

# PM Arindam Saikia leads in Raid De Himalaya

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Arindam Saikia of Team Polaris is leading the race on the second day, being closely followed by Amitrajit Ghosh and Phillipose Matthai, each driving for Team Mahindra, at the 20th Adventure of the Raid de Himalaya.

The 20th edition of the Raid de Himalaya, which began on October 10, is cur-

rently running in the highest reaches of the Kargil, Zaskar and Ladakh sectors. Arindam Saikia, driving the Polaris RZR 1000 Turbo Dynamix, gave tough competition to Amitrajit Ghosh and Phillipose Matthai, each driving XUV 500.

Capt AVS Gill, a private entry, raced his Maruti Gypsy to the hilt to keep his place among top competitors. Gill was behind Phillipose Matthai on Wednesday

by one second.

Team Polaris had suffered a major setback on Day One of the Raid. Lakhpapa Tsering, Raid 2015 winner, had to bow out in the first stage after an electrical failure in his vehicle. Clerk of the Course Manjeev Bhalla said rallyists competing in the Xtreme category raced at temperature plummeting to -16 degree Celsius at Penzi La. The Raid route today went

up to Penzi La, a mountain pass in the Ladakh region at a height of 4,400 meters, known as the gateway to Zaskar, he added.

Among bikers competing in Xtreme Moto, Nataraj, riding for Team TVS, now has a solid lead over all other competitors. Vishwas SD is second in Xtreme Moto, with Jatin Jain from Nagpur at third place. President Himalayan Motorsport Vijay Parmar said the top

three positions among bikers seem the same since yesterday.

A major drop-out on Day Two of the Raid was Sanjay Agarwal of Gurgaon, driving the Grand Vitara. Sanjay, who has notched a podium finish on the Raid in the last few years, has been dogged by bad luck during this edition as his car rolled yesterday. Today while coming down from Penzi La, a wheel of his car came off.