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Hong Kong Amateur Athletic Association



press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOP LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL MARATHONERS ARE READY FOR THIS SUNDAY'S STANDARD CHARTERED HONG KONG MARATHON 2009

[Hong Kong, 6 February 2009]: With only two days until the starting horn sounds for the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2009, some of the world's elite runners are making their final preparations. Today, local media were treated to special appearances from these incredible athletes, some of whom have come from around the globe to compete in Hong Kong's largest participatory sporting event.

Runners attending the event included Greatest Race on Earth (GROE) competitors Mr. Choi Tat Ming and Lau Kwong Man of Hong Kong, Mr. Leonid Shvetsov of Russia, Ms. Yang Fengxia of China and GROE All-Stars team members Mr. Qi Shun, Henry Wanyokie and Joseph Kibunja. Defending champion Mr. Fukuoka Koichiro of Japan, who won the 2008 Marathon with a time of 02:16:50, also attended together with athlete representatives from over 20 nations.

Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of Standard Chartered Bank (Hong Kong) Limited Mr. Benjamin Hung welcomed the Marathon stars to the stage with a locally flavoured ceremony: the opening of a traditional Chinese candy box. This was followed by each athlete giving Chinese New Year's greetings and cheering their fellow runners in their respective native languages.

Mr. Hung said, "The theme for the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2009 is 'The Race that Unites Hong Kong' but what makes this event special is that it also features top athletes from around the world running alongside the very best from our own backyard.

"We're really looking forward to Sunday, and we wish the very best to the 55,000 entrants who are competing in the day's races. We also encourage everyone in Hong Kong to get out and support this year's participants."



Hong Kong Amateur Athletics Association Chairman Mr. Kwan Kee said the calibre of athletes from about 20 countries was testament to the world-class status of the Hong Kong marathon.

“This is an extraordinary opportunity for athletes from all walks of life to run alongside the world’s best. This coming together of athletes of all abilities captures what the marathon is all about: determination, perseverance and commitment, no matter who we are or where we come from.”

For the fifth consecutive year, the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon serves as the grand finale of the Standard Chartered Greatest Race On Earth (GROE) international marathon series. The GROE features national teams vying for a share of the USD\$1 million prize purse on offer to the top overall times across four Standard Chartered marathons in Nairobi, Singapore, Mumbai and Hong Kong.

Mr Qi is running to help support Seeing is Believing (SiB), a global charity initiative of Standard Chartered Bank that has raised over USD\$17 million for blindness initiatives. Talking about his participation, he said, “I am proud to represent the Standard Chartered All-Stars team by running the final leg of GROE in Hong Kong, and I hope this helps raise awareness for SiB. I was born with visual disabilities, but many sorts of blindness are avoidable. Standard Chartered has been a major contributor toward eliminating this unfortunate issue, and I hope that my experience can inspire the disabled and the able alike. Life is full of ups and downs, but as we see our way ahead, there is always hope.”

About the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2009

The Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2009 will be held on Sunday, 8 February 2009. The Marathon is Hong Kong’s largest participatory sporting competition and has set another participation record this year with 55,000 registered runners.

The 10km Challenge start will be at 5:15am for runners who expect to finish within 1:10:00 of starting. The 10km Run 1, Run 2 and Run 3 will start at 5:35am, 6:00am and 6:30am respectively. The Half Marathon Challenge start will be at 6:50am for runners who expect to finish within 2:15:00 of starting. The Half Marathon Run 1 will start at 7:10am while the Full Marathon will begin at 8:00am.

The Full Marathon and Half Marathon will start at Nathan Road in Tsim Sha Tsui and finish at Victoria Park, Causeway Bay. The 10km Race will be run along the Island Eastern Corridor, with entrants starting at North Point and running through Quarry Bay, Taikoo Shing and Sai Wan Ho before turning at Shau Kei Wan to return to the full field finish at Victoria Park.

To celebrate the Bank’s 150th anniversary in Hong Kong, the prize purse has been increased to USD\$100,000. In addition, a further HKD\$30,000 in special prize money sponsored by Standard Chartered Marathon Savings Accounts will be awarded to the local fastest female and male full marathon runners.

Standard Chartered Bank (Hong Kong) Limited is in its 13th year of title sponsorship of the Hong Kong Marathon. Additional sponsors include the Western Harbour Tunnel Company Limited, Citizen Watches (HK) Limited, Watsons Water, New Balance Athletic Shoes (Hong Kong) Limited, Crown Motors Limited, PURE Fitness, now Sports, and the Information Services Department. Supporting organisations are the Hong Kong Tourism Board, Transport Infrastructure Management Ltd. and the Leisure & Cultural Services Department.

For full race details, go to www.hkmarathon.com.

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Released on behalf of Standard Chartered Bank (Hong Kong) Limited by GolinHarris.

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