



Tanzanian billionaire Ahmed Huwel will drive his Toyota Yaris R2 car worth sh1.8b during the Pearl of Africa Uganda Rally in Mbarara

HUWEL'S SH1.8B CAR IS IN TOWN

By Johnny Ssempiija

Tanzanian rally driver Ahmed Huwel has arrived in Uganda in emphatic style ahead of the Pearl of Africa Rally, instantly injecting excitement into an already highly anticipated event scheduled to start on Thursday and end on Saturday.

The businessman-driver made a grand entrance with a commanding convoy, drawing admiration from motorsport fans eager to witness his much-talked-about machine in action. Yet beyond the spectacle lies clear intent.

Huwel has shipped in his prized Toyota GR Yaris Rally 2, a rare and highly sophisticated rally car making its first competitive appearance outside Tanzania. Engineered for precision, endurance and outright speed, the machine signals that Huwel is not merely here for a show, he is here to compete.

"I've always been told that Ugandans love motorsport and I



FIA official Moses Matovu



Tanzanian rally driver Ahmed Huwel

want to give them a good show. I might not win, but I will definitely give them entertainment," Huwel said.

At Lumala's rally track in Mityana, the car quickly became the centre of attention, attracting both fans and technical experts. FIA-certified rally car tester Moses Matovu was full of praise for the machine's pedigree and capability.

"This is arguably the most complete GR Yaris on the African continent. It's not just about power it's about balance, engineering and how it responds under

pressure," Matovu noted.

Huwel's Toyota GR Yaris Rally 2 car costs \$350,000 (sh1.5b) but according to Matovu, a fully competitive package for the car including spares, rebuild kits, and technical support increases the costs to approximately sh1.8b, excluding taxes. The car is purpose-built for professional drivers and that's why it comes with a full package.

According to Matovu, Huwel's car is far from a standard production vehicle. It is a purpose-built rally weapon equipped with advanced suspension

systems, a full safety cage and sophisticated competition electronics. The package also typically includes spare parts, logistics support, a professional service crew and custom setup upgrades.

Under the hood, the Rally 2 machine is powered by a 1.6-litre turbocharged three-cylinder engine producing approximately 300 horsepower, paired with a five-speed sequential gearbox and a refined four-wheel-drive system. Built to FIA Rally 2 regulations, it weighs a minimum of 1,230 kgs and operates with a 32mm air restrictor hallmarks of a top-tier competition car.

However, Matovu is quick to caution that performance will depend on how quickly the driver adapts.

"Ahmed has matured as a driver. He's smoother now, more calculated. But this is a new car to him its first outing beyond Tanzania. He will need time to fully understand it," he added.