

UMS Link to expand off-campus program

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KOTA KINABALU: UMS Link Holdings Sdn Bhd is seeking a collaboration with the State Government to expand Universiti Malaysia Sabah's (UMS) off-campus programme to state civil servants looking to further their studies at bachelor's degree and degree level.

Group chairman, Buthamam Awang Mahmud, said UMS Off-campus studies or better known as PLUMS, was first introduced in Sandakan back in 1999 with a humble beginning of only 200 untrained teachers taking the course.

The programme soon evolved and became very successful, and have so far enrolled some 6,600 students in 15 bachelor's degree and 10 degree courses, he said.

"I am proposing a further collaboration with the Education Department to identify untrained teachers and have them go for off-campus studies in UMS.

This programme should also be expanded to include other civil servants," he said during the UMS Off-Campus Graduates Dinner here on Thursday.

The event was held to honour 437 PLUMS students who will be joining some 4,000 other students to receive their scrolls during the 16th UMS Convocation ceremony this weekend.

Tourism, Culture and Environment Minister cum State Education EXCO Datuk Seri Panglima Masidi Manjun, who officiated at the event, said the State Government welcomes any parties wanting to work with them towards developing the education sector.

"I fully support UMS Link's intention to collaborate with the State to provide suitable degree programmes for civil servants. Our door is always opened and we very much welcome any

parties who want to work with us in anything towards further improving access to quality education," he said.

Earlier in his speech, Masidi advised graduates not to be choosy in finding jobs, saying competition for employment is so fierce that many would find it almost impossible to find a job that meets their expectations.

The era where the government can guarantee jobs for every qualified citizen is long gone and students has to take it upon themselves to become as employable as possible before they graduate.

"I suggest students take additional courses that has nothing to do with their main studies, this will give you an advantage and therefore more marketable compared to only depending on your degree alone," he said.