

Fraudsters jailed over card theft and fake payments

● **Fined BD1,000 each**

Rehab Mohammad
TDT | Manama

The High Criminal Court of Appeal upheld the first-instance ruling, sentencing an Arab defendant, who had previous convictions, and an Asian defendant to three years in prison each.

The court also imposed a fine of BD1,000 on each defendant and ordered their permanent deportation upon completion of their sentences.

The conviction came after the defendants used stolen bank cards to pay electricity and water bills online in 12 fraudulent transactions totaling BD1,854.

The Public Prosecution stated that the defendants used electronic signatures of other people's bank cards fraudulently, entering card data and verification codes to complete payments through the government e-portal, unlawfully taking money belonging to others.

According to a fraud operations monitor at the financial company, the 12 payments were processed for the benefit of four different accounts.

Deadly birdstrike

Col. Bahar: Feeding or raising pigeons near airports puts lives and flights at risk

Ghadeer Alkumaish
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Speaking on the Ministry of Interior's "Al Aman" program, Col. Dr Osama Bahar, head of Hidd Police Station, cautioned that raising pigeons or feeding birds near airports and public areas can pose serious dangers to aircraft during takeoff and landing — the most critical phases of flight.

"If you're raising pigeons and flying them near the airport, you need to give up this hobby," he said. "People's lives matter. This isn't a game."

According to Bahar, roughly 1,000 pigeons are present in areas surrounding Bahrain International Airport. While pigeons are common in urban neighbourhoods, their presence near flight paths creates a significant risk.

Altitudes

Birds often fly in flocks at low altitudes — sometimes below 150 feet — overlapping with aircraft climb and descent routes. When birds are ingested into jet engines or strike windshields, the consequences can be severe.

Globally, aviation authorities estimate bird strikes cost be-



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— COLONEL DR OSAMA BAHAR, HEAD OF HIDD POLICE STATION

tween \$1 billion and \$1.5 billion annually in aircraft damage, delays and preventive measures. While many incidents result only in repairs and rescheduled flights, some have proven fatal.

Bahar referenced a 2009 incident in New York in which a plane struck birds shortly after takeoff, disabling both engines. The pilot safely executed an



Image used for illustrative purposes only

emergency landing, saving all 155 passengers — a reminder of how quickly routine flights can turn into crises.

Prevention

"These examples show this is not a small issue," Bahar said. "Prevention starts on the ground."

Public health officials have long warned about pigeons as disease carriers. But Bahar stressed that his focus is on aviation safety.

Feeding birds in open areas —

including cemeteries, rooftops and vacant plots near airport zones — encourages flocking and population growth. Hobbyists who raise and release pigeons may unintentionally draw birds into protected airspace.

Acts of kindness toward animals, he said, must not endanger human life.

Deeds

"If you seek good deeds, protect those on the planes — those arriving and those departing."

Airports worldwide invest heavily in wildlife management systems, including radar monitoring, deterrents and habitat control. Yet officials say community awareness remains essential.

Authorities urge residents near airports to avoid feeding birds and to reconsider pigeon-raising activities involving free flight.

Protecting passengers, pilots, and airport workers requires cooperation between regulators and the public.

As Bahrain strengthens its position as a regional aviation hub, officials say safe skies depend not only on regulation and technology — but also on responsible choices made on the ground.

Drug offense trial

Rehab Mohammad
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A man in his twenties is on trial for importing 1.2 kilograms of cannabis for trafficking and possessing marijuana and hashish for personal use.

He admitted to using the drugs but denied trafficking.

Customs intercepted the package from Asia, which was professionally concealed, and he later collected it, admitting ownership before it was handed to the Narcotics Control Department.

A search of his residence uncovered more drugs, marijuana plants, a container with traces of narcotics, rolling papers, and small bags.

Narcotic arrest

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The Ministry of Interior announced that the Air Customs Directorate at Customs Affairs has foiled an attempt to smuggle 98 capsules containing a substance suspected to be narcotic at Bahrain International Airport.

It explained that while screening the luggage of a traveller through the X-ray scanner, a customs officer became suspicious.

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