

Cyber security awareness key to combat scams in Kingdom

Staff Reporter
TDT | Manama

There have been various types of scams sweeping Bahrain, prompting authorities to increase cyber security awareness throughout the Kingdom.

There are many types of scams; however, the most common occurring in the Kingdom is phishing. The Daily Tribune previously reported that 735,244 phishing attacks were recorded in Bahrain in Q2 of this year.

Phishing is a cybercrime in which a target or targets are contacted through email, telephone, or text message, by someone posing as a legitimate institution to lure individuals into providing sensitive data.

Also reported previously by The Daily Tribune, 83 percent of respondents in Bahrain stated that they or their loved ones had experienced scams via social networks in 2021. Sadly, as technology and social media have advanced at such a rapid rate, this has given scammers more opportunities to reach users directly through social media platforms.

Speaking to The Daily Trib-



Phishing is a cyber-crime in which a target or targets are contacted through email, telephone, or text message, by someone posing as a legitimate institution to lure individuals into providing sensitive data.

une, Yaqoob Alawadhi, founder and CEO of NGN International, said: "The most common scam occurring in the Kingdom is phishing of personal data like CPR number, bank OTPs, etc.



We have also seen a lot of voice phishing, and many of these scams are happening via fraud websites.

"Cybercriminals are using an SMS, creating urgency that the user's bank account will be blocked, to potentially harvest personal and sensitive account information. Usually, the text message includes a link to a fake website that impersonates the bank's brand and asks the user to enter personal information such as a username, password, or their CPR number."

Unfortunately, Alawadhi said that the older generation are more susceptible or vulnerable to such kinds of attacks; how-

ever, anyone can fall victim to these scams, regardless of their age.

Further explaining, Alawadhi said: "Corporations have also been affected by these types of attacks. Essentially, corporations have been targeted by spear phishing emails, where the cybercriminals use publicly available information to impersonate C-level management and board members to intercept internal communication and request fund transfers."

According to The Director of National Intelligence, the goal of spear phishing is to acquire sensitive information such as personal information. Today,



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- YAQOOB ALAWADHI, FOUNDER AND CEO OF NGN INTERNATIONAL

phishing scams are more sophisticated as identities are masked, messages are tailored, and email content appears legitimate.

Additionally, there has also been a considerable number of Ransomware attacks that can lead to a loss of data, brand reputation, and funds.

As there has been an increase in scams across the Kingdom, cyber security awareness is essential to combat the issue.

Alawadhi said: "Cyber security awareness amongst users of all age groups, both as individuals and employees, across all levels of management and hierarchies is the best way to combat cyber threats in the Kingdom."

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"During the pandemic, the NGN International launched "NGN Majlis", which is a platform to spread awareness and help in the national and regional efforts to fight against the issue of cybercrime."

Fikra application period ends

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The Prime Minister's Office has announced the end of the application process for the fifth edition of the Government Innovation Competition (Fikra).

Fikra, in all its editions, has been established in line with the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, to further Team Bahrain's efforts in the Kingdom's growth and development, and to support excellence across government services.

All applications for the fifth edition of Fikra will be reviewed by a professional evaluation committee.

Bahrain welcomes three 'elite' cruise ships

● They arrived via Khalifa bin Salman Port from Dec 26 to 28

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Three cruises have arrived at Khalifa bin Salman Port (KBSP) from December 26 to 28, carrying over 11,000 tourists onboard.

This was announced by the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA).

Operated by APM Terminals Bahrain, KBSP is scheduled to welcome tens of cruise ships as part of the 2022-2023 cruise season between November 2022 and May 2023, celebrating 11 years of launching the cruise industry services in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The "MSC World Europa" arrived at KBSP, carrying 6,000 tourists from France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, and the UK.

With 19 ships in its fleet, MSC Cruises has one of the most modern cruise fleets in the world. An Italian shipping company founded it in 1970.

It boasts onboard experience as well as a diverse range of facilities such as Balinese spas, adult-only pools, and 4D cinemas. Its fleet ships can carry between 1984 and 6300 passengers at a time.



The "MSC World Europa" is one of the most modern cruise fleets in the world

"We are confident that the cruise industry will foster tourism revenues, furthering the Kingdom's position as a popular tourism destination in the region for more European tourists and other nationalities looking to explore Bahrain's culture and the Arab Gulf's rich heritage of old history and civilisation through massive cruise trips, and we wish all cruise passengers a pleasant stay in the Kingdom of Bahrain."

- DR NASSER QAEDI, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF BAHRAIN TOURISM AND EXHIBITIONS AUTHORITY (BTEA)

One crew member is assigned to every three passengers. It provides passengers with live entertainment in the form of evening concerts, parties and contests, and live shows.

The latest addition to the fleet, "MSC World Europa," was launched in November 2021. The MSC World Europa is the world's first LNG-powered cruise ship.

Setting sail from Germany, "AIDAcosmo" arrived at KBSP with a capacity of over 5,000 passengers of various nationalities.

Operated by AIDA Cruises with 1,252 crew members, the "AIDAcosma" is one of the largest cruise ships within the AIDA fleet. KBSP also received the American cruise ship "The World," which carried 148 tourists and 285 crew members of various nationalities.

'Ana Al Bahrain' competition winners honoured

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Information Affairs Minister Dr Ramzan bin Abdullah Al Noaimi honoured the winners of "Ana Al Bahrain" competition.

The ministry organised the competition on the National Days, where 45 participants won prizes ranging from BD1,000 to BD1,500.

Dr Al Noaimi honoured the two golden sponsors of the competition, the National Bank of Bahrain



One of the competition winners

(NBB) and the Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO); the two silver sponsors to Aluminum Bahrain (Alba) and Moda Mall; the two bronze sponsors, Beyon Money, and Gulf Petrochemical Industries (GPIC); in addition to shareholders, Bahrain Airport Company (BAC), and National Hotels Company represented by the Radisson Blu Hotel, and the Jumeirah Bahrain Bay Hotel.

Joint inspection campaigns



The Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) conducted inspection campaigns in the Capital and Northern Governorates. The campaigns were coordinated with the Nationality, Passports and Residence Affairs (NPRA), the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science at the Ministry of Interior and the Governorates' respective Police Directorates. The campaigns resulted in reporting several violations related to the Labour Market and Residency laws. The reported cases were referred for legal action. LMRA renewed its call to all members of the society to support the efforts of government agencies in addressing illegal labour practices, by reporting violations via the electronic form on the authority's website www.lmra.bh or by calling the authority's call centre on 17506055.