

# Not just horsepower

Haya Shaheen's journey from rider to mentor and community builder



Rehab Mohammad  
TDT | Manama

“Horses help women discover their inner strength,” believes Haya Shaheen. It is a conviction born from years spent in the saddle, where she learned lessons in patience, discipline and self-confidence. What began as a childhood fascination with horses evolved into a lifelong journey of riding, training and mentoring others, eventually leading her to co-found “Saddle Club”, a growing community for horse enthusiasts.

Founded with a group of women riders, the club is about more than equestrianism. Through activities, camps and educational programmes, it aims to build confidence, encourage learning and create meaningful connections among women, children and horse lovers alike.

**A unique bond**

For Haya, humans and horses share a unique relationship. It is this connection that transformed a childhood passion into a lifelong journey encompassing riding, training, teaching and community building.

That journey took a professional turn in 2014.

“For me, equestrianism was never just a sport, but a real school that taught me patience, discipline, confidence and responsibility,” she said.

“It helped shape my personality and the way I approach life.” Over time, her passion expanded beyond riding into teaching and training.

“I enjoy seeing my students grow step by step,” she said, adding that there is “real happiness in sharing knowledge and helping others build confidence in themselves.”

**Beyond the saddle**

Haya also believes learning is a continuous process.

“A good trainer is someone who never stops learning. I always try to educate myself and stay updated with the latest practices in equestrianism,” she said.

That philosophy continues to shape Saddle Club, which she co-founded with a group of women riders.

Founded with a group of women riders, the club serves

as a platform for horse lovers to learn, connect and grow together.

“It brings horse enthusiasts together in a supportive and inspiring environment through activities, camps and educational programmes,” she said.

Through its initiatives, the club seeks to strengthen the equestrian community while promoting knowledge-sharing and mentorship.

**Focus on children**

Children remain a special focus for Haya.

“I believe equestrianism helps children build their personality, confidence and social skills,” she said.

Working with children, she added, is a re-



sponsibility that requires awareness, care and precision.

**Empowering women**

Speaking about the impact of equestrianism on women, Haya said horses offer far more than a sporting experience.

“They create a space of calm, balance and confidence, helping women step away from daily stress and

reconnect with themselves,” she said.

According to Haya, horses are both strong and sensitive.

“They deserve respect, understanding and care.”

For this reason, she promotes a culture of kindness towards animals and encourages relationships built on trust and mutual respect between rider and horse.

For Haya, equestrianism is more than a sport.

“It is a passion, a mission and a continuous journey of learning and making a positive impact on others.”



## Lawmakers seek review of university fees hikes

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

Growing complaints from students over rising University of Bahrain fees have prompted MPs to seek a review of charges imposed on summer courses, extended study periods and re-enrolment.

Parliament's Services Committee has approved a proposal urging the government to reconsider a series of fees introduced or increased by the national university, saying they have placed an added financial burden on students and their families, particularly those from low-income households.

The proposal calls for university fees to be aligned with students' living costs and seeks to uphold the principle that higher education should remain accessible to all citizens.

The committee said all members present voted in favour of the proposal on public interest grounds.



**Obliging students to buy designated books runs contrary to the principles of university education, which should encourage the use of diverse academic sources.**

ABDULWAHID QARATA, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF PARLIAMENT'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

According to the explanatory memorandum, the proposal is based on Article 7 of Bahrain's Constitution, which requires the State to support science, literature, the arts and scientific

research.

MPs said the move followed numerous complaints from students about fee increases at the University of Bahrain.

Among the concerns cited were new charges for summer courses, the doubling of course fees for students who have exceeded 10 semesters, higher re-enrolment fees and requirements to purchase specific textbooks.

They argued that obliging students to buy designated books runs contrary to the principles of university education, which should encourage the use of diverse academic sources.

The proposal calls on the government to cancel or amend decisions that MPs say have increased the cost of diploma and bachelor's degree programmes while generating additional revenue for the university.

The Services Committee has recommended the proposal for approval.



## Bahrain, Canada discuss security cooperation

Shaikh Hisham bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs (NPRO) during talks with Brigitte Fournier, Security Adviser at the Embassy of Canada accredited to the Kingdom of Bahrain, along with her accompanying delegation. Discussions focused particularly on emergency and crisis management plans. They also reviewed opportunities for cooperation and joint coordination in related fields aimed at enhancing the exchange of expertise, developing work mechanisms, and achieving shared objectives.

## Court clears three men in illegal fishing nets case

Mohammed Darwish  
TDT | Manama

A fisherman and two Asian crewmen have been cleared of charges related to unlicensed fishing nets and evading a Coast Guard inspection after a court found no conclusive evidence linking them to the seized gear.

The Lower Criminal Court ruled that prosecutors had failed to prove the three men possessed the prohibited nets recovered at a fishing site, acquitting them of all charges.

The case stemmed from a Coast Guard patrol in September 2025. According to witness accounts, officers approached a fishing boat for inspection, but those on board allegedly fled, leaving behind nets later identified as prohibited three-layer nylon gear.

The fisherman was also accused of refusing to stop for the

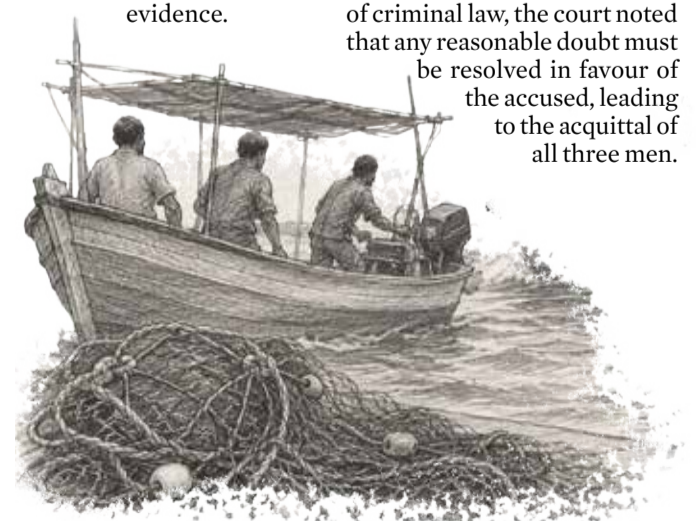
patrol boat.

Defence lawyer Mohammed Al Mahdi argued that neither his client nor the two crewmen had any connection to the nets, maintaining that the seized gear did not belong to them. He also requested Coast Guard footage of the incident and called for the charges to be dismissed due to a lack of evidence.

In its ruling, the court found that witness testimony established only that a boat had been spotted, an inspection had been attempted and nets were later recovered.

That, it said, was not enough to prove ownership or possession of the fishing gear by the accused.

Reaffirming a key principle of criminal law, the court noted that any reasonable doubt must be resolved in favour of the accused, leading to the acquittal of all three men.



## BIS felicitates AISSCE 2025-26 achievers



Pranav Bobby Sekhar emerged as School Topper with 97.8%, securing the highest Physics score in Bahrain. He also qualified for JEE Advanced after clearing JEE Main. Sakshi Lal secured second position with 97.6%, followed by Ishan Pande with 97.4%, who also qualified for JEE Main and JEE Advanced. Pranav topped the Science stream, Sakshi led Humanities, and Aysha Yusra Shamim topped Commerce with 95.6%. Other notable performers included Ishan Pande (second in Science), Harshil Jain (second in Commerce), and Ahmad Suhail Wani (third in Science). The school recorded several centum scorers. Perfect scores in English were achieved by Darwina Manoj, Dhruv Satishkumar, Ishan Pande, Amruta Varshinee Murugan, and Sakshi Lal. Mathematics centums went to Pranav Bobby Sekhar, Ishan Pande, and Darwina Manoj, while Ishan Pande, Pranav Bobby Sekhar, Ahmad Suhail Wani, and Yuvraj Agarwal scored 100 in Computer Science. Suchika Panjwani earned 100 in Informatics Practices, and Sakshi Lal secured a centum in History. Among subject toppers were Darwina Manoj (Biology, 99), Amruta Varshinee Murugan and Vaishnavi Vinayakumar (Economics, 99), Sakshi Lal (Psychology, 99), Ahmad Suhail Wani (Chemistry, 96), and Sakshi Lal (Applied Mathematics, 93). Pranav's 96 in Physics was the highest in Bahrain. The school also commended nine students who achieved A1 grades in all subjects, reflecting exceptional consistency and academic excellence.