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**Racing for the Arts: First-Ever Sangker River Run a Smashing Success**

**Racing for the Arts: First-Ever Sangker River Run a Smashing Success**

Posted Jan 31, 2024 15:43 by EAC News © 1311



BATTAMBANG: Phare Ponleu Selpak announced today the incredible success of the Sangker River







The 30-kilometer run/cycle event kicked off the year-long 30th anniversary celebrations of Phare Ponleu Selpak and served as a fundraiser for the school's art and education programs in Battambang Province. Thanks to generous platinum sponsorship by V-Active and Krud Energy, gold sponsorship by ABA Bank, and the contributions of other sponsors and local partners, 100% of the money raised by runners and cyclists went toward the 30th anniversary fundraiser.

“We would like to thank all donors, athletes, sponsors, and volunteers who contributed to the success of the Sangker River Run,” said Osman KHAWAJA, Executive Director of Phare Ponleu Selpak. “Your generous contributions of time, talent, and finances, have significantly enhanced the lives of young people here in Battambang Province by fostering their education as well as access to the life-changing power of the arts. The success of the inaugural Sangker River Run has once again established Battambang as a natural hub for arts, culture, and travel in Cambodia, and we're proud to be a part of that.”

The Sangker River Run incorporated a solo run, a solo cycle, and a relay run. The results of the race are as follows:

In the solo 30 km running race, Hiroshi Ake of Japan won 1st place, followed by Tang Seksang in 2nd place and Hong Vantheth in 3rd place, both Cambodian.

In the solo 30 km cycling race, Oliver Rene Bodicker of Germany took 1st place, with Si Meas and Samphous Pharoun, both of Cambodia, taking second and third place, respectively.

In the 30 km relay running race, Team SuperSonics of France took 1st place, with Team Kingdom Fight Gym (UK, Sweden, Netherlands) and Team Braided Dragons (U.S.) coming in second and third place, respectively.

“The event was well-organized and had a lot of fun,” said Oliver Rene Bodicker of Germany, the winner of the 30-km cycling race. “The track challenged me with a mix of both smooth and rugged routes. The scenery was also amazing. I encourage others to visit the campus, support the circus, enjoy the arts and culture, and make some contribution. I'm hoping you will come here.”

Ouch Ophinissara, the director of the Battambang Provincial Department of Tourism, presided over the event and also awarded the medals to the winning cyclists. The three co-founders of Phare Ponleu Selpak – art teacher LON Lao, Director of the Phare Performing Arts School KHUON Det, and Director of the Phare Visual and Applied Arts School TOR Vutha – as well as Osman KHAWAJA, the Executive Director of Phare Ponleu Selpak were also at the ceremony and awarded the medals to the winning solo and relay runners.

The race featured athletes from 14 different countries including Cambodia, Vietnam, Pakistan, South Korea, Japan, Australia, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, France, Chile, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The route began at the foot of Phnom Banan, home to an 11th-century Angkorian temple, and continued along the scenic Sangker River through the heart of Battambang, ending at the Phare Ponleu Selpak campus.

“This is the first time I have attended this race in Battambang,” said TANG Seksang, the second-place finisher of the 30-km solo run and a native of Phnom Penh. “I was so excited to join the







breathtaking beauty as I went over several suspension bridges and through many villages. I hope to see more people joining this kind of fundraising and running events in the future.”

At the finish line, the campus of Phare Ponleu Selpak was bustling with sponsors and food vendors. As cyclists and runners approached the finish line, residents, attendees, and judges cheered them on while Phare music students greeted them with drums. Complimentary massages, snacks, and beverages were provided to each finisher. The entire event ended at midday, and racers were invited to a free Phare Battambang Circus show that evening under the big top on the Phare Ponleu Selpak campus.

Even though the event is over, Phare Ponleu Selpak still urges supporters to continue supporting up to the end of the campaign. As of 30 January, the Sangker River Run has raised \$34,498.07, about 11% of the overall annual fundraising goal. Interested supporters can make a donation by SimplyGiving and Phare’s ABA until February 9, 2024.

The next few major events to look out for in Phare’s 30th anniversary celebrations occur from March 1–3 under the title “Celebrating 30 Years of Phare Ponleu Selpak: A Weekend of Festivities in Phnom Penh” including:

- Contemporary Dance Performance: Madison Now, directed by Michael Laub and choreographed by Michael Laub and Khen Vanthy

Date: March 1–2

Venue: John Crawford Theatre, Canadian International School, Koh Pich

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$5 / \$10 / \$20

- 30th Anniversary Charity Gala: Art auction, live painting, circus, and theatre performances with a four-course dinner and luxury stays

Date: March 2

Venue: Rosewood Phnom Penh Time: 6 p.m.

Tickets: \$150 per person / Full table \$1500 (early bird bookings by 11 February will get a free ticket to “Madison Now” and Cabaret of Dreams)

- Contemporary Theatre Performance: Cabaret of Dreams in collaboration with The Acting Academy

Date: March 3

Venue: To be determined

Times: To be determined

Tickets: \$20 (show including a drink)







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Please contact [reservations@phareps.org](mailto:reservations@phareps.org) for more information and to book tickets.







Phare Ponleu Selpak



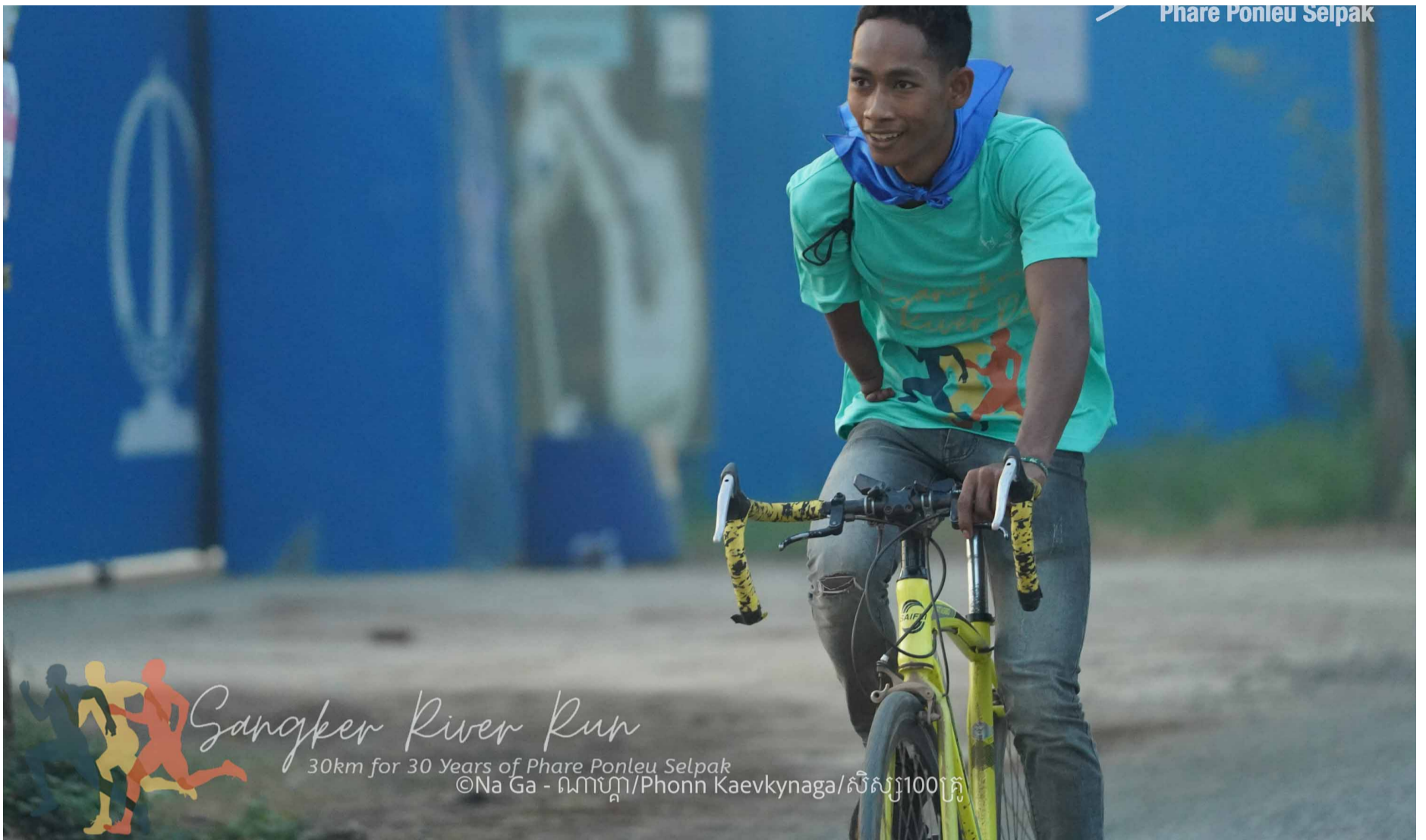
Sangker River Run

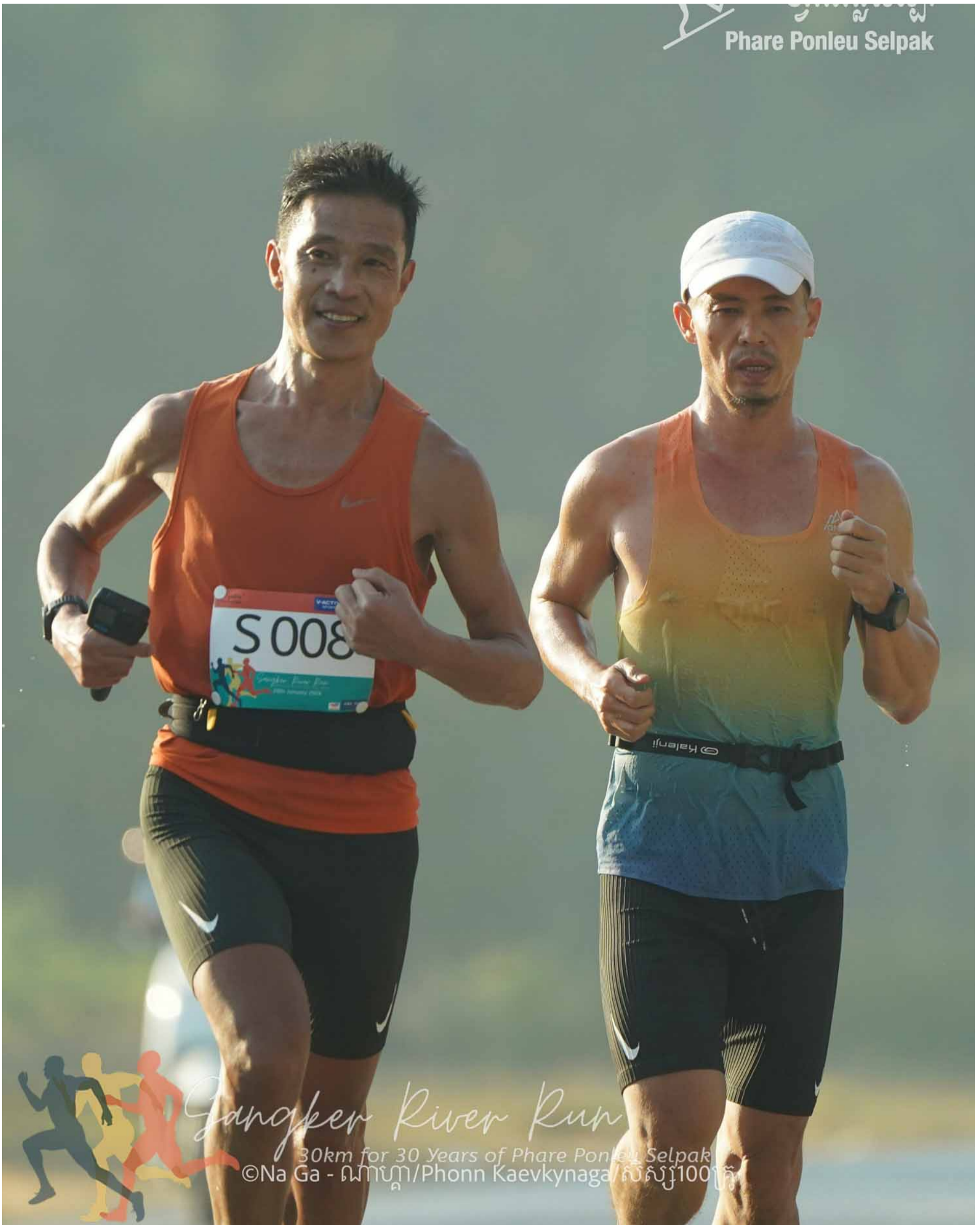
30km for 30 Years of Phare Ponleu Selpak

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Phare Ponleu Selpak



*Angkor River Run*

30km for 30 Years of Phare Ponleu Selpak  
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*Sangker River Run*

30km for 30 Years of Phare Ponleu Selpak  
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