

Fintech Forward 2026 Set to Welcome High-Level UK Delegation Led by His Majesty’s Trade Commissioner for the Middle East and Pakistan

H.E. Gemma Stevenson, His Majesty’s Trade Commissioner, will make Bahrain her first official visit in the region.

Manama

The Bahrain Economic Development Board (Bahrain EDB), in collaboration with the United Kingdom’s Department for Business, Innovation, Science, and Trade (BIST), is set to host a delegation from the United Kingdom (UK) led by H.E. Gemma Stevenson, His Majesty’s Trade Commissioner for the Middle East and Pakistan at the UK’s Department for Business, Science, Innovation and Trade (BIST), at Fintech Forward 2026 (FF26), marking her first visit to the region and the second consecutive year of the UK delegation’s participation at the forum. Taking place between 6-8 October, the visit builds on the long-standing bilateral ties between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the UK, and the continued opportunities to strengthen trade, innovation, and cross-border partnerships across financial services and fintech.

The delegation will include over 20 venture capital firms, fintech companies and ecosystem supporters, alongside other UK official leaders. In addition to attending FF26, the delegation will engage with key Bah-



rain ecosystem players, including the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB), the Labour Fund (Tamkeen), Bahrain Fintech Bay, as well as other industry leaders to explore potential partnerships, exchange perspectives, and strengthen connections between UK and Bahrain’s financial and fintech sectors. The programme will also include a cultural tour of the Muharraq Pearling Path, offering delegates an opportunity to explore Bahrain.

“The UK and Bahrain share a long-standing relationship, with strong connections across financial services, investment and innovation,” H.E. Gemma Stevenson commented “Our participation in Fintech Forward for the second time reflects the significant opportunities for businesses to engage with Bahrain and the wider region. I am proud to lead this delegation as our companies explore new commercial relationships. I look forward to visiting Bahrain and engaging with businesses and policymakers to deepen commercial ties and create growth across our markets.”

Hosted by the Bahrain Economic Development Board (Bahrain EDB), supported by the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB), the Labour Fund (Tamkeen), Bahrain Tourism & Exhibitions Authority (BTEA), and Bahrain Fintech Bay (BFB), and programmed by Forbes Middle East, FF26 will bring together

global leaders under the theme “Finance in the Age of Intelligent Infrastructure”. As part of the forum’s programme, Katie Ramsey, Head of the Global Venture Capital Unit in His Majesty’s Government’s Office for Investment, will participate in a panel discussion under the title “The Great Convergence: Banks, Fintechs and the Partnership Economy”, joining Bader Sater, the CEO of Bahrain Fintech Bay, and Yaseen Al Samerrai, the Country CEO of Bahrain CFI Trade, to discuss how financial institutions and fintechs are adapting and using technology to improve customer experience and stay competitive in a rapidly changing financial marketplace. Her participation will add a UK perspective to discussions examining the infrastructure, innovation, and emerging models shaping the future of financial services.

Following their participation at Fintech Forward 2025, three UK companies, Umazi, Valexa, and AMAN powered by Themis, subsequently announced their launch in Bahrain, highlighting the opportunities for fintechs to establish a presence in the Kingdom and access the wider regional market.

Bahrain Chamber to Host 69th Board Meeting and 15th Consultative Meeting of FGCCC

The Bahrain Chamber will host the 69th Board of Directors Meeting and the 15th Consultative Meeting of the Federation of GCC Chambers on 5 and 6 October 2026. The meetings will address key economic issues of priority to the Gulf private sector and explore ways to strengthen cooperation and integration among business communities across the GCC.

Chairman of the Bahrain Chamber, Nabeel Khalid Kanoo, stated that Bahrain’s hosting of these meetings comes at a time when greater cooperation between the public and private sectors across the GCC is needed to strengthen the resilience of Gulf economies in addressing emerging challenges and changes, support market stability and sustainable economic activity, and enhance the private sector’s role in the development process.

Kanoo said the current economic landscape calls for more effective mechanisms for coordination and responding to emerging developments, while safeguarding the GCC’s economic and development gains and supporting the private sector’s ability to sustain, grow and expand its activities. He stressed the importance of turning Gulf cooperation into practical initiatives by strengthening joint efforts to anticipate and manage risks, diversifying supply and transport routes, and enhancing the readiness of GCC markets to respond to changing



circumstances. Such efforts, he noted, are essential to strengthening business continuity and economic security across the region.

Kanoo noted that the Consultative Meeting will discuss a number of proposals submitted by GCC chambers, including strengthening industrial integration in the healthcare, medical, agricultural and food industries, encouraging joint Gulf investments in these sectors, and exploring ways to enhance food security and the GCC’s capacity to secure essential needs.

He stressed that these areas offer opportunities to strengthen Gulf value chains and leverage the capabilities and expertise available across member states, creating new opportunities for investors and business owners while supporting sustainable growth.

Kanoo reaffirmed his support for the GCC countries’ efforts to safeguard their economic, developmental and civilizational achievements, and to advance joint Gulf action in a manner that serves the interests of the GCC countries and their peoples.

Al Baraka Group Announces Its Global Partnership for the 5th AlBaraka Summit in London

Manama

AlBaraka Group B.S.C (C) has announced its sponsorship as a Global Partner of the 5th AlBaraka Summit in London, to be held on 13-14 October 2026 at JW Marriott Grosvenor House, London. This sponsorship builds on the success of previous summits and reaffirms the Group’s commitment to advancing the Islamic economy and strengthening its presence and impact across global markets.

The summit will be held under the theme “Ethics in Action: Rebuilding Foundations and Advancing the Global Impact of the Islamic Economy”, and will bring together central bank governors, ministers, banking group CEOs, policymakers, investors, scholars, academics and industry experts from around the world to exchange insights on building a more ethical, resilient and sustainable Islamic economic system.

The summit’s sessions will address strategic leadership for the Islamic economy, including policy, regulation and global direction; strengthening ethical confidence across banking, investment and capital markets; strengthening social security through social funds and Takaful; and activating Waqf, Qard Hasan, Zakat and Sadaqat for social impact. The program will also explore the next-generation Islamic economy through digitalization,



entrepreneurship, social media and the creative economy. In addition, the program will feature a special session held under the patronage of “Saleh Kamel Islamic Economics Award” entitled “From Research to Impact.” The session will provide post-graduate students at the Master’s and PhD levels with an opportunity to present their research and academic projects in Islamic economics and finance before a distinguished group of academics and experts.

Commenting on the partnership, Mr. Housseem Ben Haj Amor, Board Member and Group Chief Executive Officer, said: “We are proud to continue our Global Partnership of the AlBaraka Summit in London, which has become an important platform for dialogue on the future of the Islamic economy. This year’s theme affirms that

ethics provide a fundamental foundation for building trust, achieving justice and creating sustainable value for societies. We look forward to the summit translating these principles into economic and financial policies and practices with tangible impact.”

The AlBaraka Summit continues a journey that began in 1981 with the launch of the AlBaraka Symposium for Islamic Economics by the late founder, Shaikh Saleh Kamel, may Allah have mercy on him, which, for more than four decades, has contributed to advancing thought and practice in Islamic economics and finance.



Toyota Bahrain Launches the All-New Land Cruiser FJ in the Kingdom, bringing Freedom and Joy to Every Journey



Manama

October 2026 (Manama, Bahrain) – Ebrahim K. Kanoo (EKK), the exclusive distributor of Toyota vehicles in Bahrain, announced the launch of the all-new Land Cruiser FJ introducing a new member of the legendary Land Cruiser family designed to make its trusted capability and adventurous spirit accessible to an even broader range of customers.

Developed around “Freedom & Joy,” the Land Cruiser FJ carries forward the reliability, durability and off-road performance that define the nameplate in a more compact, agile form. It expands the lineup for diverse lifestyles, combining everyday maneuverability with the freedom to explore. Guided by Toyota’s “TO YOU” concept, it reflects the Land Cruiser’s continued evolution to meet changing needs while remaining a vehicle people can trust

Commenting on the Land Cruiser FJ’s arrival in the Kingdom, Ayman Shehadeh, Senior Manager for Toyota Marketing, said: “Ebrahim K. Kanoo is pleased to introduce the Land Cruiser FJ to customers in the Kingdom. With its distinctive design and practical versatility, it brings the capability and con-



fidence associated with the Land Cruiser name to a wider range of journeys and lifestyles.”

He added: “From everyday driving to weekend adventures, the FJ gives customers the freedom to enjoy it in their own way, which is exactly the spirit of our launch campaign, ‘As You Like!’ It is one FJ with many ways to enjoy it: its personalisation options allow customers to make it their own, while its Land Cruiser capability provides confidence wherever the journey leads.”

The Land Cruiser FJ will be offered in two grades in the Kingdom: Mid and High. This grade structure gives customers the ability to select a vehicle suited to their individual preferences and intended use while retaining the fundamental reliability, durability, and off-road performance shared across the range.

The five-seat cabin balances clear visibility and intuitive

controls with practical space for passengers and cargo. Its 6:4 split-folding rear seats can be adjusted to suit different passenger and loading needs, while the squared design and horizontal instrument panel reflect the vehicle’s functional character. Depending on grade and Bahrain specification, available features include a 12.3-inch display audio system, Toyota Safety Sense, Panoramic View Monitor and Blind Spot Monitor.

The launch of the all-new Land Cruiser FJ in the Kingdom expands one of Toyota’s most recognized vehicle families with a model that remains faithful to its heritage while creating new opportunities for enjoyment. Its more accessible size and agile character allow a broader range of drivers to experience the capability and reassurance associated with the Land Cruiser name.