



Some of the graduates at the convocation.

## Hopes high on first batch of mosque management grads

DE 11/12/01 3

**Sherell Ann Jeffrey**

KOTA KINABALU: High hopes are riding on the first batch of students who have now earned their stripes in mosque management.

The Executive Diploma in Mosque Management introduced by UMS Link Holdings Sdn Bhd is ultimately aimed at improving the management of mosques and surau in the State.

"With this programme, we can see that it's a new beginning where we can expect well managed mosques with the presence of trained people irrespective of whether they are in the urban or rural areas," said former Head of State Tun Ahmadshah Abdullah here, Thursday.

He was speaking at the joint conferment of

certificates and advanced diploma to 195 students from two educational centres of learning under the UMS Link.

Eight working adults obtained their executive diplomas under the mosque management programme.

"I fully support the programme, which is a new field, explored by UMS Link and knowing fully well the mosque situation in our State.

"I've worked with the Sabah Islamic Religious Council for eight years in the 80s and I know there is quite a number of mosques and suraus in Sabah but the majority are managed by people who are not well trained.

"They are not trained how to organise or look after mosques the proper way. However,

there are some mosques, which are very well managed because they are headed by corporate people."

He said the need to have knowledgeable and trained people to manage the mosque is important because numerous programmes can be organised in the mosque.

"In fact, there are so many things to do in the mosque, with so many jobs to do, it's not easy. You will meet so many characters going in and out or maybe encounter those who don't care about the mosque rules.

"Thus, it's important to be trained and be knowledgeable to handle situations like this the proper way."

He added that government allocation has been limited because it wants the committees looking after the mosque to raise their own funds and manage it.

"You need to have your own funds, thus, you will need knowledgeable people to run it," he said.