Diversity on campus

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THIS year’s Chinese New Year celebrations wasn’t just about ushering in the Year Of The Dog for Sunway University’s Chinese Independent School Alumni Club (CISA).

In fact, their celebrations coincided perfectly with the club’s eighth anniversary on Feb 8.

Themed “Tuan Yuan Fun”, the club’s vice-president Amanda Chan Siew Yi, 21, says the theme was chosen because they wanted to stress the importance of the reunion dinner during Chinese New Year.

She adds that the dinner, held the night before the first day of the festival, is an age-old tradition where families come together to enjoy authentic dishes.

The club even put on a play about how three brothers return to their mother’s home after leaving due to her constant nagging.

What made the play all the more special was the incorporation of the university’s 24 drum ensemble and a short Chinese violin (erhu) piece.

The day-long celebrations also had a lion dance troupe comprising Chinese independent high school alumni - not all from Sunway University - and a dragon dance troupe made up of Chung Hwa High School, Klang, students.

Chan says this is the fourth year CISA is organising the celebrations and it is their biggest to date.

They have more booths this year, including five game booths and eight cultural exhibitions, she adds.

Among the exhibits were Chinese paper cutting, calligraphy and Chinese knotting while the performances included a Chinese orchestra, diabolo and a performance by Astro All Stars Geraldine Gan and William Tan.

“The majority of the club members are Chinese and we already know about our own culture.

“What we want is to show our foreign visitors (students) and those of other races the Chinese culture when they visit the booths,” adds Chan.

Sunway Education Group and Sunway University senior executive director Elizabeth Lee says they celebrate every major festival at the university.

“It’s only in appreciating each other’s cultures that we can truly embrace the differences,” she adds.

Also present were Sunway University vice-chancellor Prof Graeme Wilkinson and Sunway Group’s Education and Healthcare Division’s chief executive officer Dr Lee Weng Keng.