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Sania Mirza becomes first Indian to be nominated for Fed Cup Heart Award

Sania Mirza, the most decorated Indian female tennis player, has added another feather to her cap today after becoming the first Indian to be nominated for the Fed Cup Asia/Oceania Group I Heart Award.

In 2019, Zarina Diyas from Kazakhstan emerged victorious from Asia/Oceania Group I. This year, India will be represented in the awards race for the first time.

Former world number one and multiple Grand Slam winner Sania Mirza returned to Fed Cup competition for the first time since 2016 and guided Team India with her inspirational performance recording three doubles wins in the Asia/Oceania Group I tournament earlier this year in March. Her performance, along with another senior compatriot Ankita Raina, proved decisive in India's historic qualification to the Fed Cup Play-offs.

"Stepping on to the court for the first time in India colours was a moment of pride for me, back in 2003. It has been an eighteen year long journey since then and I feel extremely proud and privileged to have contributed to the success of Indian tennis. The Fed Cup result at the Asia/Oceania tournament last month is one of the greatest achievements of my playing career. These are the moments an athlete plays for and I am grateful to the Fed Cup Heart Awards selection panel for this recognition" said Mirza.

The Fed Cup Heart Award is an International Tennis Federation (ITF) initiative that was established in 2009 to recognize those Fed Cup players who represent their countries with distinction, show exceptional courage on court and demonstrate outstanding commitment to the ideals of the competition.

To recognize the top performances in Fed Cup this year, six players have been nominated for the three regional Group I Fed Cup Heart Awards.

The winners of the Heart Awards will be determined by online voting by fans which will go live on 1st May and will go on until 8th May.

In Fed Cup Heart Award's 11th edition this year, Priska Madelyn Nugroho of Indonesia is the second player nominated from the Asia/Oceania region. They are joined by Anett Kontaveit (Estonia) and Eleonora Molinaro (Luxembourg) from Europe/Africa; Fernanda Contreras Gomez of Mexico and Paraguay's Veronica Cepede Royg from the Americas, as the remaining four regional Group I nominations.

(Hironmoy Chatterjee)
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