

First Isuzu KBs in Kenya, as GMSA expands African exports market

According to Business Report, General Motors South Africa (GMSA) has exported its first shipment of Isuzu KB light commercial vehicles to Kenya, expanding the export markets it services in Africa.



Kenya was the latest addition to the company's existing right-hand drive export markets of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Mauritius, said Rita Kavashe, MD for east Africa and GMSA exports manager, adding that the Isuzu brand was already well established in Kenya, where it achieved a 30 percent share of the new light commercial vehicle segment last year.

"When production of the new generation Isuzu KB commences at the company's Struandale facility next year," Kavashe said, "[it will be] the first time the vehicle will be built in both right- and left-hand drive," opening up new opportunities to export the Isuzu KB beyond existing markets to rapidly-growing countries like Angola and Nigeria. GMSA has investing R1 billion in three new vehicle assembly programmes, including the Chevrolet Utility, the new Chevrolet Spark, and the sixth-generation Isuzu KB, which is set to be launched in sub-Saharan Africa during the first half of next year.

"Key to achieving this is strengthening our distribution network, improving logistics efficiencies, ensuring that the right product portfolio is in place and providing excellent after sales support to our customers." Increased export volumes, Kavashe told Business Report, would ensure GMSA achieved the annual production volume threshold of 50 000 units to qualify for the government's Automotive Production and Development Programme.

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