

intended partner Harry went back to the UK which left me with the kit and a very uncertain future in Riyadh due to the then security issues. Being a true Brit I made the usual stiff upper lip decision to stay but I would build the kit the way I wanted to and to my specifications.

I have a good friend and expert Land Rover mechanic Nabil with his own workshop who agreed to let me use his workshop facilities free of charge in exchange for me giving him specialist advice and assistance when needed. I think I was the reason he got so many customers they would just come to see the Khawaja doing mechanics work. The donor vehicle was a 1988 Range Rover of known history, it had a new MVPI, the Estimara was renewed and the permission papers to allow the change of colour from white to yellow were obtained. Over the next

three years of Thursdays I dismantled the donor from a completely functional and legal Range Rover to a complete mess, as you'll see in the photos below. We also ended up changing workshops twice after various landlords upped the rent; Nabil now resides in a large workshop in Diriyah where I completed the majority of the build.

Once I had started the build-up I employed a local Saudi "welder", he lasted one day, after I was able to dismantle his welding with only a small hammer. So I purchased my own mig welding set from a supplier down in Ghorabi street who hadn't a clue what he was selling, and after a lapse of 12 years or so I re-taught myself the gentle art of welding.

I think that I modified every part of the kit several times and ended up fabricating many of the specialised items need to meet my specifications. I lost count of the number of times I trial fitted the frame to the chassis to check and re-check the fit and that the modifications would actually work. Simple things like having the frame powder coated was a real problem, I ended up changing suppliers and at the third attempt we got a reasonable but not perfect finish. Things like installing hydraulic winches front and rear caused many headaches, and there were many hours of standing and scratching my head over seemingly insurmountable problems. As my wife and friends will attest I was regularly seen assuming the pose while finding that elusive solution.

Twice I nearly gave up both through sheer lack of progress and through frustration at the never ending list of problems to overcome. I found two people on the internet in the UK who were building similar cars and they both agreed that 'taking a break' of a few of weeks or 'spending more money on special parts' worked wonders for restoring your morale.

Any way I persevered and slowly through boiling hot summers (no air-conditioning in the workshop) and freezing cold and wet winters (the roof was made of used aluminium sheets with many many holes to let the rain in) progress was made. Things got much better when I received some special transmission parts from a supplier in the UK and once the locking differentials and special transfer box were fitted the beast was movable on its own wheels. Last spring I managed to get the engine running and so although it had no bodywork I could sit in it on an old coffee table and drive it around the workshop forecourt.

In June 2007 I decided to move the chassis frame to the patio outside our villa and start the wiring and final assembly, jobs that could be done in short bursts, some of it in the evenings after work, Ramadan hours are great for that. The body panels had been remade and were then painted by the

