

Suresh, Ashish leading in Raid-de-Himalaya rally

Suresh Rana and Ashish Moudgil were leading on Day Six of the tenth edition of one of the world's toughest motor rallies, Maruti Suzuki Raid-de-Himalaya in the car and bike categories respectively, an organiser of the rally said Monday.

Bhaskar Rumani, who was leading in the bike category till Day Five, was injured in an accident near Baralacha pass, one of the the world's highest motorable roads.

'Bhaskar Rumani was injured as his bike skidded in the cold desert of Baralacha pass,' Manjeev Bhalla, another organiser of the event, told IANS by phone from Leh.

He said in the X-treme car category, Suresh Rana is leading, followed by Sanket Shanbag and Harpreet Singh Balu, while in the X-treme bike category Ashish Moudgil, who was second till Day Five, is leading, followed by Sandeep Singh Mathur and Prasant Kumar.

'For the first time, the roar of the engines will echo in the Zaskar region of Ladakh Tuesday. This will really test their (motorists) endurance, skill and luck,' he added.

Out of 132 professionals participating in the rally, only 83 were now in the fray, including 37 in X-treme category and 46 vehicles in the adventure category.

Four-time winner of the event Suresh Rana, who is again leading the rally, said: 'I am still hopeful of conquering the Himalayas.'

Sunny Sidhu of Chandigarh, who was the winner of the 2003 rally and the winner of Desert Storm in Rajasthan for three consecutive years from 2003 to 2005 and again in 2008, was out from the rally in the initial stage.

This time the organisers have made some changes in the original route as some stretches have been damaged badly due to the recent heavy rain and snowfall.

The rally has once again featured on the international off-road rallies calendar of the Federation of International Motorsport, Geneva.

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