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SUNDAY 4th July 2004: In a latest attempt by local city councils and state athletic associations, the Ipoh City Council (MBI) recently introduced a few extreme elements into the sport of marathoning in this country. Looking to emulate their counterparts in the Melaka Municipal Council, MBI organized last Sunday's maiden Ipoh International Run 42K by purposely not providing the much needed isotonic drinks from all the water stations except one at the 32K mark. This is on top of intentional measures put in by the organisers to position traffic marshalls at the wrong spots, withdrawing finish line officials at the 5th hour mark and not providing adequate finishers' medals. This pre-emptive move came as a surprise after the initial promise by MBI to ensure that these "essentials" are not overlooked and that the "shortcoming" of the Melaka Marathon 3 months ago were not repeated.

MBI spokesman Abdul Rahman Nordin said that this was to add an edge to the event. "We are tired of hearing about well-organized events such as the Singapore Marathon. Did Phiddipedes run from to Athens with the help of aid stations? Heck, he didn't even have proper footwear!", he said. Abdul Rahman added that these deprivations were to simulate an environment as close to the original marathon Phiddipedes ran more than 2,000 years ago. "Did Phiddipedes complained about the finisher's medal and certificate? No! In fact he just dropped dead!", the spokesman said. Abdul Rahman also contended that medals and certificates should not be something that marathon finishers should look forward to. "The satisfaction of finishing a marathon should be ranked higher than the material tokens," he contended. In a display of their commitment not to provide top-notch race organization, race officials even engineered a mess-up of the medals distribution to the other race categories and goodie bag distribution. There were also unconfirmed reports that cartons upon cartons of 100Plus were being sold at the finishing area for a Ringgit each, when they were more needed to hydrate the tired runners.

However 2nd time marathoner Tony Leong, argued that while it's true that the satisfaction of completing a marathon is greater than the medals, the medals and certificates were nice momentos to have and to show to his grandchildren. "Now they'll just have to take my word for it that I ran marathons!"

Fellow 2nd time marathoner Jamie Pang had arrived from KL with his wife and son, looking forward to this event. Initially things had looked promising. He had, through his running club [Pacesetters](#), secured a hotel room just 400 metres from the starting/finishing line. He also heard from his friend Yaziz whom he bumped into that the organisers had put together a route tour. "Unfortunately having my young son around, I was unable to make that tour," he said. He revealed that his preparation this time had been fraught with setbacks and his son also seemed to have come down with a fever, cutting short his fish and chips dinner at the Ipoh Parade mall.

When met after the race, Jamie said, "I thought I felt very comfortable, relaxed and having the right thoughts in my mind. The first 10 was easy. We passed a long and winding road which took us into a Chinese village. Don't ask me where I was as, with the exception of one coffeeshop which was opening for business, I didn't see a damn thing - the stretch was that dark! Not only that, I distinctly smelled cow dung. Don't believe me? Ask my friend here." he said, pointing to his newly acquainted 50-ish friend who nodded in agreement. The MBI officials would later confirm that the darkness and smell were also intentional elements to keep the minds of the runners alert lest they run into deep potholes. "I knew something was wrong when I crossed the line in 5:14 as I didn't spot any officials at the finish line. There was no one to direct me to do anything or anywhere. It was as though there's no finish line! It was also ridiculous that the medals will be sent by mail." Jamie lamented.

At this point 2 runners approached this reporter and voiced their anger. One of them who wished to be known only as Chen also did not receive a medal despite completing the marathon in 4:38. The other complainant, who looked Penguin-like, was equally upset, mouthing expletives. They mentioned that MBI should be sued for negligence and misrepresentation.

July 6th, 2004

NB. This article was written as a parody of the MBI authorities. Name of the MBI official is purely concocted. For more great lampoons and excellent resource of misinformation, please check out [Onion.com](http://onion.com).