

Bahraini woman sentenced for drug smuggling

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

A 46-year-old Bahraini housewife was sentenced to 10 years in prison, fined BD5,000, and had the seized items confiscated by the First High Criminal Court.

She was convicted of importing and possessing drugs after a postal package from a European country was found containing food and sweets with hidden narcotics.

The public prosecutor charged her with importing marijuana for trafficking and possessing hashish for personal use, both in violation of the law.

The case began when a customs officer became suspicious of a package addressed to the woman.

An X-ray scan revealed unusual contents.

Upon opening the package, authorities found food and sweets hiding bags and containers of a herbal substance suspected to be marijuana, weighing approximately 194 grams, cleverly concealed.

The package was seized, and the woman admitted it belonged to her, saying it was sent by an Asian man. She confirmed the herbal smell was marijuana.

Housing support

Parliament backs national platform to restore homes of low-income families

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

The Council of Representatives approved a proposal calling for the launch of a national platform to support the restoration of homes belonging to low-income families across Bahrain.

This move aims to strengthen housing security and preserve social stability.

The proposal, titled "Tarmim", was endorsed as part of wider efforts to address deteriorating housing conditions and lengthy waiting periods faced by vulnerable households.

MPS agreed that adequate housing is a constitutional right and a cornerstone of dignity and family stability.

Attention

During deliberations, attention focused on the growing number of homes suffering from structural deterioration, overcrowding and long standing maintenance issues, particularly among families who own their homes but cannot afford repairs.

MP Basma Abdulkarim stressed that the current housing framework focuses largely on financing and allocation, while neglecting families living in unsafe or unsuitable homes.

She argued that a unified digital platform would simplify procedures, ensure transparency and prioritise cases based on need.

MP Dr. Mahdi Abdulaziz Al Showaikh highlighted the



An old home in need of repair

visible spread of dilapidated houses in several areas, warning that delays in intervention place residents at risk and undermine Bahrain's social image.

The proposed platform aims to centralise applications, assessments and approvals, reducing administrative delays and duplication.

MPS noted that the initiative could also support heritage preservation in older neighbourhoods and provide opportunities for Bahraini engineers, contributing to local employment and skills development.

Fairness

Members said the platform would enhance fairness in access to housing support, protect families from unsafe living conditions and strengthen community cohesion.

They stressed that preventive maintenance is more effective and less costly than delayed intervention.

With parliamentary approval secured, the proposal will be referred to the government, as expectations grow for practical steps to implement the platform and deliver timely relief to eligible households.

Art building set for restoration

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

Parliament has approved a proposal calling for the restoration of the Bahrain Contemporary Art Society building, reaffirming the Kingdom's commitment to preserving cultural institutions as part of its national identity.

The decision highlights growing recognition of culture as a constitutional responsibility and a pillar of social and economic development.

MPS noted that the society plays an important role in supporting artistic expression and nurturing creative talent.

Its building, members agreed, is not merely a physical space but a platform that connects artists, the public and cultural dialogue, reflecting Bahrain's long standing engagement with the arts.

During discussions, emphasis was placed on the wider value of cultural infrastructure. MPS stressed that maintaining dedicated spaces for the arts contributes to community cohesion.

All non-Bahraini civil servants on temporary contracts

Mohammed Darwish
TDT | Manama

All 5,361 non-Bahrainis working in Bahrain's civil service are on temporary contracts, as new figures put Bahrainis at 87 per cent of staff across ministries and government bodies covered by the Civil Service Law.

The Civil Service Bureau released the numbers in reply to a parliamentary question from MP Abdulwahid Qarata on how many Bahrainis are in post in the covered entities.

It said there are 36,292 Bahraini employees currently on the job. Almost all of them, 36,180, are on permanent terms, which the bureau put at 99.7 per cent of Bahraini staff.

A further 112 Bahrainis are employed on temporary terms across the covered bodies, the bureau said, making up 0.03 per cent of Bahraini employees. Most of them (34 staff) work at the Ministry of Municipalities Affairs and Agriculture in posts linked to the term of municipal councils.

The bureau said those employed on temporary terms have been included in the government pension and retirement benefits system following a 2018 amendment to the law governing pensions and retirement gratuities for government employees.

It said recruitment under the Civil Service Law is driven by requests from the relevant ministries and bodies and their need to fill approved vacancies, after checks on organisational structures, staffing ceilings and approved budgets.

UNIDO ITPO marks 30 years in Bahrain

UN Secretary-General highlights private sector's role

Focus on green, blue, and orange economies

Ashen Tharaka
TDT | Manama

Bahrain has once again positioned itself as a hub for global entrepreneurship, hosting over 700 delegates from 86 countries at the 6th World Entrepreneurs Investment Forum.

The gathering showcased innovation, collaboration, and inclusive economic growth as central themes for shaping a sustainable future.

Dr. Hashim Hussein, Head of UNIDO ITPO Bahrain, reflected on the Kingdom's long-standing

commitment to empowering entrepreneurs.

"For 30 years, UNIDO ITPO has supported Bahrain's mission to provide skills, finance, and opportunities to entrepreneurs. Alongside the 25-year success of the Bahrain enterprise development model, we are demonstrating that entrepreneurship is a powerful driver of social and economic transformation," he said.

Entrepreneurship

Dr. Hussein emphasized the need for inclusive entrepreneurship, highlighting initiatives that support entrepreneurs with disabilities, creative home-based businesses, and ventures in the green, blue, and orange economies.

"These efforts help build sustainable ecosystems, strengthen communities, and unlock opportunities for generations to

come," he added.

Addressing the forum, Dr. Hussein noted the challenges of today's world, including rapidly evolving technologies, climate pressures, and economic uncertainty.

"Every challenge presents an opportunity—to innovate smarter, collaborate deeper, and amplify the voices of those shaping our future," he said.

Young innovators are increasingly leading green enterprises, embracing digital economies, and developing solutions that benefit entire communities, while women entrepreneurs continue to prove that empowering women strengthens national and global economies.

Dr. Khaled Hanafy, Secretary General of the Union of Arab Chambers, highlighted the critical role of finance in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

MPs approve amendments to Social Insurance Law

Hasan Barakat
TDT | Manama

long term sustainability.

Concerns

The Council of Representatives approved a draft law amending provisions of the Social Insurance Law.

This move aims to refine benefit entitlements and strengthen protections for beneficiaries, including widows and dependants.

The decision followed extensive debate over financial sustainability, social justice and the impact of existing regulations on vulnerable groups.

The approved amendments focus on specific articles governing social insurance benefits. MPS stressed that the law must continue to protect widows, orphans and dependants, particularly in light of rising living costs and economic pressures.

Members underlined that any reform should preserve the social purpose of the insurance system while ensuring

During deliberations, MPS raised a range of concerns and observations.

MP Basma Abdulkarim stressed that legislative changes must not adversely affect widows, warning that reducing or restricting benefits would place direct pressure on families relying on these payments for basic stability.

MP Mohamed Mohamed Al Riffaie questioned the accuracy of cost calculations and called for clearer figures to avoid undermining confidence in the system.

MP Mohamed Moosa Mohamed argued that targeted benefits for widows and dependants would not impose an excessive burden on the fund if properly structured.

MP Khalid Saleh Buanaq criticised delays in committee decisions and urged greater transparency.

Road expansion

The Council of Representatives approved, in principle, a draft law endorsing the framework agreement to finance the second phase of the Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah Road project, marking a major step forward for one of Bahrain's largest strategic transport developments. The approval followed the Financial and Economic Affairs Committee's report on the agreement between the Government and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development.

