

# Warning call over Lyrica abuse

Lyrica pills consumed by students in large numbers, sources say

● According to experts, Lyrica causes the same effect as hashish for a person who does not suffer from any diseases, especially if taken in higher doses or mixed with other medications.

● Sources say Lyrica is sold at many pharmacies across the Kingdom while neighbouring countries have banned the drug.



Lyrica is generally used in the treatment of epilepsy.

TDT | Manama  
Thamer Taifoor

Medical professionals have raised an alarm over students consuming a medicine to treat epilepsy, as a psychedelic drug.

Following allegations, neighbouring countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have decided to ban the drug, it is learnt.

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from any diseases, especially if taken in higher doses or mixed with other medications.

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Speaking to Tribune, Mohammed, a medical supervisor at a private school said scores of students are consuming Lyrica as it is considered to be one of the strongest neurotoxins.

“Doctor’s prescription is required to buy this drug. But many pharmacies sell Lyrica to anyone above 20, who resell it to students.”



Lyrica is among the most smuggled drugs in the region.

“There are many teenagers who take Lyrica pills along with energy drinks. The combination offers a psychedelic effect. It also relaxes muscles while causing loss of balance.”

Doctors say consuming Lyrica pills can have a negative impact on the health of students including sexual impotency and behavioural disorders.

A former drug addict, who doesn’t want to be named, told Tribune that Lyrica has been available at almost all pharma shops across the Kingdom since 2006.

“A box containing 56 pills of Lyrica was sold for BD20 while each pill is sold for BD5.”

“Since the drug has been banned in neighbouring GCC countries, Bahrain has become an entry point for Lyrica pills to enter the black markets in the region,” he added.

In 2016, the UAE banned Lyrica and Saudi Arabia would soon follow the suit while Palestine as classified it as a narcotic substance.

It is learnt that the Kingdom imports Lyrica pills from Egypt, where nearly 50 pharma companies manufacture the drug under 66 commercial names.

## Court orders govt doctor to pay BD19,000 for stealing medicines

TDT | Manama  
Ali Tarif

The High Appeals Court has ordered a Bahraini medical doctor to pay BD19,000 for medicines she had stolen from a public pharmacy.

This came after the Public Prosecution appealed the High Criminal Court’s ruling which

held her guilty and sentenced her to one year behind bars, but without ordering her to settle the value of the medicines she stole.

According to court files, the defendant, aged 44, was convicted of prescribing medicines from a public pharmacy in bad faith.

She was earlier sentenced to one year in prison, but her punishment was replaced with social service.

The 44-year-old doctor was put on trial after a pharmacist serving at a public pharmacy accused her of misconduct. The doctor was referred to the Public Prosecution after a commission of inquiry probed into her case, and confirmed the wrongdoing.

The defendant was allegedly selling these medicines at her private clinic.

## 18 months old child smokes sheesha, father jailed

TDT | Manama  
Ali Tarif

An Arab national was sentenced to three months in jail for making his 18 months old child smoke sheesha.

The man got into trouble after he filed a divorce petition against his wife, blaming her of negligence towards their children.

Upon questioning, the woman presented a video to the police which showed her husband making the child smoke sheesha.

The man confirmed the validity of the video, stating that he didn’t intend to put the child’s health in danger.

But he was put on trial for risking the child’s life and was sentenced to three months in prison.

## Terror cell members jailed

TDT | Manama  
Ali Tarif

The High Criminal Court has sentenced 13 defendants to life in prison for forming a terrorist cell.

Eleven of them had their Bahraini nationality stripped, while seven of them were hit with BD100,000 fine each.

Two other defendants were tried in connection with the case, including an Asian man, and both received 10 years behind bars each, but the Bahraini man was fined BD500.

Five of the defendants were ordered to pay BD1551 collectively for the damages caused to private properties following blast.

According to court files, the 15 convicted men created and operated two cells belonging to Saraya Al Ashtar (Al Ashtar Brigades).

They are said to have planned to murder police officers, and they detonated several bombs to achieve their goals.

A police officer and a Bahraini woman was injured in the blast.

As per police records, nine

**15**  
convicted men created and operated two cells belonging to Saraya Al Ashtar.

men are in police custody, but other defendants are still at large and were convicted in absentia.

The fourth and fifth defendants are in Iran and they were giving orders to the cell members.

Moreover, court files revealed that several defendants travelled outside Bahrain to receive militant training on weapons and bombs at the hands of foreigners expert in making bombs.

Prosecutors pointed out that the cells were responsible for detonating a bomb in Abu Saiba on February 4, 2017, and Sanabis on February 23, 2017, as well as pelting an improvised grenade at police officers in Samaheej on April 4, 2017.

## Training for children with special needs



The American Embassy Regional English Language Office will organise a five-day visit by American Fulbright Specialist in teaching children with special needs, Dr Carol Anne Cao. During her visit Dr Cao will give a series of workshops on best practices in addressing the needs of students with learning disabilities. She will be working with teachers at the Ministry of Education, Alya Centre for Autism and Bahrain Teachers College. On the occasion of her visit to Bahrain Dr Cao stated: “I am in Bahrain to work with the special needs community to better understand the needs of their students and how the community can help these students learn the necessary skills to be productive citizens of society. My programme will consist of collaborating with teachers to improve on teaching methodologies and to provide best practices in helping students with learning difficulties, dyslexia, ADHD and autism.” Dr Cao is the Director of Curriculum and Support Services at Summit View Schools in North Hollywood, California. She holds a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction in STEM from Texas Tech University.