Direct flights to Europe will boost state tourism

BY NORNASHEILA ZAIIDI

KUCHING: When direct air flights are established between Kuching and Europe in the near future, it will greatly boost the state’s tourism industry.

“Presently, discussions at state and federal levels are still going on to establish direct flights between Kuching and Europe,” said Deputy Tourism Minister Dr. James Dawos Mamit.

“Besides visitors from European countries, Sarawak has many visitors from Australia and New Zealand. The visitors are greatly attracted to our culture, food and beaches and we need to upgrade out tourism products from time to time,” he said, adding that the state had 4.06 million visitors last year.

Dawos said this in his speech when officiating at the Young Tourism Chef Challenge organised by the Ministry of Tourism at Kubah Ria Centre Court heer yesterday.

He explained that food has always been the main attraction in tourism industry and Sarawak is popular with its ‘Laksa Sarawak’, ‘Mi Kolok’, and ‘Ayam Pansuh’.

“The originality of the foods needs to be preserved to remain a tourist attraction. Besides, tourists are also looking for branded products in our country as we have stopped import duties since 2011.

“Last year, Malaysia was in fourth place among the list of most visited countries in the world, meaning we are on good track in the tourism industry,” said Dawos.

Ten 10 teams from five local institutions participated in the competition yesterday, which each institution sending two teams. The team from SATT College emerged winner with Glatmara College in second place and UCSI College, third.

Also present at the event yesterday was Tourism Malaysia Sarawak Director Esther Douglas Udam.