

Insights and views galore as mega entrepreneurship event concludes

Remarkable international participation makes 'The Global Entrepreneurship Congress 2019' a big success

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● **A session on "Building a Digital Nation" presented by former Estonian President Toomas Ilves, highlighted the progress made by his country in smart digital government services.**

Manama

The Global Entrepreneurship Congress 2019, hosted for the first time in the Kingdom, organised by the Global Entrepreneurship Network and Tamkeen, concluded with more than 110 sessions delivered by over 240 speakers from all over the world.

Tamkeen Chairman Shaikh Mohammed Bin Issa Al Khalifa, expressed pride in partnering with GEN to host the Global Entrepreneurship Congress 2019 for the first time in Bahrain.

He pointed out that according to the reports of GEN, the international participation during the event reached up to 51 per cent, which has been recorded as the highest in the history of the congress for over the past 10 years.

He shed light on the importance of this remarkable benchmark achieved by the Kingdom in positioning itself as a thriving business hub and a leader in

building sustainable economic environments and fostering innovation.

He also highlighted Bahrain's extensive support for the startup sector and their key role as an economic driver.

Tamkeen Chief Executive, Dr Ebrahim Mohammed Janahi, commented saying: "Bahrain's unique business environment is distinguished for its supportive regulatory laws and processes, which contribute to enhancing the Kingdom's position as an economically sustainable entrepreneurial hub.

In its first time since the inception of the GEC, witnessed the highest participation of over 50 countries at the "Startup Nations Ministerial Sessions".

In addition, the GEC witnessed a wide participation from around 170 countries including the United States, India, France, Turkey, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, South Africa, Cambodia and more.

The GEC continued with its parallel sessions on its third day yesterday, which covered approximately 50 topics that addressed entrepreneurship in digital platforms, creative industries, innovation policies, startup business acceleration, women in global entrepreneurship, mapping and measuring entrepreneur ecosystem, digital economies and more.

Among the highlights of the third day included a session on "Building a Digital Nation" presented by former Estonian President Toomas Ilves, who remarked the progress made by Estonia in smart digital government services, especially in implementing Blockchain Technology.

Mr Ilves shared the benefits



Dr Janahi honours a delegate at the Congress.

New "Trade Map" online platform

Export Bahrain, in partnership with the International Trade Centre, has announced the launch of its new interactive online platform "Trade Map" at the Global Entrepreneurship Congress 2019. The platform is accessible via Export Bahrain's website export.bh and will provide Bahraini exporters with trade and market intelligence of over 220 countries and territories and 5,300 products in a relevant and efficient manner. The purpose of this is to allow Bahraini exporters to identify and capture international trade opportunities based on indicators on export performance, international demand, alternative markets and the role of competitors from both a product and country perspective.



Former Estonian President Toomas Ilves talks about his country's success in implementing digital government services.



A panel discussion in progress at the Congress.

3,000

people from 170 countries, in addition to thousands of entrepreneurs and investors took part in the event.

of building a digital nation noting: "the fundamental core of digitalisation is having a strong and secure identity, as well as a decisive embrace of change. Today we save 2 per cent of our GDP every single year with the changes we have implemented. What makes a government resist change is the lack of will and the lack of dialogue between people who are in charge of policy-making and the people who understand digital technology."

In the "Women Entrepreneurs: Local Advancement, Global Trends moderated by Zahra Taher, crucial economic developments as well as challenges and solutions facing female entrepreneurs were dis-

cussed.

Shaikha Dina bint Rashid Al Khalifa, Director General for Policies and Development at the Supreme Council for Women, highlighted the importance of women in the entrepreneurship sector and urged them to work across all economic sectors in the Kingdom.

One of the third day's sessions included Tamkeen's "Enabling a Digital Economy: Cloud Impact on Startups" which shed light on supporting organisations as they increase the quality and effectiveness of their services, including improvement of security utilising the latest digital solutions.

The GEC also included several announcements related to development initiatives wherein various entities and organisations in the Kingdom will partner with private sector companies to support national efforts aiming to develop supportive environments for startup enterprises. This year's edition of the GEC was attended by over 3,000 people from 170 countries, in addition to thousands of entrepreneurs and investors.

National FinTech Talent Programme kicks off

● **The semi-annual programme is delivered in a combination of live and online modules and is certified by Georgetown University.**

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Bahrain FinTech Bay's National FinTech Talent Programme (FTP) has officially kicked off with its first batch of 25 Bahraini candidates.

The first cohort will be part of a specialised roadmap, that will offer unique opportunities to develop their professional skills and gain insightful experience in the latest FinTech trends and technologies on a global scale.

The programme started accepting applications in early January, and a successful batch of 50 high-calibre candidates progressed to an exclusive career fair exposing them to over



The first batch has 25 Bahraini candidates.

15 employers, including speed networking as well as breakout sessions at the event.

Following the candidate's performance at the FinTech and Innovation Career Fair, 25 candidates have been placed within FinTech and innovation related internship roles for a period of six months.

Accepted candidates will start their journey by being part of a six-month internship in

innovation/digitalisation and FinTech roles, receiving mentorship from global partners of Bahrain FinTech Bay, and will complete training on FinTech verticals focusing on blockchain and artificial intelligence run by SettleMint, Blockchain Academy Global and TAIGER AI Academy.

In parallel to their internships, candidates are enrolled in a three-month a professional

development course in FinTech delivered by Georgetown University McDonough School of Business.

The semi-annual programme is delivered in a combination of live and online modules and is certified by Georgetown University.

The certification comprises seven modules and four case-studies led by Professor Jim Angel, a prominent figure

within the FinTech landscape, and co-inventor of 12 FinTech patents.

Additionally, the course will be hosting local and international guest speakers, the entrepreneurial community, and thought leaders from the financial services industry.

Khalid Saad, CEO, Bahrain FinTech Bay commented on the kick off, "As the FinTech ecosystem in Bahrain and the region transforms further, the development of talent to continue and sustain such transformation is key.

"Initiating the region's first National FinTech Talent Programme with Tamkeen is a key step in the development of such talent.

"Through training and job placement opportunities within our partner network, we aim to develop a generation of leaders that will be able to take the industry forward and support Bahrain's transition into a knowledge and innovation driven economy."

Joint efforts to combat terror funding discussed

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The Minister of Finance and National Economy, Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa stressed Bahrain's ongoing efforts to back the international efforts to combat economic crimes, including mainly illegal trading of money.

The Minister of Finance and National Economy was speaking as he received yesterday the US Treasury's Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing Marshall Billingslea and his accompanying delegation.

He stressed the need to fight them through the government's institutions and according to international laws.

He also pointed out the importance of boosting coordination at all levels to carry out effective procedures to confront the quality development in innovated funding methods used by the terrorist organisations in order to maintain international peace and stability.

They discussed boosting bilateral co-operation in combating terrorism funding.