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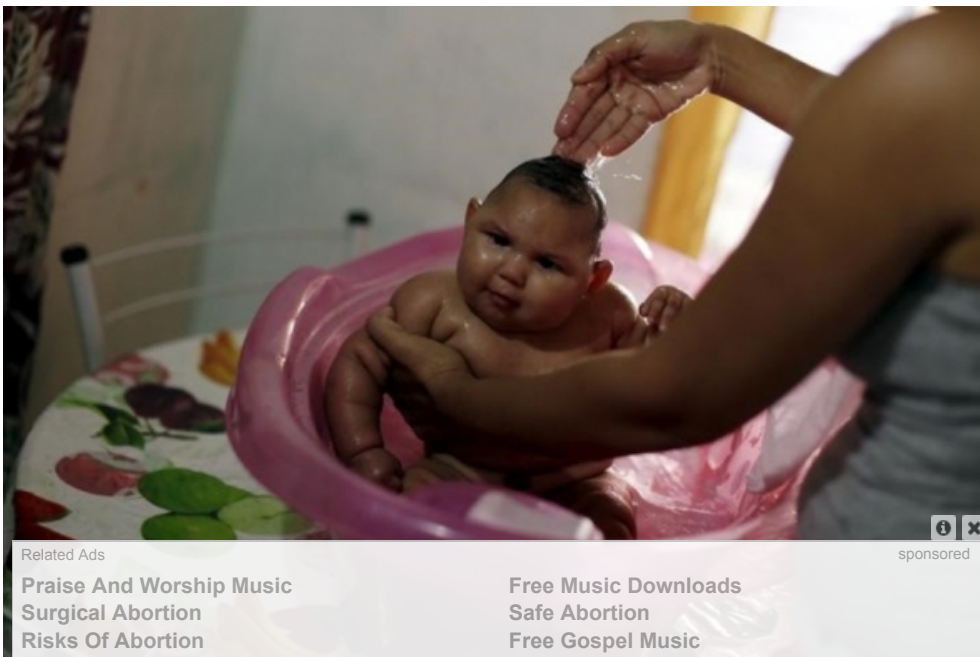
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Abortion pill demand surges in Latin America due to Zika alert

By **Lorraine Caballero** | 24 June, 2016 12:08 PM | 0 Comments



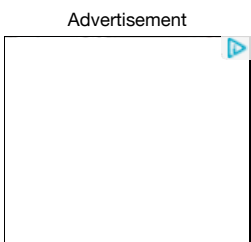
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(Reuters/Ueslei Marcelino)Gleyse Kelly da Silva bathes her daughter Maria Giovanna, who has microcephaly, at their house in Recife, Brazil, January 30, 2016.

The demand for abortion pills in seven Latin American countries has reportedly skyrocketed after health officials warned that the Zika virus might cause severe birth abnormalities.

A **study** published by The New England Journal of Medicine on Wednesday found that the demand for abortion pills in Brazil, Ecuador and Venezuela has doubled. Orders from women in Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras and El Salvador also increased to 76 percent from 36 percent previously.



The authors of the said study include a leader of Amsterdam-based nonprofit organization Women on Web, which supplies abortion pills to women in countries with strict abortion laws, the **New York Times** notes.

Gilda Sedgh, principal research scientist at reproductive health research group Guttmacher Institute, said there are around 3.5 million abortions every year in the countries where the Zika alerts were

issued. She said the figures presented in the study could be an early warning sign of more demand for abortion due to the Zika alert.

Dr. Sedgh also mentioned the possibility that the increased demand experienced by Women on Web may have been caused by the increased visibility of their services after the Zika warnings.

"The increase in demand for abortion observed by the authors in countries affected by Zika could be spurious because Women on Web accounts for a small share of all abortions in that part of the world," Sedgh said.

Despite the Zika health advisories in the seven Latin American Countries, the World Health Organization (WHO) there is a "very low risk" of the Zika virus spreading worldwide because of the upcoming Olympics that will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in August. WHO experts assured that there is no need to move the venue of the big sports event, the BBC reports.

In addition, WHO said mosquito activity in Brazil in August is relatively low. Nevertheless, the health authority has advised pregnant women to stay away from the Olympics and reminded visitors to avoid mosquito bites.

Zika's Abortion Boom in Brazil & South America



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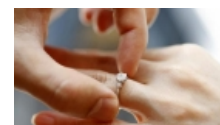
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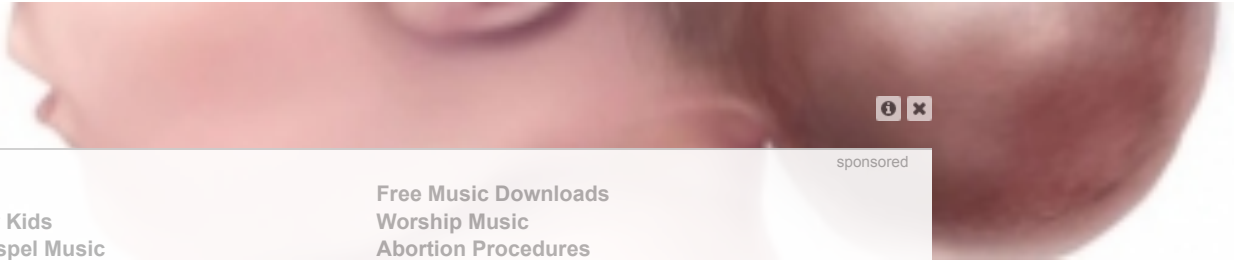
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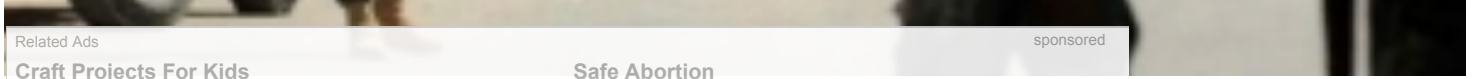
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