

**All-New Delica Mini and eK Space Win RJC Car of the Year Award for 2026
- Rally Driver Hiroshi Masuoka Named RJC Person of the Year for 2026**

Tokyo, November 11, 2025 – Mitsubishi Motors Corporation (hereafter, Mitsubishi Motors) announced that its all-new kei-cars¹, the Delica Mini and eK Space, have been jointly awarded the RJC Car of the Year award for 2026, run by the Automotive Researchers' and Journalists' Conference of Japan (RJC), alongside the Nissan Roox.

Additionally, Mitsubishi Motors rally driver Hiroshi Masuoka has been honored with the RJC Person of the Year award for 2026. This prestigious accolade recognizes outstanding individuals in the automotive industry.



All-New eK Space and Delica Mini



Hiroshi Masuoka
Vice President, Mitsubishi Motors



RJC Car of the Year Award

This marks Mitsubishi Motors' fifth win of the RJC Car of the Year award and the first in three years since the eK X EV (pronounced "eK 'cross' EV"), an all-electric kei-car, won the award² for 2023.

The Delica Mini is a super height-wagon kei-car that bears the name of the Delica minivan, which combines a spacious interior with powerful driving performance. The all-new model builds on the concept of its predecessor while making bold advancements in exterior and interior design, driving performance, safety features, ease of handling, and user-friendliness, making it ideal for both everyday driving and outdoor adventures.

The all-new eK Space combines excellent maneuverability for city driving with a modern design that appeals to all generations, along with a spacious interior.

- **Comments from the Jury:**

While further enhancing the visibility and convenience expected of super height-wagon kei-cars, the models achieve both excellent fuel efficiency and refined driving performance. By incorporating unique elements into the interior and exterior designs to create three distinctive models – each built on a single platform developed by NMKV Co., Ltd., a joint venture between Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. and Mitsubishi Motors – the achievement demonstrates exceptional ingenuity and deserves significant praise.

RJC Person of the Year Award

Hiroshi Masuoka has competed in the Dakar Rally 21 times with Mitsubishi vehicles including the Pajero, achieving consecutive victories in 2002 and 2003, the first ever by a Japanese driver. From 2012 to 2014, he participated in the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb, and in 2015 in the Baja Portalegre, driving electrified vehicles as both a driver and team director.

By participating in motorsports with competition vehicles based on mass-production models, as well as those incorporating both production components and advanced technologies, he has leveraged the expertise gained to enhance commercial vehicles, contributing to the advancement of high-performance electrified vehicles that support carbon neutrality. Additionally, his proactive involvement in social contribution activities to promote safe driving, including participation in Mitsubishi Motors' SUV 4WD test drive events, was highly praised, leading to his recognition with the award.

Currently, Masuoka serves as team director of Team Mitsubishi Ralliart, leading the team to overall victories in the Asia Cross Country Rally in 2022 and 2025.

- **Comments from the Jury:**

Masuoka achieved the first-ever consecutive wins by a Japanese driver in the Dakar Rally, and as a team director, led his team to two victories in the Asia Cross Country Rally. By competing with electrified vehicles, he has contributed to the development of electrification technologies that promote environmental sustainability. His role as a demonstration driver in the 4WD hill climb kit experience event, along with his active efforts to promote safe driving, was also highly commended.

- **Comment from Hiroshi Masuoka:**

"From a young age, I was fascinated by cars and spent countless hours honing my skills. I debuted in off-road racing at 18 and joined Ralliart at 22. Over the years, I have had the honor of competing in the Dakar Rally – the world's most grueling rally – 21 times with Mitsubishi Motors, achieving long-awaited overall victories in both 2002 and 2003. I am deeply grateful to Mitsubishi Motors customers, Team Mitsubishi Ralliart fans, all those involved, and my family, who has supported me throughout my journey of over 40 years as a driver and team director. I will continue to contribute to the development of safe, reassuring, and comfortable vehicles by applying the experience gained through motorsports."

About the RJC Car of the Year for 2026

Now in its 35th year, the RJC Car of the Year award is determined by votes from RJC's selection committee. Eligible vehicles are domestic models premiered in the Japanese market between November 1, 2024, and October 31, 2025. The top six models were selected on October 31, with final voting held on November 11.

Mitsubishi Motors has previously won the RJC Car of the Year award four times³, the RJC Technology of the Year award six times⁴, and the Special Award twice⁵.

1. Kei-car is a vehicle category in Japan for microcars.
2. Joint award with the Nissan Sakura
3. Previous winners include the "i" kei-car (award for 2007); the Eclipse Cross, a crossover SUV (award for 2019); the eK Wagon and eK X, height wagon kei-cars (award for 2020) and the eK X EV, an all-electric kei-car (award for 2023).
4. Previously recognized technologies include the INVECS (Intelligent & Innovative Vehicle Electronic Control System) automatic transmission technology used in the Galant and Eterna (award for 1993); the INVECS-II Sport Mode automatic transmission of the FTO (award for 1995); the GDI (Gasoline Direct Injection) engine of the Galant and Legnum (award for 1997); the PHEV system of the Outlander PHEV (award for 2014); the evolved PHEV and S-AWC systems of the Eclipse Cross (award for 2022); and the electrification technology of the all-electric kei-car used in the eK X EV (award for 2023).
5. Previous winners include the Lancer Evolution X (award for 2009) and the Triton (award for 2025).

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About Mitsubishi Motors

Mitsubishi Motors Corporation (TSE:7211) – a member of the Alliance with Renault and Nissan – is a global automobile company based in Tokyo, Japan, which has about 28,000 employees and a global footprint with production facilities in Japan and the ASEAN region. Mitsubishi Motors has a competitive edge in SUVs, pickup trucks and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, and appeals to ambitious drivers willing to challenge convention and embrace innovation. Since the production of our first vehicle more than a century ago, Mitsubishi Motors has been a leader in electrification – launched the i-MiEV, the world's first mass-produced electric vehicle in 2009, followed by the Outlander PHEV, the world's first plug-in hybrid electric SUV in 2013. With a target of increasing the sales ratio of electrified vehicles to 100% by 2035, Mitsubishi Motors will deliver models that embody Mitsubishi Motors-ness and contribute to the realization of a carbon-neutral society.

For more information on Mitsubishi Motors, please visit the company's website at <https://www.mitsubishi-motors.com/en/>