

New African car brand makes its debut

There's a new African car brand! Mureza will be making its debut at Automechanika Johannesburg, which takes place at Expo Centre, Nasrec, from 18-21 September 2019.



Source: www.quickpic.co.za

Mureza initially has a joint venture with the SAIPA Group in Iran for platform-sharing and the supply of some of the other major components, but Mureza's ultimate objective is to design and manufacture vehicles in Africa for African drivers.

The first model, the Prim8 (pronounced Primate), is a crossover/hatchback which will be assembled initially from SKD kits in the Automotive Supplier Park in Rosslyn, South Africa, and later at the Willowdale assembly plant in Zimbabwe and in the ex-Hyundai plant in Botswana. The new business is being backed by funders in the United Arab Emirates.

The prototype Prim8 will be displayed at Automechanika Johannesburg. It has been converted from left-hand to right-hand drive locally, but the future SKD and CKD kits will be set up for right-hand drive. A three-year warranty will cover the car.

The Prim8 uses a 1.5-litre petrol engine developing 87kW and drives the front wheels through either a five-speed manual or

CVT transmission. The target is to offer the fully equipped top model at between R180,000 and R200,000.

The comprehensive specification of the top model includes keyless entry, 7-inch touchscreen, Bluetooth, satnav, reversing camera, cruise control, parking sensors, audio system, air conditioning, power-adjustable driver's seat, four airbags, electronic stability control, ABS brakes and tyre pressure monitoring.

The initial local content target is 40% with significant increases in the short to medium term, according to Tatenda Mungofa, one of a group of Africans from various countries who are driving this ambitious project.

Mungofa explains that there is a void between the new vehicles and used vehicles currently sold in African countries and says this is the gap his team proposes to fill with new models priced not much above the cost of a used import, which are heavily taxed in certain markets.

"We will also engage with the people selling used imports to retail our new models and will assist them in setting up service facilities where this is viable, or else we will appoint independent servicing outlets in the various SADEC countries that we are targeting as a first step for our new company," explained Mungofa.

"Here in South Africa we are also looking to sell our various Mureza models through used vehicle outlets instead of setting up new car franchised dealerships. Online selling will be important for us too," he added.

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