

Central Bank explores Islamic finance services with KPMG

THE Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago met yesterday with representatives from KPMG to discuss Islamic finance services as a potential avenue for financial sector development in the country.

'The Central Bank believes that Trinidad and Tobago has an opportunity to pioneer regulated Islamic financial services in the region. The benefits include innovation, financial inclusion, better liquidity management, foreign direct investment opportunities and boosting domestic economic activity. The bank also sees this as an opportunity to broaden and diversify the economy and the financial services sector as a whole,' a release stated yesterday.

KPMG's country managing partner Dushyant Sookram emphasised the importance of regulatory oversight for any entity offering financial services, noting that depositor protection is a cornerstone of a successful alternative for financial sector development.

'At KPMG, we are passionate about the possibilities that Islamic finance services can offer to the local community, and our next step is to engage other key stakeholders, including the Government and the commercial banks, and to complete a feasibility study to gain a comprehensive understanding of the market interest', he said.

Central Bank Governor Larry Howai reaffirmed the bank's openness to exploring innovative approaches to financial sector growth.

'The Central Bank is committed to supporting forward-thinking initiatives such as the Islamic finance services model with the potential to be transformative for the financial sector and the country,' he said.

'The bank looks forward to continuing this initiative, guided by its vision of fostering innovation, stability, and growth for the national financial sector,' the release stated.

Among those representing KPMG at the meeting were partner-advisory Arnold Niranjan and manager-advisory Khabeeda Abdool. The team was joined virtually by Pravin Manik, director-Audit at KPMG Bahrain.