Chance to feed the planet

By SANDHYA MENON
educate@thestar.com.my

MALAYSIA generated an estimated 42,672 tonnes of waste daily last year that could have been channelled to the needy.

Under its Goal Two, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) aims to end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030.

Seeing a need to contribute to this effort, Sunway University School of Hospitality hosted the Bill Gallagher Young Chefs Forum, designed for chefs under 25 years of age.

The varsity used the forum as an apt platform to educate and expose its participants not only Malay Heritage cuisine, but to the opportunity to feed the planet and doing so in a sustainable manner.

The forum saw the participation of 125 young chefs from around the world, and was divided into two activities.

Describing eating as the nation's favourite national activity, Sunway University vice-chancellor Prof Graeme Wilkinson said: “Good food is indeed something that unites the world and I am delighted that today you will learn something about our national dishes.”

“The second activity involves packing meals in support of the excellent work undertaken globally by Rise Against Hunger.

“While pursuing a career, I would like to urge all of you to keep in mind those who are less fortunate.

“It’s normal for one to aspire for success but try to contribute a little of your time - it could be as little as helping out in the soup kitchen - to help feed those who need nourishment,” she added.

Through their participation in the forum, the biggest contribution of the young chefs involved coming up with recipes for the food packets, said Rise Against Hunger Malaysia president Tiki Keh.

“We pack simple meals which comprise rice, lentils and dehydrated vegetables among other things.

“If the participants can create tasty recipes out of these simple ingredients, it will add value not just to the budding chefs’ skills, but also to the homeless people who benefit from these food packets.

“Attending forums like these will build empathy among young chefs,” he added.

The forum provided talented chefs with an opportunity to build their network and learn how to further develop their culinary skills inside and outside the kitchen.