

## Dakar Rally 2018: Team PETRONAS De Rooy IVECO off to a good start with a fourth position in stage 1

*The 2018 edition of the Dakar rally kicked off Saturday January 6 with a short special of 31 kilometres*

*Ton van Genugten's IVECO Powerstar finished in fourth place, just over a minute behind the leaders, while Artur Ardavichus followed less than 4 minutes later*

Turin 7 January 2018,

The 10<sup>th</sup> South American edition of the toughest rally raid in the world, the Dakar, kicked off on Saturday in Peru, with three IVECO Powerstars as contenders facing a route of almost 9,000 kilometres ahead of them. The 337 participating vehicles drove through the starting ramp in a colourful ceremony in El Pentagonito, Lima. All the crews drove straight to the beginning of the stage, close to the city of Pisco, where the first 31 kilometres of timed special took place for the 40th edition of this historical competition.

**Ton van Genugten**, from team PETRONAS de Rooy IVECO, achieved the best result of the three IVECO Powerstars in the first special. He crossed the finish line just over a minute behind the leaders, in fourth place behind Ales Loprais, Martin van den Brink and Eduard Nikolaev. The Dutch pilot was very pleased with the opening stage of the Dakar 2018: *"This was about what I had in mind. It went extremely well. It was a fast track through the dunes, you could drive fast, but it was certainly not easy."*

Teammate **Artur Ardavichus** finished the stage five minutes behind Loprais. The driver from Kazakhstan will start the second stage from the 16th place, following his position on yesterday's special.

**Argentinian Federico Villagra**, also behind the wheel of an IVECO Powerstar, and one of the favourites to battle the Russian's Kamaz head to head, had a bit more complicated race in the first 31 km special. A glitch with the navigation system cost the pilot 16m37s in the shortest day of competition.

Even though the first stage covered a short distance, it already showed the difficulties that the crews will face in the first week of action, when they will cross the world's highest dunes in the desert of Peru. Navigation will be a key factor in this Dakar 2018 and the co-pilots' skills will be put to the test all the way through.

## **Stage 1 / Overall – Dakar Rally 2018**

1. Ales Loprais (Tatra)	25m15s
2. Martin van den Brink (Renault)	+ 22s
3. Eduard Nikolaev (Kamaz)	+ 29s
4. <b>TON VAN GENUGTEN (IVECO)</b>	+ 1m11s
5. Anton Shibalov (Kamaz)	+ 1m18s
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16. <b>ARTUR ARDAVICHUS (IVECO)</b>	+ 4m55s
21. <b>FEDERICO VILLAGRA (IVECO)</b>	+ 16m37s

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