



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **SHOWDOWN OF CHAMPIONS 2009 BRINGS TENNIS GLAMOUR TO MALAYSIA**

For two days only, catch a quartet of stars in the tennis world -- Elena Dementieva, Maria Kirilenko, Sania Mirza and Zheng Jie – battle it out on Malaysian courts for the Showdown of Champions 2009. The event, aptly billed as the Glam Slam, combines glamour, beauty, sports and fashion, and runs from 19 to 20 December at the Malawati Stadium in Shah Alam, Malaysia.

The tennis icons will play in three matches – the first, on 19 December, sees the double pairing of Elena and Maria versus Sania and Zheng Jie in what is called the Russia versus Asia match. The following day, Elena will compete against Zheng Jie, while Maria will meet face-to-face with Sania.

Concert performances, meet-the-fans sessions, a charity gala dinner fashion show, and a tennis coaching clinic are also scheduled for the world-famous tennis icons.

Tourism Minister, Dato' Sri Dr. Ng Yen Yen, said, "The Showdown of Champions 2009 brings in tennis stars that cater to the large market segments we wish to explore further."

The Showdown of Champions 2009 is also endorsed by event ambassador, Anna Kournikova. Anna, the world No 1 junior at 14, remains an icon despite having hung up her racket in 2003. Her appeal and popularity are illustrated by her stature as United States' No. 9 favourite female sports stars in a recent poll.

Anna was ranked as high as No. 8 in 2000 and won 16 doubles titles, earning the No 1 ranking at the end of 1999. She was runner-up in mixed doubles at Wimbledon in 1999 and the US Open in 2000. Before calling it quits six years ago, Anna had the distinction of beating five No. 1 players – Lindsay Davenport, Martina Hingis, Monica Seles, Steffi Graf and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario.

Anna was excited to be part of the project and said, "I'm really excited to be part of the Showdown of Champions 2009. I think it will benefit Malaysia. Malaysia and Malaysians are fortunate to be able to witness such an event. I have heard so much about the event and I believe it encourages tennis fans from this region to travel and experience a unique show. Tennis is a popular sport and people love to travel between countries and even continents to watch their favourite stars in action."

Elena is the 2008 Olympic Games gold medalist who enjoys a good record in Asia. The Showdown of Champions 09 Asia versus Russia match will help Elena prepare for the Hopman Cup in January, where she will partner Igor Andreev.

Maria, the world No. 61, is one of the most attractive and sexiest tennis stars on the planet. The poster girl for tennis, affectionately called Makiri, likes connecting athletics and fashion and appeared in the glamorous 2009 Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition. Sania, blessed with Bollywood looks and one of the most recognised and talked about women in India, personifies the emerging India and is regarded with a passion usually reserved for movie stars and the country's cricket team. She is currently ranked 58th in the world.

Zheng Jie, ranked 35th in the world, has the distinction of becoming the first Chinese player ever to reach the semifinals of a Grand Slam singles tournament in Wimbledon in 2008 and only the second time a wild-card player has reached the women's semifinals in the Open era. Generous and charitable outside the court, Zheng Jie donated her winnings to the Sichuan earthquake victims.

The Showdown of Champions 2009 is organized by LD Sports Sdn Bhd, a leading sports event management company, and sponsored by Royale Chulan, Yonex and Pavilion Kuala Lumpur, and supported by the Ministries of Tourism and Youth and Sport.

The Malawati Stadium is located in Shah Alam, about 25 km away from Kuala Lumpur, and is an indoor stadium with a capacity for 40,000 people. Shah Alam is well connected to the surrounding cities by highways such as the Federal Highway, New Klang Valley Expressway (NKVE), Shah Alam Expressway (KESAS), Guthrie Corridor Expressway, and the North-South Expressway Central Link (ELITE). It is well connected to main transportation hubs such as the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) some 30 km south of the city and KL Sentral in Kuala Lumpur.

For more information on this event, please log on to <http://showdownkl.com/> or contact the organizer LD Sports Sdn Bhd, tel: +603 2093 0658 or email: [info@showdownkl.com](mailto:info@showdownkl.com)

Tickets are priced at RM48, RM108, RM188 and RM208. For ticketing information, go to [www.tickethotline.com.my](http://www.tickethotline.com.my).

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