

# Cybersecurity backbone of digitisation: Experts

MOHAMMAD SHOEB  
THE PENINSULA

Keeping in view the fast pace of digital transformation and changing patterns in the way daily business and economic activities are conducted by organisations, ensuring cyber security has become inevitable and of paramount importance to minimize the risks involved to emerging digital economies, including Qatar, noted a panel of experts at an event yesterday.

Most of the panellists highlighted that with the dynamically evolving market conditions, it is essential that organizations, world over, recognize the need for digital divergence and build capabilities to cope with exponential changes.

Experts from the IT industry were speaking at an interactive webinar titled 'Digital divergence and Exponential Change' - Build resilience, promote restructuring, hosted by Doha Bank.

The event 'Secure Digital' touched upon the paramount importance of digital identity, network and cyber security, emerging digital economy and the pertinent need to manage the inherent risks associated with "new normal".

Proficient business and technology leaders from top notch international organizations joined the event as panellists for the webinar. The panellists shared interesting views on digital security and on how building relevant capabilities can help us address technology risks and vulnerabilities associated with it whilst accelerating business growth.

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R Seetharaman, in his introductory note, thanked the elite panelists for their thought leadership on such an important topic. CEO, Doha Bank reiterated the importance of digital security in the current times where social governance was at stake and how prolific, the Qatari government was at responding to dynamic environment keeping trust, transparency and truth at the helm. He gave insight on state of cybersecurity on account of artificial intelligence, supply chain collaborations, threat to public cloud from malware and password less technology. In the Gulf region, malware attacks were one of the biggest cyber threats in 2019. There is increased exposed to cyber risks from digital transformation. Omar Sherin, Partner, Technology Practice, EY, took the audience through his views on digital commerce and secure digital economy, how people, processes and technologies are interconnected and involved in



Sheikh Hamad Abdulla Al Thani, CEO of Vodafone Qatar (centre, second row); Dr. R Seetharaman (top left), CEO of Doha Bank, and other panellists during the webinar hosted by Doha Bank, yesterday.

building a meaningful and secure economy. His views on building a secure Cyber ecosystem with reference to the upcoming FIFA 2022 in Qatar was very well received.

Sherin, during his talk, explained his views on the importance of prevention, detection and response to a security event and how there is a pressing demand to revise the existing IT and information security regulations to be relevant. While it is important to be at the driver's seat of the speed of innovation engine, it is equally important to focus on the security aspects, both from a provider and consumer perspective.

Sheikh Hamad Abdulla Al Thani, CEO of Vodafone Qatar, gave an impactful talk on how Vodafone Qatar is enabling

digital transformation using future ready networks.

His thought-leadership address on enabling innovative, future-proof connectivity & security to meet business demands was commendable. Sheikh Hamad, took the audience through his vision of how advanced network technologies can improve living standards and its substantial dependence for a safe tomorrow.

Vodafone Qatar is actively pursuing the implementation of a high-speed 5G technology in the country which amongst others will enable "machine to machine" communication that will transform the way machines communicate with humans.

This was followed by views from the next speaker Lell Fell,

Senior Executive Partner, Gartner, who spoke at length on the hyper-awareness of opportunities and threats in the digital world. He spoke about the plethora of prospects available for users and vulnerabilities associated with digitization especially in a world post the covid-19 pandemic.

Lell pointed out that "Resilience and Recovery are King.." and the COVID-19 is acting as a catalyst for change in many of the organization worldwide.

Other speakers at the event included Global Account Manager, Financial Services Industry, Microsoft, Alaa Ajweh; Abhik Goswami, Chief Risk Officer, Doha Bank; and Ravi Baldev, Manager Sys Eng.- DPS & Cyber Recovery Systems, DELL who also highlighted the significance of data security.

## Ahlibank expands its 'Credit Card Pearl Rewards Programme'

THE PENINSULA - DOHA

Ahlibank, a leading Qatari-owned financial institution, has announced the addition of new partners to its Credit Card Pearl Rewards Programme. The new outlets include fashion, F&B and lifestyle retail stores. Ahlibank Credit Card holders will be able to redeem Pearl Points for reward vouchers for purchases from these different outlets.

The new outlets include global brands such as: Virgin Mega Store, Massimo Dutti, Boggi, Zara Home, Oculis in addition to Paul Café, Eataly and many other retail stores. Ahlibank Credit Card holders can redeem their Pearl Points in multiple ways, including digitally through Ahlibank Online or Mobile Banking application, at their nearest Ahlibank branch, or by calling the Contact Centre on +974 4420 5222.

Ahlibank's Deputy CEO - Business Support, Services & Human Resources, Mohamed Al Namla, said, "We are pleased to add new outlets to our Credit Card Pearl Rewards Programme. This partnership is part of our plan to add exceptional international brands as our partners; making our Pearl Rewards Programme more valuable, diversified and meeting all our customers' needs."