

Bahrain showcases digital innovation, excellence at 2025 Government Awards

A landmark ceremony celebrates 30 years of the Internet while honouring visionary public and private sector innovators

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Bahrain's journey as a digital pioneer took centre stage yesterday at the Government Excellence Award 2025 ceremony, held at the Sakhir Grand Hall, Exhibition World Bahrain.

The event also commemorated 30 years of the Internet in the Kingdom, spotlighting the nation's transformation into a regional hub for innovation and technology.

Ministerial Remarks on Digital Progress

The ceremony opened with remarks from His Excellence General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior and Chairman of the Ministerial Committee for Information and Communication Technology (MCICT).

H.E. Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy, was also present.

H.E. General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah highlighted Bahrain's rapid evolution in digital and information services, emphasising the strategic initiatives that have enhanced governance, service delivery, and national competitiveness.

Following his speech, a short film traced the history and milestones of the Internet in Bahrain, reminding attendees of the Kingdom's technological journey over the past three decades.

Keynote Addresses and Visionary Leadership

A virtual address from Mr Alexander Felsenberg, Chair of the Award Judging Committee, set the stage for the awards presentation.

This was followed by keynote speeches from Mohamed Ali Al Qaed, CEO of the Information & eGovernment Authority, and Dr Abdullah Abdulrahman Al Hamed, President of the Bahrain Internet Society.

Both highlighted Bahrain's dedication to digital transformation, integrated government sys-



H.E. Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa and H.E. General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa with distinguished guests and awardees at the event



tems, and international standards that stimulate innovation and elevate public welfare.

Celebrating Innovation Across Sectors

The nominees reflected a rich tapestry of initiatives across both public and private sectors, each demonstrating the Kingdom's commitment to digital excellence.

Winners were celebrated across multiple categories, marking achievements that span from governmental digital services to pioneering private sector innovations.

The ceremony concluded with a group photograph of all award recipients, symbolising the collective effort behind Bahrain's digital success.

Bahrain's rapid evolution in digital and information services has enhanced governance, service delivery, and national competitiveness.

Faris Ahmed Marhoon and Cintel Secure

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Tribune, Faris Ahmed Marhoon shared insights into his award-winning project, Cintel Secure.

"The application safeguards websites by identifying and analysing all potential vulnerabilities," he explained. "After

rigorous testing, it generates a detailed report guiding organisations on securing their online platforms."

Cintel Secure exemplifies Bahrain's drive to protect digital infrastructure while fostering innovation.

Hussein Basem and SolarMap

Also featured in an exclusive interview, Hussein Basem, creator of SolarMap, detailed how his web application is advancing sustainable energy practices.

"SolarMap combines artificial intelligence, data analytics, and satellite technology to help individuals and businesses measure energy consumption and transition from traditional energy sources to solar-powered solutions," Basem said.

The platform demonstrates how technology can merge in-

novation with environmental responsibility.

Driving National and Regional Impact

Reflecting on Bahrain's broader vision, Mohamed Ali Al Qaed highlighted the significance of the 2007 e-Government strategy, noting its role in laying the foundation for integrated services, digital tools, and international benchmarks.

He underscored Bahrain's leadership in the GCC through initiatives such as the Digital Government Awards, regional collaborations, and the launch of 13 editions of the Government Excellence Awards, reinforcing the Kingdom's position as a centre for digital innovation.

Innovation Beyond Borders

The 2025 awards ceremony reaffirmed Bahrain's ability to harmonise public and private sector efforts, creating a digital ecosystem that not only benefits national development but also generates solutions with regional and global influence.

By recognising cutting-edge projects and visionary individuals, Bahrain continues to position itself as a hub for digital excellence and transformative innovation.

Cash cap and new anti-money-laundering checks for gold trade and auditors

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Gold and jewellery dealers and external auditors in Bahrain are now covered by a new Ministry of Industry and Commerce decision that lays down updated steps to stop money laundering, terror financing, proliferation financing and the illegal cross-border movement of funds.

The decision was published in the latest Official Gazette and takes effect the day after publication.

Decision No. 105 of 2025 applies to anyone licensed to sell or trade gold and jewellery, and to auditors when they carry out



H.E. Abdulla Fakhro the specified activities defined under the anti-money-laundering law.

Risk

Its reach also extends to relevant branches and subsidiaries inside and outside Bahrain, according to the level of risk tied to each business.

For gold and jewellery businesses, the rules bar cash payments for any single deal worth BD3,000 or above, or the equivalent in other currencies.

A copy of the customer's ID must be taken for any cash purchase over BD2,000.

Firms must keep a record of transactions for at least five years, and issue a receipt showing the client's details, the sale value, a description of the items and the date of sale.

Auditors performing the specified activities must apply due-diligence checks on clients and beneficial owners, monitor business relationships and one-off transactions, and put internal controls in place.

Bahrain-Malta ties



His Excellency Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy, received Silvio Schembri, Minister for the Economy, Enterprise and Strategic Projects of the Republic of Malta, during his visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain. H.E. Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa highlighted the longstanding relations between the two countries and emphasised their shared commitment to enhancing cooperation and coordination, particularly in economic and investment domains.