



NEWS RELEASE

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WORLD-CLASS RUNNERS JOIN MALAYSIA'S FIRST STANDARD CHARTERED KL MARATHON 2009

KUALA LUMPUR, 25 June 2009 – Kuala Lumpur is all set to witness the inaugural Standard Chartered KL Marathon come Sunday, 28 June. The largest and most rewarding race date on the calendar is guaranteed to be an exciting affair, as several of the world's top runners compete to win a share of the MYR350,000 prize money.

With timings of under 2:10 hours, many have been training hard to compete in what is surely a blue ribbon event on their competition schedule for the year.

They will be in good company though amongst the largest number of runners ever registered for a run in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with over 12,500 runners participating to make it a truly memorable occasion.

The interesting and colourful mix of several top runners from the various parts of the globe is quite amazing considering that the Standard Chartered KL Marathon is in its first edition.

Top of the pack is Kenya's **Lawrence Kiptoo Saina** with a personal best of 2:09:52. Coming into the race, Saina is primed for a good finish. Recent performances are evident of this and he has consistently been performing with quality timings hovering around the 2:11 hours mark.

Another face to watch is **Dogaga Haylu Abebe**. Sunday could well enough be his day as the Ethiopian is determined to match or better his time of 2:10:41 achieved in Seville, Spain earlier in the year.

Watch out also for **Biwott Philip Kiplagat**, another Kenyan who could be crossing the Finish Line ahead of the pack. The 32-year old enters the race as a serious contender having recently clocked 2:10:30, so do keep your eyes peeled for the cool Kenyan.

In **Mary Akor**, the women's category sees a lady who could top the women's category. The 24-year old from Nigeria has a personal best of 2:33:43 and her winning streak leaves her in good stead to once more add to her champion's trophy.

Though not if Russian **Margarita Plaksina** has anything to say about it. The 30-year old Russian ran a personal best of 2:35:36 in Saransk, Russia earlier this year, and it does indeed look like a battle royale between her and Akor.

Joining the group of international elite athletes are several home grown champions and two names certainly stand out - **Kunasegaran Ramakrishnan** and **Muniandy Ramadass**.

The pair of 30-year olds is arguably Malaysia's best and could well provide a photo-finish as they both have similar personal best times of 2:42 hours and they will be aiming to be the victor in the Malaysian Category.

The bet though must be on 34-year old **Shaharudin Hashim** to take home that crown. Hashim has achieved a personal best of 2:34:21 hours and is aiming to set a new national record ahead of the SEA Games in December, and there's certainly no occasion better than the Standard Chartered KL Marathon to write himself into the national record books.

Kenyan **Henry Wanyoike**, the world's top visually-impaired runner, will be running the Half Marathon with his childhood friend **Joseph Kibunja** as guide. Henry currently holds the Half Marathon World Record for visually-impaired runners with a time of 1:10:26 achieved in 2004. He is also the Gold and World Record holder of the 5,000 metres and 10,000 metres events at the 2004 Athens Paralympics.

Henry and Joseph have run in all nine Standard Chartered sponsored Marathons around the world as goodwill ambassadors of Seeing is Believing, a global community initiative aimed at addressing the causes of avoidable blindness as well as raising funds for the visually impaired.

The Standard Chartered KL Marathon, with its theme 'Run Your Race' is Malaysia's largest Race both in terms of participation numbers and also in terms of prize money. In just ten weeks, over 12,500 people signed up for the Marathon, which promises a total prize pool of MYR350,000.

The race is divided into five categories – Full Marathon, Half Marathon, 10km, 5km Family & Fun Run as well as the Kids Dash (3km and 950m).

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Standard Chartered KL Marathon 2009

The Standard Chartered KL Marathon 2009 is organised by Octagon, with Standard Chartered Bank as the Title Sponsor and MSIG Insurance Solutions as a Gold Sponsor. The Marathon is endorsed by the Youth and Sports Ministry, the National Fitness Council and the Kuala Lumpur City Hall, and sanctioned by the Malaysia Amateur Athletic Union (MAAU), International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), and the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS).