

But Ashley Madison was bullish about its future in the country.

"We're looking at a membership in South Korea of 1.6 million members by 2016," Kraemer said.

Source: AFP, via I-NET Bridge

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