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## Llovera-Haro back in Iquique after a horrific adventure in Bolivia.

Albert Llovera-Àlex Haro (Buggy MD Rallye) have completed the difficult double challenge of the stages in Bolivia. On the one hand, racing and resting at an altitude of almost 4000 metres and on the other not having access to their mechanics in the bivouac in Uyuni. On top of that, they also had to cope with terrible weather conditions; the intense rain made it feel colder than it already was at such an altitude. When it looked as though the day was over, their stage was extended more than two hours because they got stuck in the final dunes (only 26 km from the finish line).

The 8<sup>th</sup> stage,Uyuni-Iquique, 808 km long, was divided into 26 km at the beginning, followed by a route of 450 km around the Salar de Uyuni and 300 km of neutralised parcours to get back into Chile. The Bolivian adventure finished with 26 km of dunes close to Iquique.

Llovera-Haro was 64th at the finish line with a time of 6h08'14".

The fight for the stage victory, back in Iquique, was won by Toyota driver Yazeed Alrajhi from Saudi Arabia, who finished the parcours in 3h26'49". The general ranking for the cars category maintains Qatari driver, Nasser Al-Attiyah as its leader, since he had no problems to keep at bay his main rival, Toyota's South African driver Giniel de Villiers.

The rain, that the teams had to endure once they reached Uyuni, had negative consequences for Llovera-Haro; as Albert explained: We arrived at the bivouac in Uyuni completely soaked and on top of that the clothes we had to change into were also all wet. At an altitude of 4000 metres, it is cold and when you are wet... I barely slept, but luckily Alex was able to rest. The changes in temperature this past couple of days have been very abrupt and this takes a toll on your body. During the stage back to Iquique, Llovera-Haro also had to stop for some emergency repairs; here are Alex's words about it: We had to stop to change a flat tire, which was more difficult than usual since the electric wrench melted and we had to use the standard one. We also had to repair the brake system on the control panel because it wasn't working. Despite it all, the team with the colours of Qatar on its buggy is now in Iquique to enjoy a well deserved day off: We really need it. The route up until now has been extremely tough, especially at the beginning and during the marathon stage mainly due to the rain. Getting stuck at the end was just the cherry on top.

As Albert has mentioned, tomorrow is the day off, which both drivers and cars really need so they can get ready to start the way back, in five stages, to the finishing podium in Buenos Aires.

After the day off, Llovera-Haro will face the 9<sup>th</sup> stage, still on Chilean soil, from Iquique to Calama, 538 km long with a special stage of 450 km. The survivors of the Dakar 2015 will start very close to the coast of the Pacific ocean and finish at an altitude greater than 3000 metres.

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