



**Hero MotoSports Team Rally stands strong at the half way mark  
La Paz, Bolivia, January 11, 2018**

Every time the Dakar Rally hits the Bolivian leg, there are always chances of the weather and climate playing the spoilsport. Staying true to the tradition, the first part of the 6th stage of the Dakar Rally from Arequipa to La Paz had to be cancelled owing to bad weather and foggy conditions for the riders. The revised 6th stage was limited only to a 194 km of timed section today, from the original planned stage of 313 km but not before the riders tackled everything from snow, freezing temperature and rain; all this at an altitude of 4800 m.



Both riders from Hero MotoSports Team Rally decided to be safe and cautious with an aim to successfully complete the 1st half of the Dakar Rally without any unwanted incident. Oriol Mena continued his solid run from yesterday to finish the stage at 23rd position, and an overall 21st place. CS Santosh continued his resurgence in the rankings, despite a troubled ankle owing to an

earlier crash. He finished the stage at 38th position and overall stands at 51st place at the end of the first half of the Dakar Rally.



To summarize the first half for the team, it was an excellent start for the team with two very good stages from CS Santosh, then followed a couple of difficult ones and a very positive progress of Dakar rookie Mena, especially in the really tough stage 5. All in all a good Dakar so far as the team has been able to fight off, all that the Dakar has thrown at them so far and stands strong at the half way mark.

As the competitors rolled into the cold and rainy La Paz podium, the cheer and warmth of the thousands of people who thronged the podium area braving the bad weather, gave them a true Heroes welcome. The competitors now get a much deserved rest day on 12th January, to rest their wounded and tired bodies and minds before the second leg of the rally kicks off.

The next stage will move the rally from La Paz on 13th January for its 1st marathon stage of 425 km to Uyuni. As per the regulations, the riders will not be able to receive any assistance from the crew at their overnight halt at Uyuni and will be on their own.

**Oriol Mena** (Comp No: 61): *"Today was a difficult day due to rain so I decided to take it safe. I have my mind focussed on making to the finish line at Cordoba so I did not want to commit any mistakes just before the half way mark. Today I decided to trade off safety for speed but it doesn't matter as there's still a long way to go into the rally. Now tomorrow we rest and the day after we start the party again!"*

**C.S Santosh** (Comp No: 49): *“Bolivia has always been the turning point in the Dakar. It was really cold start in the morning and a very long liaison, and then it started to raining making things worse. We didn’t have dust today so I knew it was my best chance to pass a few guys and I tried to make the most of the opportunity. Overall good day and I brought the bike home. Now we rest for one day and then get ready for the final leg of the Dakar”*

### **Provisional Stage 6 Classifications**

1. Meo Antoine, RedBull KTM Factory Racing, KTM, +1h 54m 10s
2. Kevin Benavides, Honda Factory Racing, Honda, +30s
3. Toby Price, RedBull KTM Factory Racing, KTM, +30s
- 23. Oriol Mena, Hero Motosports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +7m 51s**
- 38. C.S. Santosh, Hero Motosports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +14m 57s**

### **Overall Provisional Classifications after Stage 6**

1. Kevin Benavides, Honda Factory Racing, Honda, 16h 33m 20s
2. Adrien Van Beveren, Yamaha Factory Racing, Yamaha, +01m 57s
3. Matthias Walkner, RedBull KTM Factory Racing, KTM, +02m 50s
- 21. Oriol Mena, Hero Motosports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +01 14m 07s**
- 51. C.S. Santosh, Hero Motosports Team Rally, Hero MotoSports, +04h 52m 00s**

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