



## PRESS RELEASE

11th January 2015, Iquique

### Ardavichus's Tatra Stopped By A Burst Piping

Iquique/Židovice – Major technical issues came in the way of the turquoise Tatra with our mechanic Daniel Kozlovský on board during the 7th stage of the Dakar Rally. Moreover, the crew had to tackle bad luck right in the midst of the marathon stage, where each truck goes on its own. While none of the crew members was injured, for a long time it was not clear whether they would be able to continue the race.

At first, the pilot Ardavichus started out the 335-kilometre long stage from Iquique, Chile, to Uyuni, Bolivia, very well. He even attacked the much-desired podium position, getting as close as third position in the middle of the stage. Unfortunately, in the final part of the timed stage his truck's turbo piping ruptured and all the hopes of a solid standing were gone. His colleague Tomáš Vrátný stopped to assist him but he couldn't. *"In order to remove this problem we would need a welding machine. Naturally, we didn't have one with us there,"* commented Tomáš Vrátný.

Consequently, the skilled Kazakhstani pilot got stuck just a few kilometres before the finish and transfer to the closed bivouac which was only accessible for racers without their accompanying cars and mechanics. Therefore, the crew had to wait for the assistance truck carrying the necessary welding machine necessary to remove the defect and finish the stage.

In contrast, after the hardships of preceding stages the Dutch pilot on our Renault Martin van den Brink improved his mood in a major way. He successfully reached the finish line of the marathon stage on seventh position. Tomáš Vrátný lost some time while stopping by his colleague Ardavichus and was classified on twenty-first place. Four positions behind him came his Polish mate Szustkowski. The Dutch pilot from the Mammoet Rallysport team Pascal de Baar arrived at the finish on thirty-second position.

The timed stage turned out to be the ultimate birthday present for Aleš Loprais, who triumphed in it. Anyway, the level of difficulty of the stage was proven by the change at the leader's position, though the nationality and type of car remained the same. Currently, the first position is occupied by the Russian Mardeev on a Kamaz after his compatriot Nikolaev dropped from the lead to position four.

The crews spent the night outside the classical bivouac, without access to mechanics or the accompanying cars. There were sleeping bags and sleeping mats prepared for them at the cabins, but many did not even need them, as they had their hands full with repairing the technology. For quite some time we did not know whether Ardavichus's Jamal would start at stage eight. Eventually, the crew did not let their fans down and got to the start of the next stage that ends in Iquique after 273 km on the road.

**Results - trucks - Stage 7:** 1. Loprais (CZE) MAN 4:02:54, 2. De Rooy (NED) Iveco +5:39, 3. Karginov (RUS) Kamaz +5:49, 4. Sotnikov (RUS) Kamaz +7:17, 5. Mardeev (RUS) Kamaz +8:14, **7. van den Brink (NED) Renault Trucks +28:20**, 9. Kolomý (CZE) Tatra +36:01, **21. Vrátný (CZE) Tatra +1:11:56**, **25. Szustkowski (POL) Tatra +2:27:07**, **32. de Baar (NED) Renault Trucks +4:27:38**, **Ardavičius/Kozlovský (KAZ/CZE) Tatra.**

**Overall:** 1. Mardeev (RUS) Kamaz 22:35:32, 2. Karginov (RUS) Kamaz +22:13, 3. Sotnikov (RUS) Kamaz +44:06, 4. Nikolaev (RUS) Kamaz +44:43, 5. Loprais (CZE) MAN +1:11:20, 9. Kolomý (CZE) Tatra +2:39:30, **11. Vrátný (CZE)**

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