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Grand Prix Ball back in full swing

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THE luxury Grand Prix Ball that accompanies the annual Malaysian Formula One Grand Prix will be back this year after a four-year hiatus because of the global financial meltdown.

Named the *Sapura and Kencana Petroleum Red Ribbon GP Ball 2012*, the luxury gala will take place on March 22, with the attendance of Formula One drivers and team leaders and Hollywood celebrities.

All proceeds are expected to be donated to the Malay-

sian AIDS Foundation and the Global Poverty Project.

"This event is to showcase what Malaysia is about on a global level," said Live Music Entertainment (LME) chief executive officer Rio Kader, one of the gala event partners.

The event will be held under the patronage of Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, wife of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak. Najib is expected to be one the VIPs who will attend the event.

American actors Owen Wilson, Paul Walker and Adrian Brody have confirmed their attendances, said Kader.

The event will see tables for

10 people being sold at prices ranging from RM35,000 to RM200,000, depending on the company that guests will be allocated at their tables. Those that include the Hollywood celebrities are expected to be the most expensive.

Malaysian AIDS Foundation's chairman Prof Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman said she expected the foundation to receive about RM2 million from the event.

"Like the galas held previously, the cost is borne by our sponsors, which are the Sapura Group and Kencana Petroleum this time. The money that comes in will be used to fund the 90 or so pro-

grammes about AIDS that we run nationwide," she said.

However, Adeeba admitted that AIDS awareness in Malaysia was still found wanting.

"It's still not enough and we are striving to increase the awareness on a nationwide scale," she said.

This is the 14th edition of the Grand Prix Ball that takes place before the Malaysian Formula One Grand Prix at Sepang.

The event will also feature a charity auction, the proceeds of which will be divided between the Malaysian AIDS Foundation and the Global Poverty Project.