

Ali Al Kaabi Highlights Qatar's Data Privacy Vision



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By Haroon Rashid Qureshi

During the International Data Privacy Day event in Doha, RKI spoke with Ali Al Kaabi from the Data Privacy Protection Department at the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA).

Al Kaabi explained that Qatar celebrates Data Privacy Day annually on January 28. He noted that

this year's observance is particularly significant as NCSA has launched the first national awareness campaign dedicated to personal data privacy.

“This campaign focuses on educating data subjects about their rights and helping organizations understand best practices in handling personal data,” he said. “It covers how data should be processed, controlled, and securely stored.”

He expressed hope that the campaign would have a strong and positive impact on local institutions and the wider public by strengthening awareness and compliance.

Discussing current challenges, Al Kaabi highlighted the rapid shift toward digital life. “Data privacy is a human right,” he said. “Personal data is a valuable asset, yet many individuals and some organizations do not always apply the necessary safeguards.” He added that while many institutions are improving, awareness efforts remain essential to close existing gaps.

Referring to Qatar's legal framework, he emphasized Law No. 13 of 2016 on Personal Data Protection, one of the first such laws in the region. The law defines sensitive data, outlines individuals' rights, and sets obligations for organizations. He encouraged the public to follow both the law and official guidelines issued by the concerned authorities.

Addressing phishing and social engineering attacks, Al Kaabi warned against fraudsters impersonating banks or government entities. “Raising awareness is key,” he said, noting that

banks clearly state they never request OTPs, yet some individuals still fall victim.

Comparing Qatar regionally, he stated that the country is among the pioneers in data privacy legislation and continues to advance toward greater maturity in cybersecurity and data protection, with the ultimate goal of ensuring a secure nation.