

That's it, it's final!

Court rejects 'Lyrica' peddling case final appeal

● **Bahraini doctor, six ring members slapped with jail terms and fines**

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A renowned Bahraini doctor who was earlier convicted in a major narcotics peddling case and his accomplices got their final appeal against their imprisonment verdict rejected by the Court of Cassation yesterday.

Chief Prosecutor Ahmed Al Ramadan confirmed in a statement yesterday that "the case involved a criminal network that is led by a doctor and is specialised in forging prescriptions for the purpose of using it to dispense large quantities of narcotic substances and medical drugs, and then resell them at exaggerated prices to those who abuse those substances."

According to court files, the doctor, the prime defendant, was sentenced by the First High Criminal Court in August

this year to seven years in jail, while his six co-defendants received different sentences for the charges of drugs abuse, possession and peddling, as well as forging official documents.

Two of the other defendants were sentenced to six years of imprisonment and fined BD2,000 each, while another defendant received a verdict of three years of imprisonment and deportation.

The fifth defendant was sentenced to two years of imprisonment and fined BD1,000, and the sixth man was handed a sentence of one year in jail for forging official documents, while the seventh defendant was acquitted.

The details of the case show that the defendants were guilty of dispensing large quantities of addictive prescription pills commercially known as "Lyrica", using fake prescriptions issued by the doctor and illegally selling it to addicts for higher prices that are sometimes more than four doubles of their original cost.

The ring got exposed when the Public Prosecution an-

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CHIEF PROSECUTOR AHMED AL RAMADAN

nounced earlier this year that the Military Police of Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), in co-operation with the Anti-Narcotics Department in Interior Ministry, arrested a military staff and two

civilians while illegally selling the pills.

As reported earlier, one of the defendants told interrogators that he has been familiar with consuming the medicine, claim-



ing that it was prescribed to him after he was involved in a traffic accident back in 2010.

Explaining further, he stated that he had met some individuals who asked him to illegally sell them the medicine prescribed to him for prices ranging between BD10 to BD20.

The suspect confessed that he continued doing so, taking advantage of the prescriptions issued in his name and illegally selling it, for a couple of years.

He also said that throughout

this process of selling Lyrica to addicts, he had met the prime defendant few months before he was arrested.

He revealed that the doctor prescribed large quantities to him, as the latter worked in several hospitals and was co-operating with several pharmacies around the Kingdom, some of which he owned, to dispense the medicines to the defendant.

In his statements, the man mentioned that the relation had developed with the doctor, as the latter requested to provide him with copies of identity cards of other people so more prescriptions could be issued in their name to sell larger quantities of Lyrica to addicts.

He once sold a box of Lyrica for BD3,000, using the same method. Investigation revealed some of the prescriptions were issued in 2019 to individuals who had left Bahrain in 2018.



Lyrica is a medication used to treat pain caused by nerve damage.



Inspection visits for students' partial return to schools

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Education Ministry's School Health Department started daily inspection visits to all schools to make sure precautionary measures are strictly being followed during the partial return of students.

The visits include following up on the work of School Health and Safety Committee, reviewing the school's work plan for receiving students, ensuring the provision of health and preventive facilities, spreading health awareness, ensuring school facilities and isolation rooms, and closing school canteens and water coolers.

An electronic form for reporting cases monitored in schools

215

The number of school visits carried out by administrative, educational and technical bodies to provide a safe environment for students.

is activated, which was provided with a special link for teachers and students, and a guide was issued to help school administrations in registering and monitoring infected or suspected cases to provide health care and attention to students during school hours.



Education Minister Dr Majid bin Ali Al Nuaimi visiting a school during the reopening of classes on Sunday

With the return of the administrative, educational and technical bodies, 215 visits were carried out to schools, procedures were evaluated and forms were

filled out to be transferred to an electronic monitoring program that shows the results of the visits and the suitability of schools to receive students.

UniGrad Acoustics Academy inaugurated



Inauguration ceremony

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UniGrad Education Center, Segaya has entered the world of art and music by starting a new wing, UniGrad Acoustics Academy.

Job Joseph, a well-known personality in Bahrain in the field of art and music, will be leading this division. He is a professional musician and has been training students for the past 30 years in Bahrain.

Under his guidance, many have become adept in playing musical instruments.

The inauguration ceremony started with the lighting of the

lamp by UniGrad Acoustics Academy chairman and managing director JP Menon and Suja Jayaprakash Menon.

Famous Indian playback singer Madhu Balakrishnan officially inaugurated the academy.

The inaugural ceremony ended by felicitation speech by Boban Idiculla and vote of thanks by Job Joseph (Director of the Acoustics).

The various programmes it offers at UniGrad are Guitar, Violin, Keyboard, Drums, Tabla, Vocal Western, Vocal Classical, Western Dance, Classical Dance and Zumba.

NSSA's CEO part of global council for space



Dr Al Aseeri

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National Space Science Agency (NSSA) Chief Executive Officer Dr Mohamed Ebrahim Al Aseeri was selected as member to represent Bahrain in one of the councils from the World Economic Forum.

The Global Future Council for space is one of the 40 GFCs created by the World Economic Forum. It is a network dedicated to promoting innovative thinking.

Mosques to re-open for Dhuhr prayers

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Bahrain's mosques will re-open for Dhuhr (Noon) prayers starting 1 November, the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (SCIA) has said.

The decision, based on the approval of the National Taskforce for Combating the Coronavirus (COVID-19), means that mosques will be open for worshippers for the Fajr (Dawn)



Al Fateh Grand Mosque

and Dhuhr prayers.

Precautionary measures to ensure the safety of the wor-

shippers must be taken during the two prayers, the SCIA said.

Congregational and Friday prayers were suspended in Bahrain on 28 March after mosques were shut to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus.

Fajr prayers were allowed on 28 August as the first step of the gradual reopening of mosques, and resumption of collective

worship and religious gatherings.

EWA's achievements, plans reviewed



Electricity and Water Affairs Minister Wael bin Nasser Al Mubarak received yesterday Representatives Council member Ammar Qambar. The Minister reviewed the Electricity and Water Affairs Authority (EWA)'s future plans and projects, as well as its recent achievements that will contribute to improving the quality of the services it delivers to the citizens and residents.

Managing knowledge and innovation

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The Arabian Gulf University (AGU) organised the Knowledge Management and Innovation Week.

The AGU College of Postgraduate Studies held the week-long event for the PhD second year students enrolled in the knowledge management programme.

The programme hosted a

number of professors and academic figures from universities in the Kingdom of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and France.

Knowledge and Technological Management Department professor Dr Fairuz Al Dhamur said that the annual programme is in line with the AGU vision aimed to encourage innovation and the use of modern technology.

"The event discussed the scientific and practical frameworks for managing knowledge and innovation and the possible infrastructures for them, and ways to benefit from them at the economic, social and technical levels," she said.

It focused on case studies and global best practices in the relationship between knowledge management and innovation.