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UNDER THE BONNET

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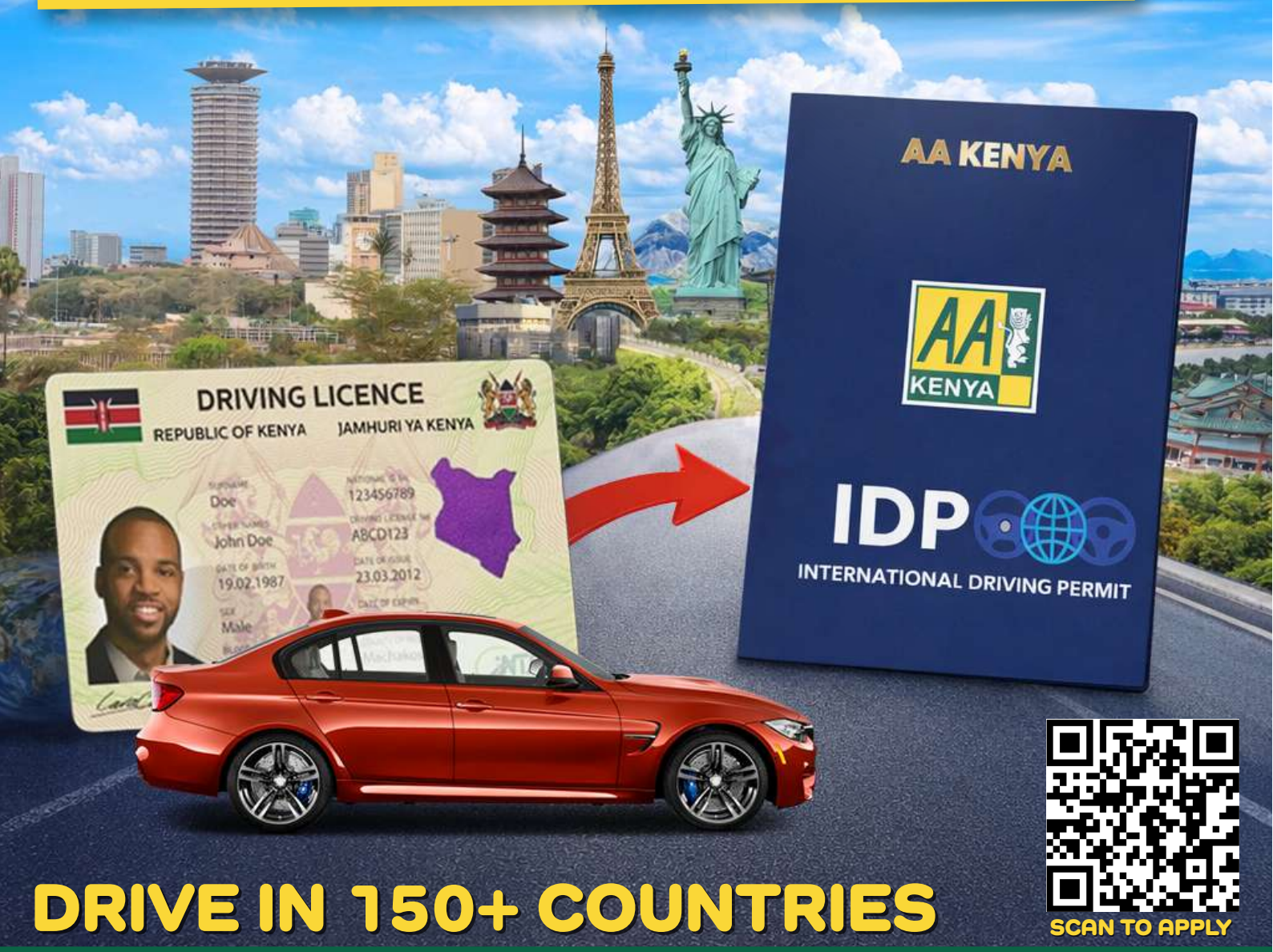
Toyota Corolla Cross Review

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MESSAGE FROM THE GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR



Welcome to the Third edition of Autonews Magazine for 2026.

The motoring and mobility industry is undergoing significant transformation. Across Kenya, we are witnessing changes in vehicle ownership patterns, the expansion of local vehicle assembly, the entry of new automotive brands, the advancement of electric mobility, and the increasing use of technology in vehicle management and traffic enforcement.

These developments are reshaping not only how we buy and use vehicles, but also how we think about affordability, safety, sustainability and the future of transportation.

In this changing environment, understanding what lies beneath the headlines has never been more important.

This quarter's edition of AutoNews, titled "Under the Bonnet," examines the forces shaping the motoring industry and, more importantly, what they mean for the Kenyan motorist. This edition seeks to provide practical insights that support informed decisions.

Making Informed Motoring Decisions

For a first-time vehicle owner, purchasing a vehicle is only the beginning of a much broader responsibility. The true cost of ownership extends beyond the purchase price and fuel to include maintenance, insurance, financing, compliance and the safety of everyone who shares our roads.

Similarly, the arrival of new vehicle brands, the growth of local assembly and the increasing visibility of electric vehicles present exciting opportunities. These however, call for informed choices based on individual needs, infrastructure, reliability and long-term value.

At AA Kenya, we believe that the future of motoring must be built on knowledge, preparedness and responsible mobility. Our role goes beyond helping people get on the road; it is about supporting them throughout their motoring journey.

Through solutions such as AA Automart, AA Vehicle Value Estimator, and AA Mobility & Telematics Solutions, we continue to respond to the evolving needs of vehicle buyer, owners and fleet operators.

Insider Eye

Within the pages you will discover:

- Road Safety initiatives such as the AA Kenya Best Driver Challenge

- A Call to our Road Safety Excellence Awards that celebrates individuals and organizations advancing road safety and encourage a collective commitment to reducing road crashes

- Our industry also draws its strength from its heritage. Events such as the Africa Concours d'Elegance, a story of craftsmanship, innovation, and the preservation of automotive history.

- Our partnership with industry stakeholders, including the Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA), reflects the importance of working together to strengthen the wider mobility ecosystem.

Looking Ahead

The future of motoring will be shaped by how effectively we respond to changing customer expectations, technological advancement, affordability and the need for safer, more sustainable mobility. These developments call for continuous learning, innovation and collaboration across the industry.

At AA Kenya, we remain committed to building on our legacy while embracing the opportunities ahead. We recognise that our responsibility is not simply to serve today's motorists, but also to anticipate tomorrow's needs and help shape a motoring environment that is safer, more efficient and better prepared for the future

As you explore this edition of AutoNews, I encourage you to look beyond the headlines and consider what these developments mean for your own motoring decisions, your business and the future of mobility in Kenya.

We remain your trusted motoring partner, connecting experience with innovation,, promoting safer roads and helping motorists navigate an increasingly complex mobility landscape with confidence.

The industry is changing, and so are the needs of the motorist. Our responsibility is to remain informed, relevant and ready to lead. Thank you for continuing to be part of our journey.

Happy Reading.

Francis Theuri,
Group Managing Director, AA Kenya.

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AA ROAD SAFETY EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Gala Dinner

Serena Hotel, Nairobi

Friday, 23rd Oct 2026

5:00 PM

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Per Person

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AND THE WINNER IS…



AA KENYA ROAD SAFETY EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2026

By Timothy Albrite`

For the **AA Kenya Road Safety Excellence Awards 2026,** the journey began with a call for submissions and hundreds of **companies, individuals and organisations** put forward their work.

From there, the entries moved into judging, bringing together a panel with experience from across Kenya's and International road safety landscape.

The process culminates in the awards gala on **23rd October 2026**, when the winners are finally revealed.

The call for submissions invited organisations and individuals to put their road safety work under the spotlight.

The responses came from across the motoring, transport and business landscape, with entries covering initiatives in areas such as driver training, fleet safety, insurance, logistics, technology, education, community programmes and corporate road safety.

Road safety is often associated with the driver behind the wheel or the traffic officer on the road.

In practice, decisions made long before a vehicle enters traffic can also influence what happens on the road; from how drivers are trained, how fleets are managed, how vehicles are maintained, how safety technology is deployed, how companies manage their employees on the road, how communities are educated etc.

The entries bring many of those stories into one awards programme.

Putting forward an entry is one thing. Making the case for it is another.

The judging panel draws expertise from institutions and sectors including the **Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA), Traffic Police, government and the private sector.**

It is a deliberately broad pool of experience for an issue that cuts across equally broad territory.

The judges assess submissions against the criteria established for each category, examining the initiatives presented and the evidence supporting them.

That means the process goes beyond asking whether an organisation has a road safety policy or has run a campaign.

The breadth of the 2026 awards reflects the many hands involved in road safety.

The programme recognises work across **22 categories**, including best corporate in road safety, road safety innovation, insurance, financial institutions, logistics, education, motor clubs, traffic police leadership, boda boda & matatu saccos, driver safety and wellness, community engagement, public sector institutions, counties, garages and workshops, and safe mobility for tours and travel.

A fleet operator may have approached the problem differently from a school.

An insurer may see risks from another angle. A workshop, technology company, county government or boda boda organisation may be tackling an entirely different part of the same problem.

The awards bring those different approaches into the same conversation. And that is what makes the judging stage particularly interesting. Behind every entry is an

organisation making its case for why its work deserves recognition.

Eventually, the paperwork gives way to the stage.

On 23 October, the AA Kenya Road Safety Excellence Awards gala brings together the organisations and individuals behind the entries, alongside judges, partners and guests.

For those in the room, the anticipation will come down to a few seconds to the annuouncing of the winners.

But the significance of the evening goes beyond the trophies.

The awards create a record of the road safety work being carried out across different parts of Kenya. They give organisations an opportunity to put their initiatives forward, have them examined and share the work with a wider audience.

Behind every name announced from the stage is the work, the evidence and the people who made the entry possible.















Inside the Big Shift Reshaping the Automotive Aftermarket

By Timothy Albrite



The automotive aftermarket industry is changing quietly but quickly. As vehicles become more electronic, connected and technically complex, the businesses that repair, maintain and supply them are facing a new set of demands.

For Kenya, where the aftermarket supports thousands of motorists, workshops, parts dealers, distributors and fleet operators, the change is becoming increasingly relevant.

From advanced diagnostics and vehicle electronics to batteries, tyres, workshop equipment and solutions for hybrid and electric vehicles, the aftermarket is expanding beyond the traditional business of mechanical repairs and replacement parts.

These changes will be visible at Automechanika Dubai, which returns from 10 to 12 November 2026 at Dubai Exhibition Centre, Expo City Dubai. The annual trade exhibition brings together manufacturers, distributors, workshop professionals and other automotive businesses across the global aftermarket, with product categories covering parts and components, tyres and wheels, batteries, electrics and electronics, diagnostics and repair, and digital solutions.

The vehicles entering the market are becoming more diverse. Alongside conventional petrol and diesel models, hybrids, electric vehicles and increasingly connected cars are creating new requirements for servicing and repair.

That means a workshop's traditional mechanical skills may no longer be enough. Technicians increasingly need access to modern diagnostic equipment and training to understand electronic systems, sensors, advanced driver assistance systems and, in the case of electrified vehicles, high-voltage systems.

The same shift is affecting the parts business. As more vehicle brands enter the market, distributors and parts dealers have to manage a wider range of components. Filters, brake parts, suspension components, batteries, tyres and electronic parts all have to be sourced and stocked for an increasingly varied vehicle population.

For businesses, this makes sourcing, product knowledge and inventory management more important than ever.

Automechanika Dubai's programme reflects this changing landscape, with areas dedicated to diagnostics, repair, electrics and electronics, batteries and technology, digital solutions and equipment for different vehicle technologies.

The event also has a specific African focus through AfriConnections, which connects African buyers with international suppliers and provides a platform for discussions around sourcing, trade and aftermarket development.

That is particularly relevant to Kenya's distributors and importers, who increasingly operate within international supply chains. The relationships built at major industry exhibitions can influence which products, technologies and equipment eventually become available in local markets.

But the shift is not simply about new technology. It is also about skills. A modern vehicle can only be maintained properly if the people working on it understand the systems inside it. As the vehicle population evolves, technician training will become an increasingly important part of the aftermarket's future.

For Kenyan workshops, distributors and fleet operators, this creates both a challenge and an opportunity. Businesses that understand changing vehicle technology, invest in appropriate equipment and keep their technical teams trained will be better positioned as the market evolves.



Automechanika Dubai offers one opportunity to see that transition at close range, meet international suppliers and assess products and technologies entering the aftermarket.

Planning to visit?

Automechanika Dubai 2026 takes place from 10–12 November 2026, from 10am to 6pm each day, at the Dubai Exhibition Centre (DEC), Expo City Dubai. The exhibition is aimed at trade professionals, including automotive businesses, workshops, distributors, manufacturers and fleet operators.

The venue is connected to the Dubai Metro through Expo 2020 Station, with taxis, buses and ride-hailing services also available. Visitors can also access more than 10,000 parking spaces at the venue.

For those travelling from Kenya, the official visitor planning information includes details on accommodation, travel, visas and getting to the venue.

If you work in Kenya's automotive aftermarket, this is an opportunity to see where the industry is heading, meet potential suppliers and explore technologies that could eventually find their way into the local market.

[Register to visit Automechanika Dubai](https://automechanika-dubai.ae.messefrankfurt.com/dubai/en/planning/visitors.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

The aftermarket is changing. The businesses that understand that shift early will be better placed for what comes next.







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Where Is Your Fleet's Fuel Going? The Technology Helping Businesses Stop the Losses

By Emily Muma

For businesses running fleets, fuel is one of the biggest expenses on the books. Yet the amount paid at the pump does not always tell the full story.

A vehicle can consume more fuel because it spends hours idling, takes longer routes, is driven aggressively or is used outside its authorised duties. Fuel can also be lost through theft or siphoning. These costs can be difficult to spot when fleet managers are relying mainly on fuel card records.

This is where better visibility of what happens on the road can make a difference.

AA Mobility & Telematics Solutions combines fuel monitoring with vehicle telematics to help businesses see how fuel is being used across their fleets. The aim is simple: give fleet managers the information they need to identify waste, improve accountability and keep operating costs under control.

A fuel card only tells part of the story

Fuel cards are useful for keeping track of transactions. They show how much fuel was purchased, where it was bought and who made the purchase.

What they do not show is what happens after the transaction.

A manager may know that a vehicle was fuelled, but not necessarily whether the fuel went into the right vehicle, whether some was later siphoned, how much was lost through idling or whether the vehicle followed its approved route.

For a business operating a large fleet, those gaps can become costly.

Following the fuel

AA Mobility & Telematics Solutions uses ultrasonic fuel sensors to monitor changes in fuel levels. Sudden increases or drops can be flagged and assessed alongside other vehicle information.

The system can also bring together fuel purchase records and telematics data, including vehicle movement, GPS location and odometer information. This gives fleet managers a clearer picture of fuel consumption and makes it easier to spot activity that may require investigation.

Instead of looking at a fuel transaction on its own, managers can look at it in the context of what the vehicle was actually doing.

Small inefficiencies add up

Not every fuel loss is the result of theft.

A driver who leaves an engine running while parked is still using fuel. Taking an unnecessarily long route adds kilometres. Aggressive acceleration and other inefficient driving habits can also push consumption higher.

These behaviours may seem minor when viewed one







vehicle at a time. Across a commercial fleet, however, they can have a noticeable effect on the fuel bill. The presentation notes that inefficient driving, unnecessary idling and poor routing can contribute to significant fuel losses.

Having access to vehicle data allows managers to see these patterns and address them with drivers.

Making drivers part of the solution

Fuel efficiency is closely linked to driving behaviour.

With real-time dashboards and driver performance information, fleet managers can identify behaviours such as unnecessary idling and aggressive acceleration. They can then use that information to have more focused conversations with drivers and encourage more efficient driving.

This also changes how fleet performance is managed. Rather than waiting for fuel costs to appear in a monthly report, managers can monitor what is happening while vehicles are on the road.

Better information, better decisions

For companies that depend on vehicles to move people, goods or services, fuel management is about more than watching prices at the pump.

It is about understanding what happens between one fuel purchase and the next.

By bringing fuel data and vehicle information together, AA Mobility & Telematics Solutions gives businesses greater visibility of fuel consumption, vehicle activity and driver behaviour. That can help identify waste, improve accountability and make better use of fleet resources.

For fleet managers, the question is no longer simply how much fuel was bought. It is whether every litre was used as it should be.

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The Brand New Car Buyer is Back!

What is behind the rise in new-vehicle sales and what it says about the Kenyan market

By Timothy Albrite

For a market that spent several years watching buyers delay vehicle purchases, Kenya's new-vehicle market has given dealers something to smile about.

Between January and July 2026, dealers sold 9,757 new vehicles, according to Kenya Motor Industry Association (KMIA) data.

That is up from the same period last year, following a 25.5 per cent increase in full-year sales in 2025. The first half of 2026 had already recorded 7,466 units, 19.4 per cent more than the 6,254 sold in the first six months of 2025.

But there is an important detail behind those numbers. The return of the new-car buyer is not simply a story about more Kenyans walking into showrooms to buy personal cars.

Much of the growth is coming from businesses, transport operators, contractors and other users replacing or expanding their working fleets.

That distinction tells us quite a lot about where Kenya's vehicle market stands in 2026.

Credit is becoming easier

One of the biggest pieces of the story is financing. The Central Bank of Kenya cut its Central Bank Rate several times between late 2024 and early 2026, taking it from 13 per cent in June 2024 to 8.75 per cent in February 2026. It has held the rate at 8.75 per cent since then. Commercial bank lending rates stood at an average 14.39 per cent in July 2026.

For someone considering a vehicle purchase through asset finance, the cost of borrowing matters almost as much as the price on the windscreen.

Lower interest rates do not suddenly make a new vehicle cheap. They can, however, make the monthly repayment easier to manage and bring some purchases that had been postponed back into consideration.

Banks are also continuing to offer structured asset-financing products for commercial vehicles, with financing periods extending over several years.

For businesses, this can make the difference between keeping an ageing vehicle on the road and replacing it with a newer, more reliable unit.

The biggest buyer is often a business

The sales figures also challenge the traditional picture of the Kenyan new-car market.

Isuzu East Africa sold 4,724 vehicles in the first seven

months of 2026, accounting for almost half of industry sales. Toyota followed with 1,977 units, while Sinotruk recorded 995.

These numbers reflect the importance of commercial vehicles to Kenya's new-vehicle market. Pick-ups, trucks, buses and other working vehicles are bought because they generate income, move goods, transport people or support business operations.

When companies have enough confidence to replace vehicles or expand their fleets, the effect can be felt quickly in showroom sales.

That is partly what happened in the first half of the year. Industry reporting linked the stronger sales to increased construction activity, business investment, cheaper credit and a more stable shilling.

So, while the phrase "new-car buyer" may bring to mind a family choosing its next SUV, the current recovery is also being powered by the Kenyan economy's working vehicles.

New does not mean passenger cars are leading

There is another reason to look carefully at the numbers.

Kenya's official registration data shows that the wider vehicle market grew in 2025, but the increase was not evenly spread across vehicle types.

Total newly registered motor vehicles rose from 140,703 in 2024 to 142,994 in 2025. Lorries and trucks increased by 21.8 per cent, panel vans and pick-ups by 7 per cent, while saloon-car registrations fell by 22.5 per cent.

That tells us something important about today's buyer. The market is not simply moving from used vehicles to new passenger cars. Buyers are making decisions around purpose, cost and the ability of a vehicle to earn its keep.

For a business owner, a new truck that spends most of its life carrying cargo is an investment in operations. For a family, a new SUV or saloon is a much more personal financial decision.

The two buyers respond differently to interest rates, fuel prices, income expectations and economic confidence.

Why buy new?

For years, Kenya's vehicle market has been dominated by imported used vehicles. The attraction is obvious: a used import can put a vehicle within reach at a considerably lower purchase price than a comparable new model.

But the calculation changes when downtime, maintenance, warranty coverage, financing and predictable running costs enter the picture.

A business operating several vehicles cannot look only at the purchase price. A vehicle that spends too much time off the road can cost the business revenue.

This is one reason new vehicles continue to have a strong place in the commercial market. Buyers can also benefit from manufacturer warranties, dealer support and access to parts and servicing networks.

For private buyers, the calculation is different but increasingly similar. The question is not only "How much can I afford to spend?" but also "What will this vehicle cost me over the years I intend to own it?"

That is a more mature way of looking at vehicle ownership.

The market is recovering, but buyers remain careful

The latest figures should not be mistaken for a return to the kind of market where buyers purchase simply because financing is available.

July provided a useful reminder. New-vehicle sales fell 12.3 per cent month-on-month to 1,677 units, from 1,912 in June.

The underlying market therefore remains sensitive to affordability and business conditions.

Fuel prices, household costs, exchange rates, interest rates and confidence in future income still influence whether a buyer commits to a vehicle.

And for many Kenyans, the used-car market remains the more accessible route into vehicle ownership.

The new-vehicle recovery is therefore better understood as a sign of selective confidence rather than a wholesale shift in buying habits.

What this means for Kenya's car market

The return of new-vehicle sales says something broader about the Kenyan market.

Buyers are still price-conscious. They are still looking for value. But where financing becomes more manageable and the vehicle has a clear economic purpose, some postponed purchases are coming back.

It also points to a market becoming more segmented.

There is the business buying a truck to expand operations. The fleet manager replacing ageing vehicles. The contractor adding a pick-up. The family looking for a new SUV. The buyer comparing a new Chinese model with an established Japanese brand.

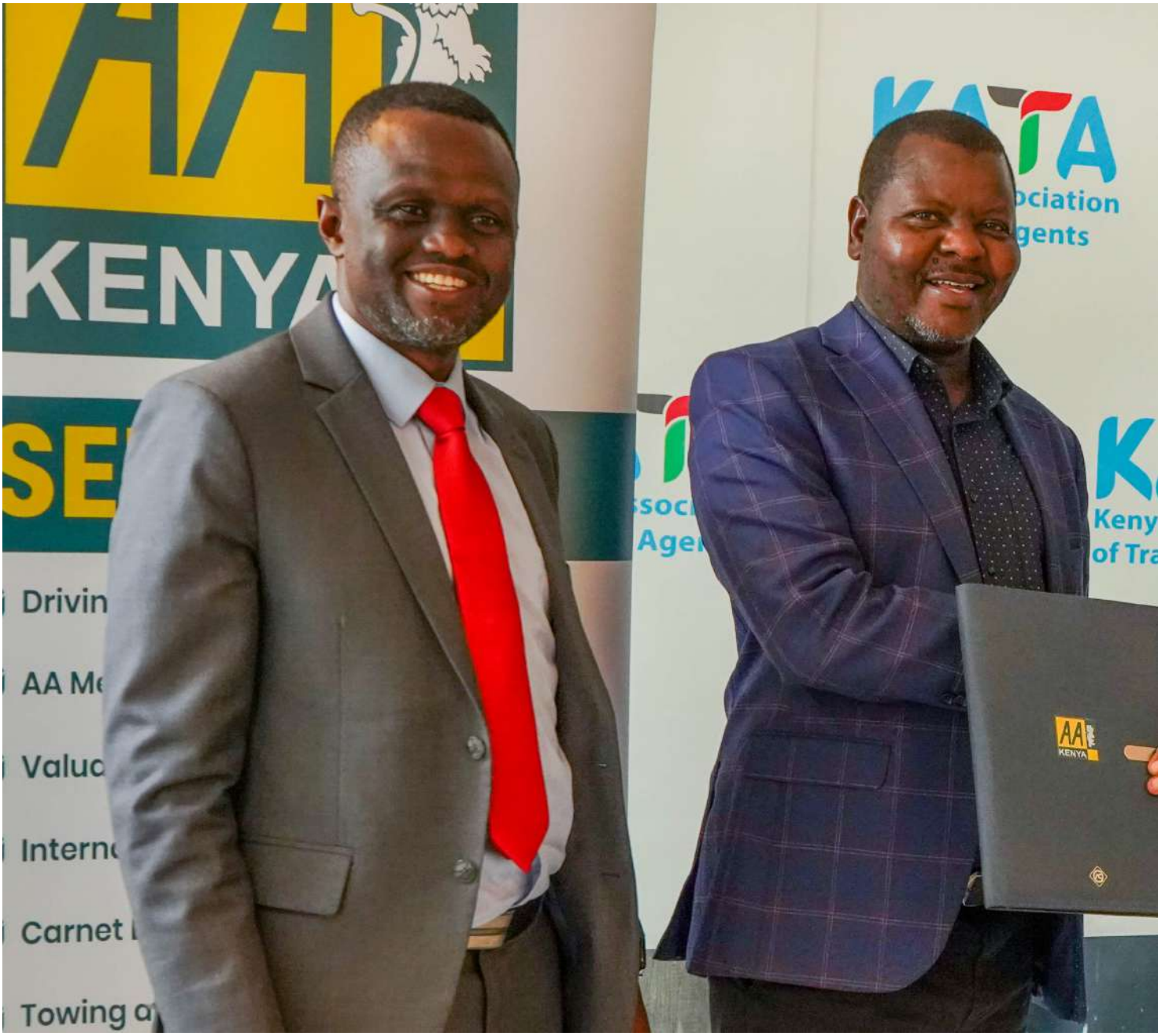
And the motorist who still finds a used import makes more financial sense.

All of these buyers are shaping Kenya's automotive market at the same time.

For motorists, the lesson is simple: a rising sales number does not automatically mean that buying new is the right decision for everyone. It means the conditions that support a new-vehicle purchase have improved for some buyers.

And that may be the most interesting part of the recovery.

The new-car buyer is back, but they are coming back with a calculator.



AA Kenya and KATA Partner to Give Travellers Driving Freedom Abroad and Airport Lounge Access

By Timothy Albrite

Kenyans travelling abroad will now be able to access International Driving Permits (IDPs) and Flight Delay Assistance (FDA) through KATA member travel agencies under a new partnership between AA Kenya and the Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA).

Under the agreement, KATA member agencies will offer their clients AA Kenya's International Driving Permit and Flight Delay Assistance services as they plan and book their trips.

AA Kenya is the only organisation authorised to issue International Driving Permits in Kenya. The permit allows Kenyan motorists to drive legally in more than 150 countries when accompanied by a valid Kenyan driving licence.

For Kenyans planning to drive while abroad, the IDP is an important travel document required when renting or driving legally. It is useful for holidaymakers as well as those travelling for work or business.

Travellers will also be able to access Flight Delay Assistance through participating KATA travel agencies. The



service gives eligible travellers access to airport lounges around the world when their flights are delayed, allowing them to relax, freshen up and enjoy refreshments or meals while they wait.

The service offers travellers a more comfortable alternative to spending hours in a busy airport terminal, helping to reduce some of the stress and inconvenience that can come with unexpected flight delays.

The partnership is also expected to increase awareness of the International Driving Permit and Flight Delay Assistance among Kenyans travelling abroad, while giving travellers an opportunity to learn about and access the services as they make their travel arrangements.

Speaking about the partnership, AA Kenya Group Managing Director, Francis Theuri said: "This partnership reflects our commitment to making travel easier, safer and more rewarding for Kenyans. By working closely with KATA and its extensive network of travel professionals, we are bringing essential travel solutions closer to customers while empowering travel agents with additional services to offer their clients."

Among those who attended the MOU signing were AA Kenya Group Managing Director, Francis Theuri, Director of Mobility Services, Timothy Keli, and Head of Destinations, Virginia Githui. KATA was represented by Vice Chairman Hamisi Hassan, Chief Executive Officer Nicanor Sabula and other members of the association's secretariat.

Through the partnership, travellers can now easily access up-to-date information about the International Driving Permit and Flight Delay Assistance from their travel agents. This enables them to incorporate these essential services into their journeys, making their travel experience smoother and more seamless from the outset.

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How Hiview International is building its place in Kenya's Automotive Industry

By Timothy Albrite



Pull into any parking lot or take a quick glance at the rubber meeting the tarmac, and it reveals a quiet shift in progress. Among the vehicles, one brand name is appearing with increasing frequency: Roadcruza.

Behind that growing visibility is Hiview International, a Kenyan automotive company building its business around tyres while steadily expanding its position in the wider automotive aftermarket.

The company's portfolio spans passenger cars, SUVs, four-wheel drives, trucks and buses. For passenger vehicles, Hiview distributes Roadcruza alongside Ultraforce, Wanda and Compass, while its commercial range includes Titan, Habilit, Good Tire, Inbal and Folder.

Speaking at Railways Golf Club, where Hiview hosted a golf tournament, Head of Business & Operations Dickson Kingi described automotive tyres as the company's key business.

The strategy, however, is broader than simply putting more tyre brands into the market. Hiview is betting on availability, product choice and customer support to build relationships that continue after a tyre is fitted.

Why Roadcruza is gaining ground

For Marketing Manager Candy Wangui, Roadcruza's growing visibility has been built around a combination of product appeal and availability.

"I think Roadcruza has been one journey that we didn't really expect in the beginning," Wangui said. "The tyre is good. It has been good in terms of longevity of use. It gives top notch quality."

She also pointed to the brand's appearance and tread design, particularly across passenger cars, SUVs and four-wheel drives.

"It still looks good and it's functional," she said. But a tyre can only gain ground if motorists can actually find it.

Hiview has worked to make Roadcruza available across the country, including beyond the major urban centres.

"They'll find it wherever they are. So all over the country, we are there," Wangui said. That availability matters in a market where motorists regularly travel long distances and may need replacement tyres away from Nairobi.

A wider tyre proposition

For motorists, tyre choice does not start and end with the brand name. Size, load rating, tread pattern and intended use all matter.

A car driven mainly around Nairobi has different demands from an SUV regularly travelling rougher roads, while trucks and buses operate under another set of pressures.

Hiview's portfolio gives it access to these different segments, from individual motorists replacing worn tyres to businesses whose vehicles are working every day.

For fleet operators, tyres are closely tied to operating costs, downtime and vehicle utilisation. Availability and suitability therefore become as important as price.

Hiview is also seeking to stay involved after the sale through its automotive service business.

Its Topking Service Centre along Kiambu Road offers services including oil changes, engine diagnostics, wheel alignment, balancing, suspension checks and tyre fitting. The facility also provides a customer lounge and other conveniences aimed at making vehicle maintenance easier.

For Managing Director Francis Kamau, that customer experience is central to the company's approach.

"We want to make sure that whenever you come here, you leave as a delighted customer," Kamau said at the launch of the service centre. "We're committed to meeting and exceeding your expectations."

That is an important shift for a company whose core business remains tyres. The customer relationship does not have to end when the tyre leaves the shop.

Hiview's growing presence is ultimately about converting visibility into repeat business.

Wangui said motorists who have encountered the brand through Hiview's customer engagements are increasingly familiar with Roadcruza.

"When they see it's Roadcruza, there's that remembrance of, 'Oh, you're back here. Thank you for coming again,'" she said.

That familiarity matters in a tyre market where motorists have numerous choices but may have limited information about what they are buying.

Hiview now has several parts of the aftermarket working together: a broad tyre portfolio, countrywide availability, passenger and commercial products and a growing service offering.

The challenge is turning those pieces into a proposition that keeps customers coming back.

For motorists, the questions remain straightforward: Is the right tyre available? Does it suit the vehicle and its use? Is the price competitive? And where can the customer get support afterwards?

For Hiview, the answer could determine how far it can move beyond being a tyre supplier and establish itself as a more recognisable player in Kenya's automotive aftermarket.

Because in the tyre business, being seen on the road is one thing. Getting motorists to come back is another.



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The Chinese Car Wave: Would You Buy One?

By Duncan Mwangi



Walk into a new-car dealership in Kenya today and you may notice something has changed. The familiar Japanese/German/Korean badges are still there, but they are no longer alone.

BYD, Changan, Skyworth, NETA, Haval, Jetour, JAC, Jetour, GWM, MG and other Chinese brands are increasingly finding space on Kenyan roads.

Their appeal is easy to understand: modern designs, generous equipment, competitive prices and, increasingly, hybrid and electric powertrains.

For years, many Kenyan motorists hardly needed to think twice when buying a new car. Toyota, Nissan, Mazda, Subaru and Honda were familiar choices, backed by established dealer networks, mechanics who knew them and a strong second-hand market.

Chinese manufacturers are challenging that comfort zone. And they are doing it with cars that can be difficult to ignore. A Chinese SUV may arrive with a large digital display, a 360-degree camera, advanced driver-assistance systems, a panoramic roof and a long list of comfort features sometimes at a price that would have seemed ambitious from an established brand not long ago.

But features alone do not make a good car.

The bigger question for a Kenyan buyer is what happens after the excitement of the showroom wears off.

Can I get the parts?

Who will service it?

What happens when the warranty expires?

And what will it be worth when I want to sell it?

These questions matter because buying a car in Kenya is rarely just about the purchase price. A vehicle can look like a bargain at the showroom and become expensive if parts are difficult to source, repairs take weeks or specialist technicians are unavailable.

This is where Chinese brands still have something to prove.

It would be unfair, however, to treat "Chinese cars" as one category.

China has become a major force in global vehicle manufacturing, with manufacturers investing heavily in research, software, batteries, electric drivetrains, safety and design.

Some brands have developed substantial international operations and increasingly sophisticated products. Others have a much shorter history and a smaller footprint.

That distinction matters.

The same caution applies to reliability. There is growing evidence that modern Chinese vehicles can compete seriously on engineering and equipment, but Kenya does not yet have decades of experience with many of these newer models. Whether a particular vehicle will still be trouble-free after eight or ten years on Kenyan roads is a question that only time can properly answer.

The after-sales network may therefore be more important than the badge.

A strong local distributor, trained technicians, genuine parts, diagnostic equipment and a clear warranty can make the difference between a sensible purchase and an expensive headache.

Resale is another unknown. Japanese brands have spent decades building consumer confidence in Kenya, and that confidence supports their second-hand values. Newer Chinese brands have yet to establish the

same track record. The first owner, in many cases, is helping create the used-car market that future buyers will judge.

Electric and hybrid models add another dimension.

Chinese manufacturers have become particularly strong in these technologies, offering Kenyan motorists alternatives to conventional petrol and diesel vehicles. For urban driving, lower running costs and, in the case of **The Chinese Car Wave: Would You Buy One?**

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Electric and hybrid models add another dimension. Chinese manufacturers have become particularly strong in these technologies, offering Kenyan motorists alternatives to conventional petrol and diesel vehicles. For urban driving, lower running costs and, in the case of EVs, access to Kenya's increasingly relevant charging network can be attractive. But battery support, charging availability and long-term replacement costs still need consideration.

So, would I buy one?

Possibly.

But not simply because it has more screens, cameras or features for the money.

I would want to know who stands behind the car, where it will be serviced, how easily parts can be obtained and whether the manufacturer and distributor are likely to be around years from now.

The Chinese car has already arrived in Kenya. The question is no longer whether it belongs here.

The question is **which brands will earn our trust.**

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The Toyota Corolla Cross

By Timothy Albrite

For starters, the Corolla Cross is a crossover model for the Corolla series from the traditional sedan to a new compact SUV. With the Corolla more popular as a sedan, the Corolla Cross brings out some key elements of an SUV, that being, strength and functionality.

The more important highlight, nonetheless, is that the Corolla Cross has been built based on Toyota New Global Architecture (TNGA) platform. It uses a new torsion-beam suspension design that has been developed to offer a "stable, cushioned ride", enabling the Corolla Cross to achieve high-quality performance, a comfortable ride, and outstanding quietness.

The SUV market is driven by a burgeoning middle- class population whose customer preference is for a more versatile model encompassing comfort, QDR (quality durability and reliability), technology, ground clearance and stylish design. The Corolla Cross is therefore designed for discerning consumers who are looking for the SUV comfort, latest technology at an affordable price point.







Interior and Cargo

Across the two models, these are the specifications you'll find; Apple Car Play, Android Auto, front and rear cup holders, automatic air conditioning, height and reach adjustable driver seat, leather gear shift and brake lever, keyless entry, six loudspeakers, front and rear power windows, sun visor, 8" touchscreen multicoloured LCD, cruise control, hill start assist control and leather upholstery.

The interior offers up to five seats inside and promises a more significant headroom for the rear passengers.

At 4460mm long, 1825mm wide, and 1620mm tall, the Corolla Cross has a 103.9-inch wheelbase and a 487-litre boot. The 1.8l Executive CVT additionally comes with a panoramic sunroof, LED daytime running lights, rain sensor, and roof rails.

Engine, Transmission, and Performance

The Corolla Cross comes in a 1.8l engine with a CVT transmission with two versions; 1.8l Limited CVT and 1.8l Executive CVT.

Cost and available financing options

The pricing of the Corolla Cross by CFAO Mobility starts from Ksh 6,840,000.

CFAO Mobility has partnered with major financial institutions in Kenya that offer various financing options, enabling customers acquire the Corolla Cross in affordable instalments. Some of the institutions include Absa, NCBA Bank, Gulf African Bank, Co-operative Bank, Stanbic Bank, KCB Bank, Equity Bank, and Family Bank.

Color versions available

The Corolla Cross is available in seven colours; red mica metallic, attitude black mica, celestite gray metallic, platinum white pearl, blue metallic, graphite metallic, and metal stream metallic.







Availability of spare parts and warranty

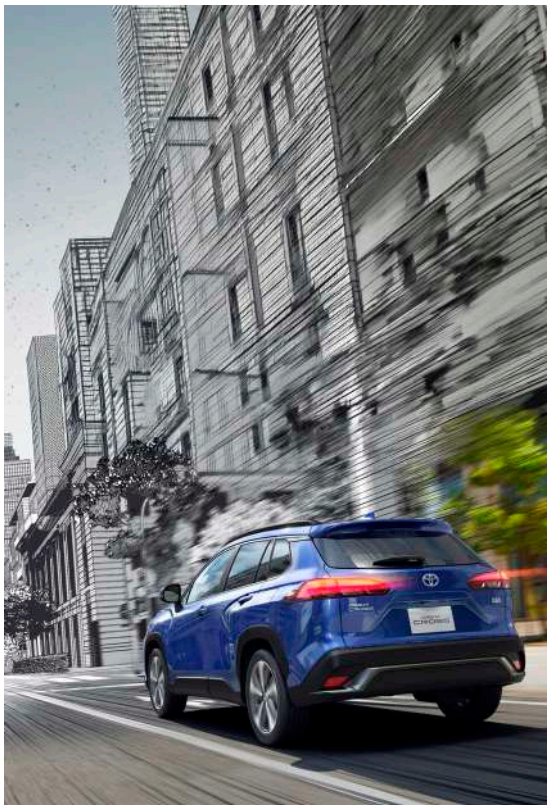
CFAO Mobility has over the years been making huge investments in ensuring that spare parts of all the vehicles under our portfolio are readily available. This is the same for the Corolla Cross customers. CFAO has parts at the Service centres across the country, and therefore the issue on parts should not be an issue for our Corolla Cross customers.

CFAO encourages vehicle owners to always go for genuine parts, which save on downtime occasioned by multiple breakdowns as a result of faulty counterfeit parts and subsequently greatly enhances the safe use of the vehicles. The fact that Toyota genuine parts are also covered by a warranty also means that the vehicle has extensive protection against repair costs.

Corolla Cross customers enjoy a 3 year/100,000 km manufacturer warranty.

Fuel economy

Corolla cross will comfortably give you 16-18kms per liter but this is also dependent on driving style. However, it guarantees 16kms per liter.







Where to view and test drive the Toyota Cross in Kenya

Enquiries on the Corolla Cross and booking of test drives can be made at any of our 31 outlets on the Toyota Kenya network countrywide. Additionally, customers can visit our website www.toyotakenya.ke for additional information on the Corolla Cross or make their test drive bookings online.

Reasons why you should consider a new SUV over used imported versions vehicles

With the modern advances in technology, new cars have become significantly beneficial and worth the value of your money. Often, the very first thing a shopper would consider in a new car is fuel economy. Regardless of the price fluctuations of fuel, it remains a fundamental factor to prioritize. Luckily, most new cars sold today have an impressive fuel economy. A car's mileage is highly important in terms of cost- saving. It has a direct bearing on maintenance and servicing expenses as well as its resale value. A vehicle with zero mileage doesn't require any maintenance upfront. The cost of servicing is incredibly low and the vehicle's resale value will be higher. Apart from cost- saving, new vehicles are much safer today than a decade ago. The latest models come with a ton of safety features including antilock braking mechanisms, driver and passenger airbags, parking sensors, traction and stability control, brake assist, among others. In terms of durability, there is no doubt that a new car will last longer than a used one. And with the accompanying warranties, the readily available genuine parts, and dealerships in major towns, maintenance costs are incredibly reduced.

All new vehicles are prepared for off road driving which caters for ground clearance and extreme hot or cold weather conditions.

If you consider SUV comfort and convenience, then the Corolla Cross is the vehicle you need.

Kenya's Best Young Drivers Have Yet Another African Title to Chase

By Daniel Kiprono

From four regional qualifiers to a national final in Nairobi, the 2026 AA Kenya Best Driver Challenge has grown into one of the country's most visible driving competitions. Now, two young Kenyan drivers are heading to Tanzania to compete for the African title.

Kenya already knows what it takes to win the African Best Young Driver title. Now, two more young drivers have the chance to bring it home again.

The 2026 AA Kenya Best Driver Challenge has drawn drivers from across the country, with regional qualifiers

held in Eldoret, Mombasa, Nakuru and Nairobi. The strongest performers from each region then met in Nairobi on 19 September for the national final.

By the end of the day, the top three drivers in each category had earned their place on the national podium.

But for two drivers in the Best Young Driver category, the competition is not over.

They will now represent Kenya at the African Best Young Driver Contest in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from 13 to 15 November.

That gives this year's competition an added edge. Kenya is sending young drivers to defend a title won on home soil at the inaugural African contest last year.

From Kenya to Africa

The Best Young Driver competition has been running in Kenya since 2023, giving young motorists an opportunity to test their driving skills in a structured competition.

The format goes beyond simply getting behind the wheel.

Competitors are tested on areas such as road rules, hazard awareness, vehicle control and their ability to respond correctly in difficult situations. The aim is to identify drivers who can combine technical driving skills with good judgement and responsible road behaviour.

The competition has also moved beyond a single young-driver contest.

In 2025, AA Kenya expanded the national challenge to include Best Young Driver, The Masters and Lady Drivers. The 2026 edition continued that approach, taking the competition to different regions before bringing the finalists together in Nairobi.

The regional format gives more drivers an opportunity to compete while creating a clear route from local qualification to the national stage.

For the best young drivers, there is now another step: Africa.

The African Best Young Driver Contest was introduced by FIA Region I in 2025, bringing together young drivers from different African countries.













The inaugural edition was held in Naivasha, Kenya, and produced a Kenyan winner.

Victor Maina Kabura of AA Kenya won the inaugural African title, while fellow Kenyan Chris Waweru Kung'u finished third. Competitors faced practical driving exercises designed to test vehicle control, decision-making and safe driving skills.

Now, Kenya returns to the continental contest with two new representatives.

What happens in Tanzania?

The 2026 African Best Young Driver Contest will be held in Dar es Salaam from 13 to 15 November, hosted by AA Tanzania.

The competition is aimed at drivers aged 18 to 26 and combines practical driving with knowledge-based tests. According to FIA Region I, competitors will face assessments covering areas including first aid, traffic rules, road safety and vehicle handling.

Being a good driver is not simply about knowing how to handle a car. It is also about recognising danger, understanding the rules, making good decisions and knowing how to react when something unexpected happens.

The Best Driver Challenge also fits into AA Kenya's wider road-safety work. Through the AA driving school, driver assessment and other road-safety programmes, AA Kenya focuses on improving driver skills and encouraging safer behaviour on the road.

The competition puts those ideas into practice. Drivers get to test themselves against others, while young motorists have a pathway that can take them from a regional competition in Kenya to a continental championship.

But the biggest test is still ahead. Last year, Kenya hosted the first African contest and kept the title at home. This time, two new young drivers will have to earn the right to bring it back.

Veronica Duder's 1930 Essex Super Six Wins 54th Concours d'elegance at Ngong Racecourse

By Samson Ateka



Veronica Duder's 1930 Essex Super Six emerged the winner at Ngong Racecourse as the 2026 Africa Concours d'Elegance crowned its overall champions.

Veronica tied for first with Mike Duder's 1930 Ford Tudor, both scoring 278 points, but the former claimed the overall top position by virtue of being older marque of the two on the log book.

The matching 1930 American classics dominated the judging for underside, finish and originality. Kevit Desai's 1968 Jaguar 420 was third on 270, followed by Umang Patel's elegant 1966 Mercedes Benz 230 SL on 267 and Baldev Chager's 1986 Nissan Silvia 200SX on 265

In motorcycles, Rick Agagliate's 1941 Indian Scout 741 won with 176 points, just one point ahead of Dominique Antoine's incredible 101-year-old 1925 Triumph 550SD on 175 points. The win confirms the Indian's perfect restoration and roadworthiness.

The results celebrated machines spanning a century, from 1925 to 1986, proving true craftsmanship is timeless.

The fabled event, in its 54th edition, returned to the Ngong Racecourse on Sunday with a colorful mix of rare utility workhorses and beloved touring classics battling for top honours.

In Class 1 for utility vehicles made after 1980, Cloth My Ride (EAT) took first place with a well-presented 1999 Land Rover Defender scoring 189 points, edging out James Nguo's 1996 Mercedes Benz 290GD on 181 points. Kelvin Leiyan's 1992 Toyota Land Cruiser was third on 163 points, while Joshua Bily's 1991 Peugeot 504 Pick Up finished fourth on 144.

The battle was even tighter in Class 2 for utilities made between 1971 and 1980. Chirag Soni's iconic 1972 Toyota Land Cruiser FJ55 claimed victory with 200 points, just two points ahead of Don Owino's 1979 Range Rover Classic on 198 points.

Class 3 for utilities made up to 1970 showcased some of the oldest workhorses in the country. Martin Sharrif Butt's 1957 Chevrolet 3100 took top honours ahead of Reid Arensen's 1959 Land Rover Series II. Benson Muli's 1970 Volkswagen Kombi Westfalia was third, followed by Bernd Trompell's 1968 Land Rover Series IIA. The class also featured Kofi Okudzeto's pair of entries - a 1965 Land Rover Series IIA and a 1966 Willys Jeep - and Tumaini Muthiga's 1969 Peugeot 404 Pick Up.

In the touring car categories, Volkswagen Beetles proved unbeatable.

In Class 5 for 1,001cc to 1,500cc touring cars, Elizabeth & Dereck Dames won with their 1968 Volkswagen Beetle scoring 228 points, Jane Chemngorem's elegant 1960 Volkswagen Karmann Ghia was second on 222 points, just ahead of Capt Mugo Keiyoro's 1972 Volkswagen Beetle on 221 points. Imran Khan's rare 1956 Volkswagen Beetle Deluxe was fourth on 210 points.

Class 6 for 1,501cc to 1,700cc touring cars went to Paul Chemngorem's 1975 Toyota Celica with 222 points, narrowly beating Avraj Singh's sporty 1980 Alfa Romeo Sud Sprint on 220 points. Kelvin Leiyan's 1979 Mitsubishi Gallant was third on 195 points.

The Concours continues to celebrate Kenya's rich motoring heritage, with machines ranging from a 101-year-old motorcycle to 1990s modern classics, all judged on originality, restoration and roadworthiness.

Among the star attractions in.the bike category were the Pearl Bikes Africa team coming all the way from

Uganda to Grace the event.

Robert Gow, chief judge of Motorcycle category said: "This year we've 35 entries,

a couple of no shows but this is just what happens.We've got a good entry of different variety of motorcycles. We have a 101

year old Triumph 550SD bike belonging

to Dominique Antoine."

Safari Rally winner Baldev Chager evoked nostalgic memories at this year's Africa Concours d'Elegance after entering a meticulously restored 1986 Nissan Silvia 200SX - an ex-works factory car once driven by rally legend Jayant Shah.

The rare car competed in Class 13 for open sports cars made after 1970, and was one of the star attractions at the Ngong Racecourse event.

Chager, who has owned the car for 18 years, says the project has been an 11-year labour of love.

"This is actually a beautiful restoration project. I have had this car for 18 years and began the restoration 11 years ago. It's an ex-works Nissan factory car driven by Jayant Shah in a number of Safari Rallies, a number of national events in Kenya and Tanzania," Chager said.

He explained that the restoration was intentionally focused on preserving its historic identity.

"But when we started to restore it, we wanted to give it a perfect nostalgic look and I think we've managed to do that with the 1990 colour that Jayant ran in."

The entry is particularly symbolic at Ngong Racecourse, which hosted the WRC Safari Rally spectator stage in 1990 - the same ground where the Silvia competed.

This year's event also saw SportPesa showcase the replica of Racing Point Formula 1 car they sponosred in 2019.

The Racing Point car made its racing debut at the 2019 Australian Grand Prix. The team rebranded to Aston Martin for the 2021 Formula One season.

MOTORCYCLES - Top 5 Overall

1. No.34 Rick Agagliate - Indian Scout 741 - 1941 - 176 pts

2. No.35 Dominique Antoine - 1925 Triumph 550SD - 1925 - 175 pts

3. No.32 Andre Antoine - BSA - 1959 - 164 pts

4. No.31 Rick Agagliate - Yamaha Trial - 1976 - 162 pts

5. No.8 Douglas Kiereini - Honda CB750F - 1980 - 153 pts (tied with No.15 Prateek Singh Gulati - Yamaha Roadstar - 2001)

CARS - Top 5 Overall

1. No.77 Veronica Duder - Essex Super Six - 1930 - 278 pts

2. No.76 Mike Duder - Ford Tudor - 1930 - 278 pts

3. No.64 Kevit Desai - Jaguar 420 - 1968 - 270 pts

4. No.73 Umang Patel - Mercedes Benz 230 SL - 1966 - 267 pts

5. No.65 Baldev Chager - Nissan Silvia 200SX - 1986 - 265 pts



Concours d'elegance Pictorial:
































KDC 752J


15






KDA 007K
KHZ 100
KOB 751


62
KSJ 097




76
77
B 9850

Baldev Chager Rolls Back the Years With Rare 1986 Safari Nissan Silvia at Concours D'elegance

By Samson Ateka



Safari Rally winner Baldev Chager evoked nostalgic memories at this year's Africa Concours d'Elegance after entering a meticulously restored 1986 Nissan Silvia 200SX - an ex-works factory car once driven by rally legend Jayant Shah.

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"This car ran in the very grounds we are standing today on Ngong Racecourse, which hosted the WRC Safari Rally spectator stage in 1990, stepping on the same ground in 2026. So it's a very historic moment for the car, historic for me," he said.

"It has been a labour of passion, a lot of hardwork, research to get it to this standard. I'm very proud. It's one of the rarest Nissan works Safari cars that you'll find in the world."

The 1986 Silvia 200SX is one of the few surviving Nissan works rally cars built for African endurance events, making Chager's example one of the rarest Safari rally cars in existence.


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Coming Home for Good: Iconic 2019 Sportpesa Racing Point F1 Replica Set for Countrywide Tour

By Samson Ateka



It was a homecoming like no other — and it's here to stay!

On Sunday, September 27, 2026, Formula One heritage came to Ngong Racecourse as SportPesa unveiled its iconic 2019 Racing Point F1 replica at the 54th Africa Concours d'Elegance, announcing that the car will now embark on a countrywide tour.

Under the theme "Coming Home for Good," SportPesa announced that the replica will go on tour to malls and public spaces across the country to bring the magic of Formula One closer to every fan.

"This is a huge moment for every Formula One fan in the country as we bring the car home for the first time. The replica car is here for good. For every Kenyan who has dreamed of the chance to stand next to a Formula One car, this is for you," said SportPesa's Head of Operations Bernard Chauro.

"We want to make it accessible by taking it to public places and malls across the country, giving everyone the chance – so this is just the beginning," Chauro added.

Thousands of fans got the first taste of that promise on Sunday at the Concours, savouring photo moments with the iconic pink, blue and white livery at the SportPesa stand in the corporate village, the first time an F1 replica car has been showcased in the 54-year history of the Concours.

A Piece of Kenyan Sporting History

The replica homecoming marks one of Kenya's most significant global sporting sponsorships.

In 2019, SportPesa made history as the first Kenyan brand, and by extension, the first betting firm in the world, to "title sponsor" a Formula One team — joining BWT to form the SportPesa Racing Point F1 Team. That record stood for five years until the Stake F1 Team title partnership with Sauber in 2024 and 2025.

Stake's partnership ended with Audi's full 100% takeover of Sauber, with Revolut now the title partner for the Audi Revolut F1 Team.

For the 2019 season, the SportPesa Racing Point F1 team fielded veteran Mexican Sergio Pérez and Canadian Lance Stroll. Pérez finished 10th in the Drivers' Championship with a best finish of 6th in Belgium, while Stroll secured a memorable 4th place in the German Grand Prix.

SportPesa's title sponsorship concluded after the 2019 season. The team competed as BWT Racing Point F1 Team in 2020 before transitioning into the Aston Martin F1 Team from 2021.

Alfa Romeo Owners Club Chairman Peter Wanday welcomed the homecoming: "We are very pleased to welcome SportPesa to this year's edition of Concours d'Elegance, and we hope this is the start of a long partnership for motorsports in Kenya. Having a Formula One replica car here for the first time is the perfect way to mark that slice of history."

The tour announcement comes as SportPesa continues its longstanding investment in local motorsport, backing "SportPesa Racing" crews Leo Varese / Kigo Kareithi and risings stars Adriano Varese / Jason Kareithi besides supporting the fabled WRC Safari Rally.

Details of the countrywide tour stops will be announced soon.

Protecting our Boda-Boda Riders and Passenger

Powered by STOP THE BLEED® Kenya initiative & AA Kenya



Boda-bodas are the heartbeat of East African transit, but motorcyclists and their passengers are also among the most vulnerable road users. When a two-wheeled accident happens, a motorist is usually the very first person on the scene.

Do you know what to do - and more importantly, what NOT to do - in those critical first minutes?

This month, powered by the STOP THE BLEED® initiative, we are diving into the two most vital rules for managing motorcycle accident trauma: handling helmets and stabilizing broken bones.

1. The Golden Rule of Helmets: Hands Off!

When a rider or passenger is thrown from a bike, the impact puts tremendous stress on their head and neck. Your natural instinct might be to pull their helmet off so they can breathe or so you can check for injuries.

The Rule: NEVER remove a rider's helmet unless it is absolutely necessary to save their life (e.g., they are not breathing, they are choking, or their airway is completely blocked).

Why it matters: The helmet acts as a natural brace. If the rider has a cervical spine (neck) injury, yank or pull the helmet can shift broken vertebrae and cause permanent paralysis or death.

What to do instead: If they are conscious and breathing, leave the helmet on, keep them completely still, and unfasten the chin strap only if it is constricting their breathing.

2. Immobilizing Broken Bones with What's in Your Car

Motorcycle crashes frequently result in severe fractures to the arms and legs. An unstable bone can slice through blood vessels internally, leading to catastrophic

bleeding. Your goal as a first responder is to immobilize the limb before emergency medical services arrive.

If you don't have a professional splint, look around your vehicle for everyday items to create an improvised splint:

The Support: Use a sturdy object like an umbrella, a thick rolled-up newspaper, a heavy cardboard box piece, or even a vehicle floor mat.

The Padding: Cushion the limb by wrapping it in a soft jacket, hoodie, or a beach towel to prevent further pain and tissue damage.

The Tie: Secure the support gently above and below the fracture site using a triangular bandage from your first aid kit, extra clothing, or a belt.

Important: Never try to "straighten" a bone or force a joint back into place. Splint the limb exactly in the position you found it.

Quick Action Checklist for Boda-Boda Incidents

Secure the Scene First: Park your car safely, turn on your hazard lights, and place your warning triangles to protect yourself and the victim from oncoming traffic.

Check Breathing: If they are breathing, keep them still and leave the helmet on.

STOP THE BLEED: Apply direct, firm pressure to any open wounds using a clean cloth or gauze.

Call for Help: Immediately dial the emergency numbers below.

Emergency Contacts

Keep these numbers saved in your phone for immediate roadside assistance:

AA Kenya Roadside Assistance: 0709 933 000 or 0709 933 999

National Police Service: 999, 112, or 911

QuickFix First Aid Training Enquiries: 0707079192





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Bingo Technologies Unveils World's First Dual-Battery Electric Taxi for Kenya's Ride-Hailing Industry

By Timothy Albrite

Kenya's electric mobility journey took another step forward after Bingo Technologies unveiled the Bingo E2, a purpose-built electric vehicle developed for the country's growing ride-hailing market.

Making its global debut in Nairobi ahead of its public launch, the Bingo E2 introduces what the company says is the world's first dual-battery system in a production electric vehicle. The innovation combines a permanently installed battery with a removable swappable battery, giving drivers greater flexibility and reducing the amount of time spent off the road.

The unveiling also marked the launch of Bingo Technologies' wider electric mobility ecosystem, which brings together the vehicle, battery technology, fleet management software and financing solutions aimed at making electric vehicle ownership more practical for commercial drivers.

Reservations for the Bingo E2 have already opened.

Unlike conventional electric vehicles that depend on a single battery pack, the Bingo E2 offers drivers multiple ways to keep moving. The fixed battery can be recharged using a fast charger, while the second battery can be swapped when it runs low, allowing drivers to return to work much sooner.

The vehicle is also capable of carrying up to four additional swappable batteries, increasing its driving range to as much as 440 kilometres depending on usage. For drivers who spend long hours on the road, the additional range could help reduce interruptions during the working day.

One feature that drew particular attention during the unveiling was the vehicle's ability to charge another Bingo E2. Using vehicle-to-vehicle charging technology, one car can transfer power directly to another, offering a practical backup where charging stations may not be immediately available.

Bingo Technologies says the E2 has been engineered specifically for African operating conditions rather than adapted from an existing petrol-powered model. From its battery configuration to its overall design, the vehicle has been developed with the needs of ride-hailing drivers in mind, where reliability, uptime and low running costs are essential.

The company believes this approach will help address some of the concerns that continue to slow electric vehicle adoption, including range anxiety, charging convenience and the overall cost of ownership.

Beyond the vehicle itself, Bingo Technologies is positioning itself as a mobility solutions provider rather than simply a vehicle manufacturer.

During the launch, the company introduced MAYA, an AI-powered fleet management platform that gives fleet owners and individual drivers access to real-time vehicle information, operational insights and business management tools. The platform is designed to help



operators monitor vehicle performance, improve efficiency and manage their fleets from a single dashboard.

To make the transition to electric mobility more accessible, Bingo has also partnered with NCBA Bank to provide financing options for prospective buyers. The partnership is expected to lower the barrier to entry for drivers who may find the upfront cost of an electric vehicle beyond their immediate reach.

The launch comes at a time when Kenya is steadily emerging as one of Africa's leading markets for electric mobility. Government support, private sector investment and the country's electricity mix, most of it generated from renewable sources such as geothermal, hydro and wind have created favourable conditions for cleaner transport solutions.

For ride-hailing drivers, where fuel is often one of the biggest daily expenses, the shift to electric vehicles presents an opportunity to significantly reduce operating costs while lowering emissions.

Although charging infrastructure continues to expand across the country, concerns about charging times and vehicle range remain among the biggest obstacles to wider EV adoption. Bingo Technologies believes its dual-battery approach offers a practical solution by giving drivers the flexibility to either recharge or swap batteries depending on their schedules.

The vehicle's ability to share power with another Bingo E2 also introduces a level of redundancy that is rarely seen in today's electric vehicles and could prove useful for commercial operators working long shifts or travelling beyond urban charging networks.

With reservations now open, Bingo Technologies is betting that a combination of innovative engineering, digital fleet management and flexible financing will help accelerate the adoption of electric mobility among Kenya's ride-hailing drivers.

Whether the Bingo E2 reshapes the market remains to be seen, but its debut signals a growing shift away from simply importing electric vehicles towards developing mobility solutions tailored to the unique needs of African transport operators.



Opinion: Road Safety

Why Kenyans should back boda boda reforms?

By George M Song'e

Kenya's boda boda industry has evolved into one of the most important economic engines, providing livelihoods for millions of youth and delivering affordable, efficient last-mile transportation to communities across the nation.

The industry, according to a report released in 2025 by Viffa, contributes to close to four percent of Kenya's gross domestic product, generating more than $5 billion annually. From bustling urban centres to remote rural villages, motorcycles have become an indispensable part of Kenya's mobility landscape.

However, the sector's rapid growth has also exposed significant challenges. Rising road accidents, safety concerns, criminal misuse, and a lack of operational standards have placed the industry under public scrutiny. The National Transport and Safety Authority data shows that by early December 2025, 4,400 Kenyans lost their lives on the roads, of these 1,148 riders and 432 pillion passengers died.

In response, the government has proposed far-reaching reforms through the Public Transport (Motorcycle Regulation) Bill 2023.

The question facing policymakers, riders, and the public is no longer whether regulation is necessary. Still, the question is whether these reforms can achieve their intended goals without undermining the livelihoods they seek to protect.

At its core, the proposed legislation seeks to transform the boda boda sector from a largely informal industry into a structured, professional, and accountable transport system.

The Bill introduces mandatory rider registration at the county level, establishes County Motorcycle Transport and Safety Boards, enhances rider training requirements, tightens licensing procedures, and improves safety standards. It also proposes measures such as regular motorcycle inspections, passenger and cargo restrictions, and the use of tracking technologies to improve accountability and security.

The objectives behind these reforms are both reasonable and necessary. Kenya experiences a high number of motorcycle-related accidents, many resulting in serious injuries or fatalities. In addition, criminals exploit motorcycles because it is difficult to trace riders and vehicles.

By improving oversight, strengthening safety standards, and enhancing rider accountability, the proposed regulations have the potential to save lives, improve public confidence, and elevate the sector's reputation.

Where similar measures have been implemented effectively, the results have been encouraging.



Increased helmet usage, proper rider training, and licensing requirements have consistently been shown to reduce accident rates and improve road safety.

Registration systems create traceability, making it easier for law enforcement agencies to identify offenders while protecting p the vast majority of law-abiding operators. Professional training programmes can also improve customer service, vehicle maintenance, and business management skills, helping riders build sustainable careers rather than merely surviving day-to-day.

Beyond safety, the formalisation of the sector presents significant economic opportunities. A regulated industry is more attractive to investors, financial institutions, and technology providers. It can facilitate better access to insurance, financing, and emerging innovations such as electric motorcycles and battery-swapping infrastructure.

It also enables State agencies to collect reliable data, improve transport planning, and support long-term mobility solutions that benefit both riders and commuters. Yet despite these potential benefits, the proposed regulations have generated considerable resistance within the boda boda community.

Many operators perceive the reforms as costly, punitive, and disconnected from the realities they face daily. For riders struggling with fuel costs, loan repayments, and unpredictable earnings, additional compliance requirements can appear less like support and more like an added burden.

Motorcycle regulation in Kenya is not a non-starter. In fact, meaningful reform is both necessary and overdue. However, for these reforms to succeed, they must strike the right balance between safety, accountability, and economic reality. If implemented thoughtfully, the regulations could transform the boda boda sector into a safer, more professional, and more sustainable industry.

If implemented poorly, they risk becoming another missed opportunity. The future of Kenya's boda boda sector will not be determined by regulation alone, but by the government's ability to create a framework that protects lives while preserving livelihoods. Achieving that balance is not only possible-it is essential for the sector's long-term success and for Kenya's broader vision of modern, inclusive, and sustainable mobility. Concerns have also been raised regarding the creation of new county-level regulatory bodies.

Critics argue that these structures may duplicate the existing mandate of the National Transport and Safety Authority, creating unnecessary bureaucracy and increasing opportunities for inefficiency or corruption. Others question whether some provisions, including mandatory tracking systems and strict operational requirements, can realistically be enforced across Kenya's diverse urban and rural environments.

Perhaps the greatest challenge, however, is not the absence of regulations but the inconsistency of enforcement. Kenya already possesses laws governing motorcycle operations, yet compliance remains uneven due to weak implementation and limited enforcement capacity. Without addressing this fundamental issue, new regulations risk becoming another well-intentioned framework that exists largely on paper while producing little meaningful change on the ground. The debate surrounding motorcycle regulation ultimately reflects a broader national challenge: balancing public safety with economic opportunity

Few would dispute the urgent need to reduce accidents, improve discipline, and curb criminal misuse of motorcycles. Equally, few can ignore the critical role the boda boda industry plays in supporting millions of Kenyan families and driving economic activity. The success of these reforms will therefore depend not on the severity of the rules, but on the wisdom of their implementation.

Sustainable change cannot be achieved through a purely punitive approach. Instead, policymakers must work collaboratively with riders, associations, financiers, manufacturers, and other stakeholders to develop practical, affordable, and enforceable solutions. Regulations that are designed with industry participation are far more likely to gain acceptance and achieve lasting results.

Motorcycle regulation in Kenya is not a non-starter. In fact, meaningful reform is both necessary and overdue. However, for these reforms to succeed, they must strike the right balance between safety, accountability, and economic reality. If implemented thoughtfully, the regulations could transform the boda boda sector into a safer, more professional, and more sustainable industry.

If implemented poorly, they risk becoming another missed opportunity. The future of Kenya's boda boda sector will not be determined by regulation alone, but by the government's ability to create a framework that protects lives while preserving livelihoods. Achieving that balance is not only ony possible-it is essential for the sector's long-term success and for Kenya's broader vision of modern, inclusive, and sustainable mobility.

George Muthui Song'e is an E-Mobility Champion



7 Discontinued Toyota Models Still Popular on Kenyan Roads

By Moses Gichohi



Toyota has ended production of several cars that remain a common sight on Kenyan roads.

For many Kenyan motorists, some Toyota models seem almost impossible to imagine disappearing.

The Corolla Axio. The Fielder. The Premio. The Allion. The Wish. The Mark X. They have become such familiar sights on Kenyan roads that it is easy to forget that several of them are no longer being produced.

Toyota has, over the years, quietly retired a number of models as its global line-up has changed. Some were replaced by newer models, while others disappeared as the market shifted towards SUVs, hybrids and newer compact cars.

Yet discontinuation has not meant disappearance in Kenya. Because Kenya relies heavily on imported used vehicles, a Toyota can remain a popular choice here long after production has ended in Japan.

Here are seven of them.

1. Toyota Corolla Fielder – 2025

Few discontinued Toyotas are as relevant to the Kenyan market as the Corolla Fielder.

The station wagon, together with the Corolla Axio, was officially scheduled to end production in Japan at the end of October 2025, bringing the curtain down on the long-running E160 generation. Toyota announced the production end in February 2025.

The Fielder became popular in Kenya for a simple reason: it offered practicality without the running costs associated with a larger SUV.

Its wagon body provides useful cargo space, while the relatively compact dimensions make it easy to use in urban areas. Fuel economy, reliability and the availability of parts have also helped establish it as a favourite among Kenyan buyers.

Its discontinuation, however, does not mean Kenyan buyers will suddenly stop seeing Fielders.

Vehicles already produced will continue entering the Kenyan market as used imports, subject to local import regulations. In other words, the Fielder's production may have ended, but its Kenyan life is far from over.



2. Toyota Corolla Axio – 2025

The Axio shares the same final chapter as the Fielder.

Toyota ended production of the Corolla Axio in October 2025, after more than a decade of production of the E160 generation. In Kenya, the Axio established itself as one of the go-to compact sedans for buyers looking for a relatively affordable and economical car. Its appeal has been particularly strong among motorists who want a straightforward daily driver without the size and fuel requirements of a larger vehicle.

The Axio's disappearance from Toyota's Japanese production lines therefore does not immediately translate into disappearance from Kenyan roads.

In fact, its popularity could keep the model in Kenya's used-car market for years.



3. Toyota Premio – 2021

The Premio is one of the best examples of how a discontinued Japanese-market sedan can develop a second life in Kenya.

Toyota ended production of the Premio in March 2021. Toyota's own vehicle catalogue records the final generation as running through March that year.

The Premio occupied a more upmarket position than the Axio, offering the kind of comfortable, understated sedan that became particularly popular among Kenyan private and business users.

It also shared much of its mechanical DNA with the Allion, making both cars familiar names among used-car buyers.

Despite being out of production for several years, the Premio remains widely recognised in Kenya.

That is partly because its reputation was established long before production ended. For buyers who value comfort, reliability and relatively straightforward maintenance, the model remains an attractive used-car option.



4. Toyota Allion – 2021

The Allion disappeared at almost exactly the same time as the Premio. Toyota records show that the Allion ended production in March 2021. The two models were closely related, with the Allion positioned as a slightly sportier alternative to the more formal-looking Premio.

In Kenya, however, the distinction often matters less than the condition and specification of the individual vehicle. Both became popular because they offered a combination of comfort, fuel economy and Toyota's reputation for reliability.

Their discontinuation was part of Toyota's wider streamlining of its Japanese sedan line-up, but the cars remain well established in Kenya's second-hand market.



5. Toyota Wish – 2017

The Toyota Wish disappeared much earlier than the Axio and Fielder. Production of the final generation ended in October 2017. Toyota's records show the model's final production period running through that month.

The Wish was a practical alternative for buyers who needed more passenger and cargo space without moving into a larger SUV. That formula worked particularly well in Kenya.

Families appreciated its additional seating capacity, while its relatively low-slung design and car-like driving characteristics made it less cumbersome than many larger seven-seaters. But the market changed.

As buyers increasingly moved towards SUVs and higher-riding vehicles, traditional MPVs such as the Wish became harder to justify in manufacturers' line-ups.

The Wish disappeared from production, but it remains a familiar sight on Kenyan roads.



6. Toyota Mark X – 2019

The Mark X represented a very different side of Toyota.

It was a rear-wheel-drive executive sedan, available with larger engines and a more performance-oriented character than many of the economical Toyotas that dominate Kenya's used-car market.

Toyota's own records show the final Mark X generation ended in December 2019.

The final models used 2.5-litre and 3.5-litre engines, with rear-wheel drive or four-wheel drive depending on specification.

The Mark X was eventually caught by the broader decline of traditional sedans and the industry's move towards SUVs and other vehicle formats.

But in Kenya, the name still carries considerable weight.

For enthusiasts, the Mark X offers something increasingly difficult to find in modern cars: a relatively affordable Japanese executive sedan with rear-wheel drive and a naturally aspirated V6 option.

Toyota no longer makes it, but demand for good examples remains.



7. Toyota Passo – 2023

The Passo was one of Toyota's smallest cars and another model that developed a following among buyers looking for an affordable city car.

Toyota officially announced that production of the Passo would end in September 2023.

The compact hatchback was particularly suited to urban driving, with its small dimensions making it easy to manoeuvre and park.

Its disappearance was part of Toyota's changing small-car strategy, including its relationship with Daihatsu.

For Kenyan buyers, however, the Passo remains relevant because used examples continue to circulate in the market.

Like the other models on this list, the end of production does not immediately end demand.



Why discontinued Toyotas remain popular in Kenya

There is an important difference between a car being discontinued and a car becoming obsolete.

For Kenyan motorists, a discontinued model can remain attractive for years if it has an established reputation, readily available spare parts and a strong network of mechanics familiar with it.

The country's used-car market also works differently from markets where buyers mainly purchase new vehicles directly from manufacturers.

A model can disappear from Japanese showrooms while still arriving in Kenya as a used import.

That is why cars such as the Premio, Allion, Wish, Axio and Fielder continue to have a presence on Kenyan roads despite being absent from Toyota's current Japanese production line-up.

It also explains why the end of production does not necessarily make a Toyota a bad buy.

For a prospective buyer, the condition of the individual vehicle, its service history, mileage, accident history and availability of parts can matter far more than whether the manufacturer still produces the model.

The Toyota models Kenya is not ready to forget

Toyota's product line-up is changing.

The manufacturer has increasingly moved towards newer platforms, hybrids, electrified vehicles and SUVs, while some traditional sedans and MPVs have disappeared.

Kenya, however, has its own automotive timeline.

A model can be discontinued in Japan today and remain a familiar part of Kenyan motoring for another decade. Toyota may have stopped making them. Kenyans, it seems, are not finished with them yet.

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