

Taib launches state's first full marathon

Sarawak Tribune

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By Samuel Aubrey

Kuching some 2,000 international runners from Japan, Korea, India, Vietnam, Germany, Australia, Singapore and Brunei are expected to take part in Sarawak's first full marathon on March 26 next year.

Billed the "Saberkas RH Marathon 2006," the event also commemorates the 25th anniversary of Pehin Sri Haji Abdul Taib Mahmud as Chief Minister and president of Saberkas the state's biggest youth organization. It replaces the annual Saberkas Run and is expected to attract 10,000 local and foreign runners.

Inspired by the Chief Minister himself the 42-kilometre race aims to promote sports tourism in Sarawak as well as encourage locals to take up healthy lifestyles.

During its official launching and logo unveiling yesterday, Taib hoped the marathon would attract thousands of international visitors, not just runners, to Sarawak.

"At this juncture, I would like to thank the title sponsor, Rimbunan Hijau Group as well as members of Saberkas who have worked hard to promote it," he said.

Rimbunan Hijau, a Sibuan-based conglomerate, has agreed to organise the event, which is endorsed by Malaysia Amateur Athletic Union (MAAU) and Sarawak Amateur Athletic Association (SAAA). It is also supported by Sarawak Tourism Board (STB), hence the marathon's tagline "The Tropical Race, Sarawak."

Cash prizes of up to RM 200,000 will be up for grabs. There are eight categories. Only two categories will be for full marathon, namely, men (18 years and above) and women (18 years and above).

Entry fees are RM20 for the men's full marathon category and RM 10 for the women's full marathon category. For all the other categories, there will be no entry fee.

The race will begin and end in the competed of Bangunan Baituk Makmur (formerly known as Bangunan Masja). Meanwhile, deputy president of Saberkas, Dato Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg said the organizing committee would be arranging special packages for international participants.

"Details of the marathon are available on the Internet (www.saberkas.com.my/rhmarathon2006). Those interested can also contact the Saberkas office or Sarawak Tourist Information centres," he said.

Present yesterday were executive chairman of Rimbunan Hijau Group, Tan Sri Datuk Tiong Hiew King Environment and Public Health Minister Datuk Michael Manyin, who is also Saberkas vice president, Saberkas secretary general Aidan Wing, and vice president of Saberkas and organising chair- man of the event, Tan Sri Dato Sri Temenggong Tai Sing Chii.

Saberkas RH Marathon could boost tourism

Borneo Post

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By Wilson Luke

KUCHING: Chief Minister Pehin Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud has expressed the hope that the Saberkas RH Marathon 2006 would be able to attract thousands of overseas visitors to the State next year.

"The run which will be held in Kuching will be able to attract thousands of overseas visitors," he said at the launching of the Saberkas RH Marathon 2006 logo yesterday.

Taib, who is also Saberkas youth organization president, had thanked the organisers for the preparations of the event.

"I am sure that the sponsorship and the event have a great impact on our young people and Saberkas should be proud to be able to initiate the event so that sports will be the way of life", he said.

Earlier, Housing Minister Dato Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg, who is also Saberkas deputy president, said the idea to organise the first full marathon was mooted by the Chief Minister.

"It is to promote a sporting culture and healthy living among our youth as well as to promote sports tourism he said. The event will be held on March 26 to coincide with the Chief Minister's 25th anniversary as Saberkas president and a State leader.

He (Taib) has devoted tremendously to the development of Sarawak more so the youth as well as to steer together with him in transforming the state", said Abang Johari.

He hoped the marathon would give a new sense of excitement and energy into the youth organisation's commitment to make it a roving and resounding success. Abang Johari added that the organisers had hoped to get 10,000 runners including 2,000 from outside Sarawak.

"To-date runners from Japan, Korea, India, Vietnam, Germany, Australia, Singapore, Brunei and West Malaysia have signed up," he said.

Also present at the launching were Rimbunan Hijau Group executive chairman Tan Sri Datuk Tiong Hiew King, Saberkas vice president Datuk Michael Manyin who is also the Environment and Public Health Minister.

Sarawak to host marathon

The Star

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"So far runners from Japan, South Korea India, Vietnam, Germany Singapore, Brunei and Peninsular Malaysia have signed up"

- Datuk Abang Johari Tun Abang Openg

KUCHING: Some 10,000 runners are expected to take part in the first full marathon to be staged in Sarawak early next year. The Saberkas RH Marathon, organised by the state voluntary youth organization Saberkas, will take place on March 26.

With prize money totaling RM200,000, it will be one of the biggest sporting events to be held in the state. Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud, who is Saberkas president, launched the marathon logo and received the title sponsorship for the event from the Rimbunan Hijau Group here yesterday.

Saberkas deputy president Datuk Abang Johari Tun Abang Openg said the organizers were looking at having 10,000 runners participate in the event. including 2,000 from outside Sarawak.

"So far runners from Japan, South Korea, India, Vietnam, Germany, Singapore, Brunei and Peninsular Malaysia have signed up", he said.

He added that the marathon aimed to promote a sports culture and a healthy lifestyle among youths as well as showcase Sarawak as a centre for sports tourism for athletes in the region.

The event, sanctioned by the Malaysian Amateur Athletic Union and the Sarawak Amateur Athletic Association will feature eight categories - a full 42km marathon for men and women, half-marathon (21km) for men and women, men and women's veteran event (10km) and junior categories for girls and boys aged 13 to 18 (10km).

The winners of the men's and women's full marathons will receive RM20,000 and RM12,500 respectively, while the half-marathon winners will receive RM4,000 (men) and RM3,000 (women).

The winners of the other four categories will receive RM1,000 each. Entry forms can be downloaded from the Saberkas website at www.saberkas.com.my/rhmarathon2006 or collected from Saberkas offices in Kuching, Sibul, Bintulu and Miri.

Closing date for submission of entries is March 15.