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The first question of Fatwa no. 7726

Q 1: The current laws in Egypt allow pharmacists to own only two pharmacies. Some pharmacists are not satisfied with this, because they would like to expand their business. Pharmacists wishing to own three or four pharmacies do so by breaching pharmacy licensing law. They agree with other pharmacists who do not own a pharmacy, or have only one, to allow them to use their names in order to open a third. In return, they pay them a sum of money every month or every year. What is the ruling on this agreement and this money? Is this perjury or a form of cooperation for relieving the hardships that people face and an escape from the restrictions of positive (man-made) laws? Please advise us.

A: The mentioned agreement is not permissible because it involves lying, forging, cheating authorities, and violation of regulations set for the public interest and does not contradict Shari'ah. Both parties are at risk if this agreement is revealed to authorities. Therefore, the money paid to a pharmacist every month or every year by the one who appropriates a third pharmacy through such an agreement is unlawful.

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May Allah grant us success. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions.

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