The Kenyan duo delivered a tactical master class across the grueling final stages to secure a definitive victory in Round 3 of the FIA African Rally Championship.


Karen Patel and his crew celebrate after clinching the ARC in Rwanda

Kenyan crew of Karan Patel and Tauseef Khan have officially proclaimed their dominance on the continental stage, cruising their Skoda Fabia R5 to a commanding victory at the 2026 Rwanda Mountain Gorilla Rally which ended on Sunday in Bugesera District.

The victory solidifies their standing in Round 3 of the FIA African Rally Championship (ARC) following a flawless display of pace management and mechanical precision.

The Kenyan crew established their baseline early in the weekend, wrapping up Leg 1 at the top of the classification with a benchmark time of 01:22:42.2.winning 10 out of 12 stages on Saturday.

They carried that exact momentum into the afternoon loop, opening the final stretch with a sweltering win on Super Section (SS) 12 in (Nemba 3), clocking 08:36.6 at an average speed of 101.0 km/h to extend their lead over Tanzania’s Huwel Ahmed.

As the rally transitioned into the longer, high-attrition terrain of SS13 at Kamabuye 1, Patel and Khan delivered another definitive drive.

AtKamabuye Push, the Kenya duo topped the stage after clocking at time of 12:29.6, successfully keeping their comfortable lead over the rest of the field intact.

The rally competition refused to back down quietly. In SS14 at Gako B 1, Tanzania’s crew of Huwel Ahmed and Solanki Roheet pushed their Toyota Yaris GR to the absolute limit, capturing the stage win at 03:56.9 with a spectacular average speed of 127.6 km/h.

Recognizing their massive safety margin, Patel and Khan managed their pace intelligently, finishing just a fraction of a second behind in the stage at 03:57.7 to protect their Skoda R5.



Sunday’s victory was Patel’s fourth, having won the Mountain Gorilla Rally in three consecutive years from 2022, 2023 and 2024.

He lost the 2025 ARC edition to Sammn Vohr following an early withdrawal when he became one of the rally casualties due to hitting a tree in the Stage 3 accident that caused significant damage to his Skoda, including gearbox related issues.

The 2026 ARC high-speed stages also brought heartbreak for local fans and frontrunners alike. Rwandan favorites Queen Kalimpinya and Ngabo Olivier registered a Did Not Finish (DNF), joining Nanji Sameer and Roshanali Mohamed on the retirement list.

Shockingly, the Tanzanian powerhouse crew of Birdi Manveer and Birdi Manmeet, who pushed hard until the final stages of the rally were also forced out of the running before the final classification.

By the final stretch, Patel and Khan maintained total composure to cross the flying

finish line unscathed, sealing the overall victory to win the RAC Round 3. Behind them, the final classifications brought fierce celebrations across multiple championship support categories. Huwei Ahmed/ Solanki Roheet and Virani Aakif/ Shah Zahir finished second and third respectively.

Local Rwandan crew of Kanangire Christian, alongside co-driver Mujiji Kevin in their Subaru Impreza clinched ARC 2 category with a time of 02:37:35.8, holding off Uganda's Ntambi Oscar.

The Indian crew of Puligilla Naveen and Sherif Musa drove a masterful race in their Ford Fiesta to lock down the ARC 3 category class win after clocking a time of 02:27:28.5, beating out Kenya's Sachania Nikhil.

Virani Aakif of Kenya, navigated by Shah Zahir in their Skoda Fabia R5, comfortably secured the ARC Master crown with a final time of 02:25:52.4.

Kanangire Christian secured a critical home win in ARC 2 and the leaderboard at the ARC has shifted after these brutal retirements.

Ntambi Oscar/Luggya (Subaru) and Ugandan lady driver Susan Muwonge finished 2nd and 3rd respectively in this category. Susan took home the women's category award after finishing 9th.

Puligilla Naveen and Sherif Musa clinched the peace reader awards while Sachana Nkhil/Patel Deep both from Kenya in a ford fiesta finished second. Only 13 crews took part in the rally.

Official ARC Classification:

1. **Karan Patel / Tauseef Khan (KEN)** — Skoda Fabia R5
2. **Huwel Ahmed / Solanki Roheet (TZA)** — 02:20:48.5 (+07:29.9)
3. **Virani Aakif / Shah Zahir (KEN)** — 02:25:52.4 (+12:33.8)
4. **Puligilla Naveen / Sherif Musa (IND)** — 02:27:28.5 (+14:09.9)
5. **Chana Jasmeet / Chana Ravi (KEN)** — 02:28:47.0 (+15:28.4)


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