



KERIS TERBANG



PEMOTONGAN KEK SEMPENA
HARI ULANG TAHUN
TENTERA UDARA DIRAJA BRUNEI KE-54

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VISION

TO DELIVER A ROBUST, RESPONSIVE AND RESOURCE EFFICIENT AIR FORCE

Assalamualaikum,

Welcome to Issue 2 of Keris Terbang! Planning for material and content for this quarter's issue posed challenges for the editorial team. It wasn't because everyone was too busy with his or her routine jobs. COVID-19 happened, and the whole nation was affected by it. Suddenly words like hand sanitisers, facemasks, Zoom meetings and social distancing became part of everyone's daily habits. Lets not forget the currently practised fist bumps and other greeting gestures. The past three months have been life changing for some, if not most of us. But as we keep on striving and adapting to what is now our 'new norms', we must still uphold our 'Service Above Self' mind-set and collectively maintain the RBAirF's working efficiency during this challenging period.



Albeit we all faced a more sombre but nothing less than meaningful Ramadhan, an even more low-key Aidilfitri was celebrated in our own homes. If anything else, it would have made us appreciate these two important Islamic months more than previously. We still managed to celebrate the RBAF's 59th anniversary on 31st May as well as the RBAirF's 54th anniversary on 24th June recently, although in smaller and decentralised numbers. One milestone was achieved recently with the publication of the Air Power Doctrine. We hope you enjoy our articles that are aimed to feature our airmen and airwomen, and their stories as we welcome the second half of 2020!

Stay safe and healthy!

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FOREMOST



**Lt Col (U) Pengiran Hasrul Ariffin
Bin Pengiran Haji Rosley
Chief of Staff, RBAirF**

“The percentage of aircraft availability is the reflection of our performance. Fulfilling 100% of the daily requirement is our target, above that is a bonus”

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

As I was casually talking with one of the engineering warrant officers, reminiscing and sharing stories and experiences, I realised that we used work together in one of the operational squadron. Counting the years, that was seventeen years ago!

When I reflect back to those years, a lot of what we strived for and achieved needed a lot of sacrifices. We worked hard and set aside our personal errands, supported each other as a team and always aimed for excellence with the 'safety first' mindset embedded in all our activities.

As we orient ourselves to the new norms implicated by COVID-19, the RBAirF continues to remain operationally ready to deliver air operations, as well as to respond to any requirements to support the nation in tackling the secondary effects of the pandemic on the ground. I know for the fact that it has not been easy. The last few weeks has tested and challenged us in the efforts to flatten the curve, but Alhamdulillah, it has not hindered us from carrying out our responsibilities. We could still celebrate important events along the way, and find blessings in disguise amidst the hardships faced.

Adapting to a different environment enabled us to appreciate Ramadhan in a subtly sweeter pace, as well as celebrate Syawal and Aidilfitri with a little bit more time to spend with our loved ones. The pandemic didn't stop us from celebrating the RBAF's 59th Anniversary in modesty, and didn't deter the RBAirF in celebrating her 54th Anniversary too. We managed to celebrate a historical milestone this year with our first ever Air Power Doctrine, as well as acknowledge the men and women who have contributed tirelessly with excellence and teamwork, ultimately placing service above themselves.

As we enter the second half of the year, there are still many challenges that lie ahead and activities to look forward to. I have no doubt that we will continue to perform, as we always do, and I pray that the RBAirF will continue strive and persevere, and always be under the protection of Allah the Almighty. Amin Ya Rabbal Alamin.

Stay strong and stay safe!

RAMADHAN – THE MONTH OF GIVING

By Lt (U) Dk Nurafifah



The Commander of RBAirF handing over donations to the youngest son of the late 16360 Sgt (U) Muhammad bin Hj Zakaria, from No. 4 Wg



The eldest son of the late 18223 LCpl (U) Muhd Khairuddin bin Hj Abbas at Kg. Meragang, receiving donations from CO No. 1 Wg

During the holy month of Ramadhan, Muslims are obligated to fast from sunrise to sunset and perform various forms of charity, particularly upon those who are able to do so. Muslims are taught to be generous in contributing to charity work and donations as this will get them closer to Allah the Almighty. An act of kindness, however small, gives out a good feeling and a sense of meaningfulness.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the RBAirF handed out donations to the family members of departed personnel at their residences, by Group and Wing Commanders. Several donations were also handed by Commander RBAirF himself. Donations were in the form of cash and daily necessities, which consolidates the Annual *Sentuhan Kasih* event, which is conducted during the holy month of Ramadhan. The donations presented were raised by the collective contributions from the RBAF Welfare Fund, RBAirF *Surau* Fund, the RBAF Cooperative Limited (Kowira), the the RBAF Wives Welfare Committee (BAKTI) as well as funds from BAKTI of RBAirF.

These annual charitable acts are tokens of remembrance for departed RBAirF personnel, in the hopes of easing the burden of their family members, and as a reminder that they are still and continue to be under the care of the service. The act of giving is one of the important values of Islam without expecting anything in return and is a demonstrative quality of our Prophet Muhammad PBUH, who was known as the most generous of people. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH said: "The best charity is the one which is given during Ramadan." [Tirmidhi]



KHATAM AL-QURAN IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE MONTH OF RAMADHAN

By Lt (U) Arieef

Rimba Air Force Base, Friday 22 May 2020 – RBAirF held an annual *Khatam Al-Quran* to mark the end of the Holy month of Ramadhan despite the nation's uproar of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The event was held at Ruang Legar Rajawali, RBAirF Headquarters, and present as the Guest of Honour was the Deputy Commander of RBAirF Col (U) Abdul Rahman bin Haji Durahman. Also in attendance were Senior Executive Officers and Wing Commanding Officers.

Adhering to the national guidelines of COVID-19 preventive measures, all present were provided face masks and seated apart to encourage social distancing throughout the event.

The ceremony began with the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah and followed by recitation of Surah Ad-Dhuha until Surah Al-Masad. It was then proceeded with *Takhtim* and the Doa Khatam recited by Ustaz Said Bin Hj Yusop, the RBAirF's Religious Teacher. The event concluded with a *Doa Tolak Bala* (to ward off misfortune); praying to Allah The Almighty to keep everyone safe from the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The main objective of the event was to enliven the month of Ramadhan and to cultivate the spirit of loving Al-Quran with beneficial activities like this as well as supporting the desire of the country to be a *Zikir Nation* despite facing difficult times.





MENTAL HEALTH



According to the World Health Organisation (WHO):

"Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community."

Mental health is the foundation for the well-being and effective functioning of individuals. It is more than the absence of a mental disorder; it is the ability to think, learn, and understand one's emotions and the reactions of others. Mental health is a state of balance, both within and with the environment. Physical, psychological, social, cultural, spiritual and other interrelated factors participate in producing this balance. There are inseparable links between mental and physical health.

TIPS FOR MENTAL HEALTH:

Good mental health:

Is characterised by a person's ability to learn. The ability to feel, express and manage a range of positive and negative emotions. The ability to form and maintain good relationships with others.

1. Build Relationships

Having good relationships with other people is the most important factor contributing to a sense of wellbeing. This can include family, friends, workmates and others in the community. Investing time and energy in your relationships can lead to great benefits for all involved.

2. Exercise and Stay Healthy

Exercise has been shown to increase wellbeing as well as reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. Good physical health leads to better mental health so a healthy diet, getting a good night's sleep and regular checkups with the doctor can all help.

3. Develop Gratitude

Count your blessings. Try keeping a gratitude journal and write down 3 positive things each day. This can lead to increased wellbeing.

4. Identify and Use Your Strengths

We all have different strengths and weaknesses but finding out what you are really good at and using those talents can increase wellbeing. Using your strengths to help others or contribute to the community creates a sense of meaning and purpose.

TIPS TO KEEP MENTALLY HEALTHY DURING COVID-19:

PAUSE. Breathe. Reflect
KEEP to a healthy routine
CONNECT with others
BE KIND to yourself and others
REACH OUT for help if you need it

PAUSE. Breathe. Reflect
KEEP to a healthy routine
CONNECT with others
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- There have been more than half a million deaths due to COVID-19.
- Limit unnecessary exposure and contact with the elderly and children as well those who have medical conditions such as chronic diseases.
- Offices, restaurants, banks and other business organisations have rescheduled their working pattern by temporarily introducing a change in their normal shift work or roster.

PREVENTION MEASURES AGAINST COVID-19:



Stay home if you feel unwell.



Clean your hands often. Use soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub.



Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth. Cover your nose and mouth with your bent elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze.



Avoiding unneeded visits to medical facilities allows healthcare systems to operate more effectively, therefore protecting you and others.



If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention. Call in advance.



Follow the directions of your local health authority.



Maintain a safe distance from anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

COVID-19 IMPACT ON PERSONAL LIVES AND PRODUCTIVITY:

- Sports and other activities are very much affected by the closing of sports centres, gyms, swimming pool and field.
- Shops, restaurants, shopping malls, private schools, private gym owners run with less profit as the number of customers are very much reduced.
- Schools and educational institutions have been ordered shut while teachers and students adapt to home based virtual and online learning.
- Some business organisations have to reduce their manpower resources or workers to survive.
- As a result of COVID-19, many business organisations operate at losses and have to close down.
- The number of exports and imports of products is reduced due to restrictions imposed by countries to overcome or prevent the spread of this disease.

Since individuals are encouraged to stay at home and maintain social distancing to help stop the spread of COVID-19, a few possible hobbies can be picked up:

- Learn how to cook with the extra time at home.
- Activities such as gardening and home improvement projects can also be rewarding when staying at home. Save some money with DIY projects rather than paying others for the service.
- Those with sports equipment such as treadmill, should start doing indoor running.
- Physical exercise and YOGA can be chosen to make individual busy.

TIPS / POSSIBLE HOBBIES TO PICK UP



THE ROYAL BRUNEI ARMED FORCES 59th ANNIVERSARY: ADAPTING TO NEW NORMS

By Lt (U) Ak Aminor Fikhri



It is that time of the year again. The sounds of the drumbeats and bagpipes light up the morning. Everyone takes their positions, ready to start the day's proceedings. Civilians gather, waiting at the side of the parade square, anticipating to watch military personnel marching in for the mass parade. Sirens start wailing a distance away from the parade square. Photographers standing next to the Royal Dais ready to capture the moment. As the emcee announces, "The arrival of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Negara Brunei Darussalam...", everyone stands up to show their respects. His Majesty arrives along with members of the Royal Family. The clicking sounds of cameras fill the air as he steps down from his vehicle. Greeted by the Second Minister of Defence and Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF), His Majesty is ushered to his seat.

This is how I remember the last RBAF anniversary celebrations, and how it usually begins. The remainder of the day is usually filled with an exciting arena display showcasing collaborative efforts from various units, including the RBAirF, of which was preceded by an already captivating flypast during the parade, and static displays of RBAF equipment and assets, to be shared and celebrated with the rest of the nation.

For the first time, the RBAF was unable to organise the anniversary celebrations like it used to, as the whole nation's norms were halted due to COVID-19. Precautionary measures came into play to curb and control the spread of the novel virus, guidelines outlined by the Ministry of Health for everyone to adhere to, and the RBAF was of no exception. Celebrations of the RBAF Anniversary this year were held in moderation, and only held within the RBAF organizations in isolation, without the collaborative celebrations that is anticipated every year.

On 31st May 2020, RBAF celebrated her 59th anniversary behind closed doors within their respective units. The main ceremony was held at the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF). For the RBAirF, a ceremony was held at the RBAirF Headquarters as the main location for the ceremony, with the Operations Group and Support Group celebrating at two other locations within Rimba Air Base. The ceremony was attended by a total of 90 personnel only across these venues, consisting of senior officers, officers, airmen, and civilian staff. Guest of

• ACTIVITIES •

Honour at RBAirF HQ was Col (U) Abdul Rahman bin Durahman, Deputy Commander of RBAirF. The ceremony's conduct, in line with the new norms, was done via technological means in order to recreate and embrace a togetherness feel that forms the basis of this celebration. Even with COVID-19 precautionary measures that had to be applied, it did not stop the intent of this celebratory and thanksgiving ceremony, an offer of gratitude to how the RBAF has evolved for almost six decades.

With that being said, it still couldn't negate the obvious difference to the feel during this year's anniversary. The drumbeats by the band that usually light up that morning are now replaced by silence, and my mind wanders off to a thought to when will it happen again. The crowd that normally fills the space at the sidelines of the Parade Square is now replaced by selected airmen seating next to each other with spaces. The smile of children watching the display arena show is now just personnel with face masks over their faces.

This year's celebration submits us to a realisation that the RBAF anniversary and the opportunity to celebrate it should be cherished and appreciated. Even though this year's celebration is different, it has brought us new perspectives and thoughts, and the new norm presents us with a prompt to not only appreciate and celebrate what we have achieved, but grow and adapt to new solutions for unexpectedness, just as how the RBAF has developed over these years. Happy 59th Anniversary to RBAF, and to wishing that she will grow stronger to adapt to new norms, and fulfill the missions and visions set before her in whatever challenges that lie ahead!



RBAirF Anniversary Celebration this year at various locations



RBAF Anniversary Celebration in 2019





GREETINGS FROM RBAIRF PERSONNEL ABROAD

Assalamualaikum to all readers. It is an honour for me to be given the opportunity to convey my greetings to you this time around. In view of the COVID-19 pandemic I pray that you have been keeping well and are in good health during this difficult time.

First and foremost, I wish you all *Selamat Hari Raya, Mohon Maaf Zahir dan Batin*. I hope that everyone has been enjoying the festivities in their own special way.

As we all know, this year has brought with many new challenges and experiences for us. We are still navigating our way into this new normal whereby restrictions have been put in place on many things that we take for granted. This is a sacrifice that we make for the sake of our own health and the health of others. In Shaa Allah, if we continue to play our part in preventing the spread of this disease, we will eventually triumph over this invisible enemy.

Even though I am currently miles away from home, I can still feel a strong sense of belonging to the Royal Brunei Air Force and would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to the RBAirF for celebrating its 54th Anniversary and wish every personnel back home, Happy Anniversary! May the RBAirF continue to stand tall and celebrate many more anniversaries in the future. I wish that all of us will continue to place loyalty, integrity, patriotism and professionalism in our line of work.

Till we meet again, I pray that Allah the Almighty keep us and our country safe under His divine protection. Aamiin Ya Rabbal Alamin.

With Warmest Regards,

Lt Col (U) Hjh Suriani Hj Junaidi
Brunei Darussalam's Defence Attache to Kingdom of Thailand

Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar
Walillahilham

From the 96th Helicopter Instructor Course Participants here all the way in Singapore, we would like to wish Selamat Hari Raya to all our brothers and sisters at the RBAirF, and also an advanced Happy Anniversary to both RBAF and RBAirF.

*Pada Saat hati telah bersih,
Maka Kebahagiaan yang ada tidaklah
terbeban dan tak bersyarat,
Setelah sebulan penuh menahan nafsu dan
berbagai bentuk cubaan,
Muncul lah hati yang bersih dan suci,
Untuk itu, Dengan segala kerendahan hati
izinkanlah kami sekeluarga mengucapkan
Selamat Hari Raya Aidil Fitri Maaf Zahir dan
Batin dengan senyuman ketulusan*

**Cpt (U) Asma Ahmad Farisulamin bin Sultan
Cpt (U) Mohamad Wafiy bin Haji Mohd Salleh
96th Helicopter Instructor Course Participants,
Singapore**



Assalamualaikum Dato, Sirs and Ma'ams,

Bismillahirrahmanirahim. All praises and thanks to Allah, I would like to use this opportunity to wish everyone in the RBAirF, Eid Mubarak, Happy 59th RBAF Anniversary and most of all, a Happy 54th RBAirF Anniversary to all the men and women in blue.

Stay professional, efficient and most importantly stay safe.

Regards,

**Cpt (U) Mohammad Aliff Bin Haji Zulkifli
IDB VMAT Leader, Mindanao Philippines**



ROYAL BRUNEI AIR FORCE'S 54th ANNIVERSARY EVENT

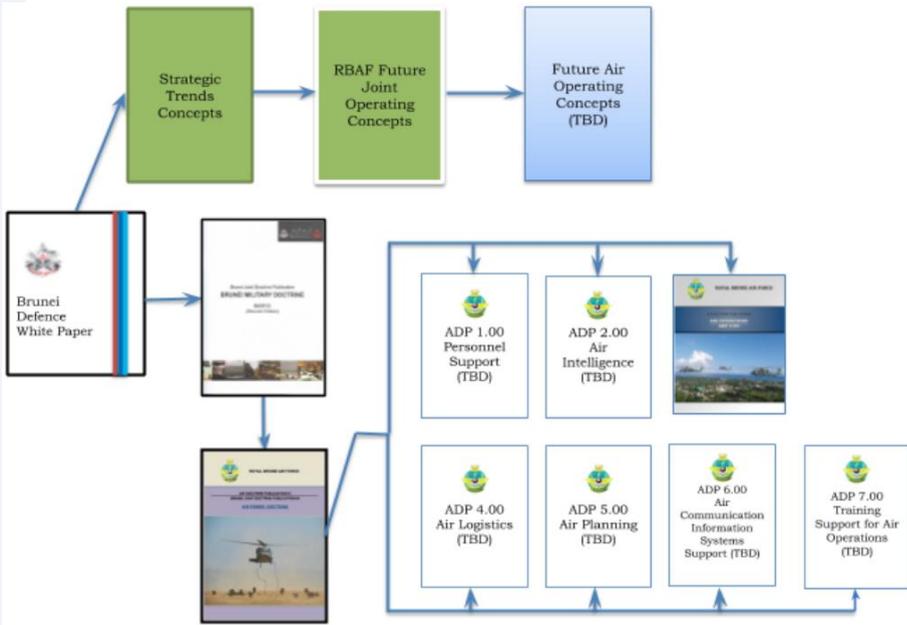
By Lt (U) Amir Dawod

RIMBA AIR FORCE BASE, Wednesday 24 June 2020 - The Royal Brunei Air Force (RBAirF) celebrated its 54th Anniversary today at the Punai Hall. The Guest of Honour was Brig Gen (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sahat. Other attendees include the RBAirF Board of Executives, Senior Officers, Officers, Other Ranks and civilian personnel. The event started with the recitation of Surah Yasin, tahlil and thanksgiving prayer led by the RBAirF religious teacher.

The event then commenced with a speech by the guest of honour. In the speech, he touched on the recent achievements by RBAirF and also stressed on the immense value of the contributions by all levels of the RBAirF personnel. Upon the conclusion of his speech, the guest of honour was invited for the cake cutting ceremony.

The event was then followed by the presentation of the outstanding personnel awards. 791 Maj (U) Pg Abdul Aziz bin Pg Dato Hj Abd Wahab was presented with the prestigious Outstanding Officer award, while the Outstanding Senior NCO award was given to 11898 WO1 (U) Mohammad Hamdris bin Hj Taha. The award for the Outstanding Junior NCO was presented to 52454 Pte (U) Abd Mubin bin Haji Abd Latif and the category for the Outstanding Civilian Staff went to Awg Jinnidi bin Awg Hj Mahali.

The event also saw the official launching of the inaugural RBAirF Air Power Doctrine. The guest of honour proceeded to sign the book and presented copies of the doctrine to the RBAirF Senior Officers. The doctrine can be accessed on the official RBAirF website via the link. The guests and attendees were then treated to a curry lunch, whereafter the event concluded with a photo session.



RBAIRF'S AIR DOCTRINE PUBLICATIONS

By Maj (U) Faiz

The cornerstone of any military organisation is its doctrine. For any air force, the most strategic doctrine deals with Air Power.

The RBAirF has published her first Brunei Air Power Doctrine during the recent RBAirF 54th Anniversary celebration. This doctrine is aligned with joint military doctrine across the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) and is known as ADP 01 / BJDPA 05 Air Power Doctrine. The RBAirF also produced another publication named ADP 3.00 – Air Operations. This publication focuses on operations that are conducted within RBAirF.

These series of doctrinal publications is in line with the RBAirF Doctrine Cell's aspiration in producing a complete set of air doctrine publications that will complement each other and will complete the documentation of RBAirF from strategic to tactical documentations, in order to ensure effective employment and deployment of the Air Force during operations. The series of publications produced and planned to be produced, and its linkage to MINDEF and RBAF strategic publications are shown in the diagram above.

Some of these publications are in the pipeline and will be published within the next two years. Along with these environmental doctrinal publications, the Doctrine Cell will also be producing the joint operating concept paper known as the Future Air Concept. This publication will touch on how RBAirF will be portrayed in the near to distant future, and how it will be developed to be a more credible air force towards fulfilling its roles and missions, and overall, protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Brunei Darussalam.



OUTSTANDING RBAIRF PERSONNEL 2020



**791 Maj (U) Pg Abdul Aziz
bin Pg Dato Hj Abd Wahab
Outstanding Officer Award**

Maj (U) Pg Abd Aziz was recently appointed as the Officer in Command (OC) for the COVID-19 Task Force Support Services in supporting the nation to curb the spread of the virus, and currently he is the Head of the Initial Project Team (IPT) for the RBAirF Unmanned Aerial System. He was also the Secretary of the Working Committee that saw to the success of the 16th ASEAN Air Chiefs Conference that was hosted by RBAirF in 2019.



**11898 WO1 (U) Mohamad Hamdris
bin Hj Taha
Outstanding SNCO Award**

WO2 (U) Hamdris has been actively involved in supporting counselling activities at the Royal Brunei Armed Forces Counselling Centre since 2010. His diligence and professionalism led to his exclusive selection to assist in the Senior Warrant Officers Exchange Programme hosted by Singapore in 2019, as well as carrying the responsibility as Floor Manager during the 6th ASEAN Air Forces Education and Training (AAFET) Working Group meeting hosted by RBAirF in Brunei.



**52454 Pte (U) Abd Mubin
bin Haji Abd Latif
Outstanding JNCO Award**

52454 Pte (U) Abd Mubin bin Haji Abd Latif excelled in numerous courses along the duration of his service. He was awarded the Best Student during an Airborne Course attended in Pakistan. He was also the Best Student whilst undergoing the Basic Airborne and Military Freefall courses here in RBAirF.



**Awg Hj Jinnidi
bin Awg Hj Mahali
Outstanding Civilian Staff Award**

Awg Haji Jinnidi bin Awg Mahali was extensively involved in the Blackhawk S70i Procurement Project in the early days, back in 2013. Then after he was appointed as an S70i Resident Programme Office (RPO) Logistician to oversee the projects execution, and ensuring the Avionics equipment and requirement that are to be supplied for the S70i's are according to the arrangements that have been set by Sikorsky and the Ministry of Defence. He was stationed in West Palm Beach Florida, USA, for two years.

RBAIRF CORE VALUES – SERVICE ABOVE SELF

By Maj (U) Arif Syazwi

Core values are guiding principles that help us go through our daily lives and more importantly guide us during critical events where difficult decisions are required to be made. Core values also give us a sense of identity as an individual, and when a group of people share the same core values it gives them a sense of belonging. Individuals who belong to an organisation have a responsibility to internalise the organisation's core values.

The RBAirF has three Core Values: 'Service Above Self', Teamwork, Excellence. In conjunction with the RBAF's 59th Anniversary and RBAirF's 54th Anniversary, this issue of Keris Terbang will look into detail at the value of Service Above Self and the reason it is of essence within the force. The RBAirF Core Values Handbook defines Service above Self as "to put the needs of the service ahead of one's self. It makes one to think less about his or her own personal interest and focuses more on the interest of the organization."



The relationship between RBAF and RBAirF Core Values

In the military context, the ultimate embodiment of this core value is when service men and women offers the ultimate sacrifice (his/her life) in the line of duty. There are many examples of military men and women sacrificing their lives in battles and wars. However, we can also practice and apply this core value in our everyday work environment, be it in the office or out in the field.

"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."

John F Kennedy

In our everyday lives, a simple decision such as working during your personal time when required to complete a designated task can be considered as 'Service above Self'. It might also be times of spending the valuable extra time you have at the gym, rather than watching a movie with friends, in order to ensure your fitness level is up to standard. In summary, when required, you are willingly submit and are able to put your self interests aside in order to serve others.

"Personnel with the value of Service Above Self will act selflessly in nature and will always be mentally ready to contribute his or her service whenever required. However, this value must always be inculcated wisely with a well-balanced approach. To a certain extent, it should not render one's self to neglect their own responsibilities namely their religion, health and family."

The RBAirF Core Values Handbook

From this statement, it is therefore equally important for you to cater to the needs of your family and personal responsibility. Every airman/woman should have the wisdom of when to place the needs of others above their own, whether it be for the Air Force, family or others who are in need. Only when one can do this without being forced, told or indoctrinated, can an airman/woman can be aid to possess this value. A value that ultimately will seam the rest of the two values easily as it materialises and embeds in one's veins.

"I regret that I have but one life to give for my country."

Captain Nathan Hale

THE INTRINSIC VALUE OF A ROYAL BRUNEI AIR FORCE AIRCREW: A COMMANDING OFFICER'S REFLECTION

by Lt Col (U) Awg Muhammad Amiruddin

I cannot deny that as aircrew, we have always upheld with pride, our traditions and culture as air force personnel, and concur with continuous emphasis on our Air Force values in promoting "Service Above Self", "Teamwork" and "Excellence".



Currency training in Feb 2020

Assalamualaikum. Special greetings to all,

Sitting in as a Commanding Officer No. 1 Wing, one must understand and accept the weight that falls upon the shoulders of leading the main element and workhorse of the Royal Brunei Air Force. As you command the Wing, you must also be ready to lead by example and set the appropriate standards to the airmen or airwomen under your command. I also believe that if someone wants to be efficient and effective in doing his or her job, with proper training through reliable supervision and mentoring, he or she can excel in no time. This effort, not only requires patience, but also time and personal sacrifice.

One may ask, why aircrew are viewed in such high regard within the RBAirF. A simple but inevitable fact remains, that any Air Force is established in order to deliver air power and it is the men and women working in the skies that will ultimately exert this effect as such. Even as we aspire to attain sophisticated platforms or aircrafts, the human element embodied by an aircrew is fundamentally the existential factor to justify an air force. I cannot deny that as an aircrew, we have always upheld with pride, our traditions and culture as air force personnel, and concur with continuous emphasis on our Air Force values in promoting "Service Above Self", "Teamwork" and "Excellence". I believe that by having these values inculcated in our hearts and mind, together we will achieve our air force's vision in delivering "a robust, responsive and resource efficient air force, God willing. In addition to that, we must remember that in the context of national interest, collaboration, interoperability and jointness with all our sister services are vital approaches in striving forward in order to optimise our current available resources.

The RBAirF has always been blessed with strong leadership and remains as such. National stakeholders look toward us for air support and we will always be in their top lists of agencies in fulfilling dire requirements. From a leadership perspective, and as an aircrew, I have always known that an aircrew possesses a very distinctive and unique job specification, one that will continuously be sought after to serve.



**Wing Presentation
in Jan 2003**

It demands a highly polished skill set, retention of valuable knowledge, maintenance of respectful attitude and continued professionalism, all of which encompasses reasons to why an aircrew is viewed as a highly valuable asset (and expensive!) to any air force.

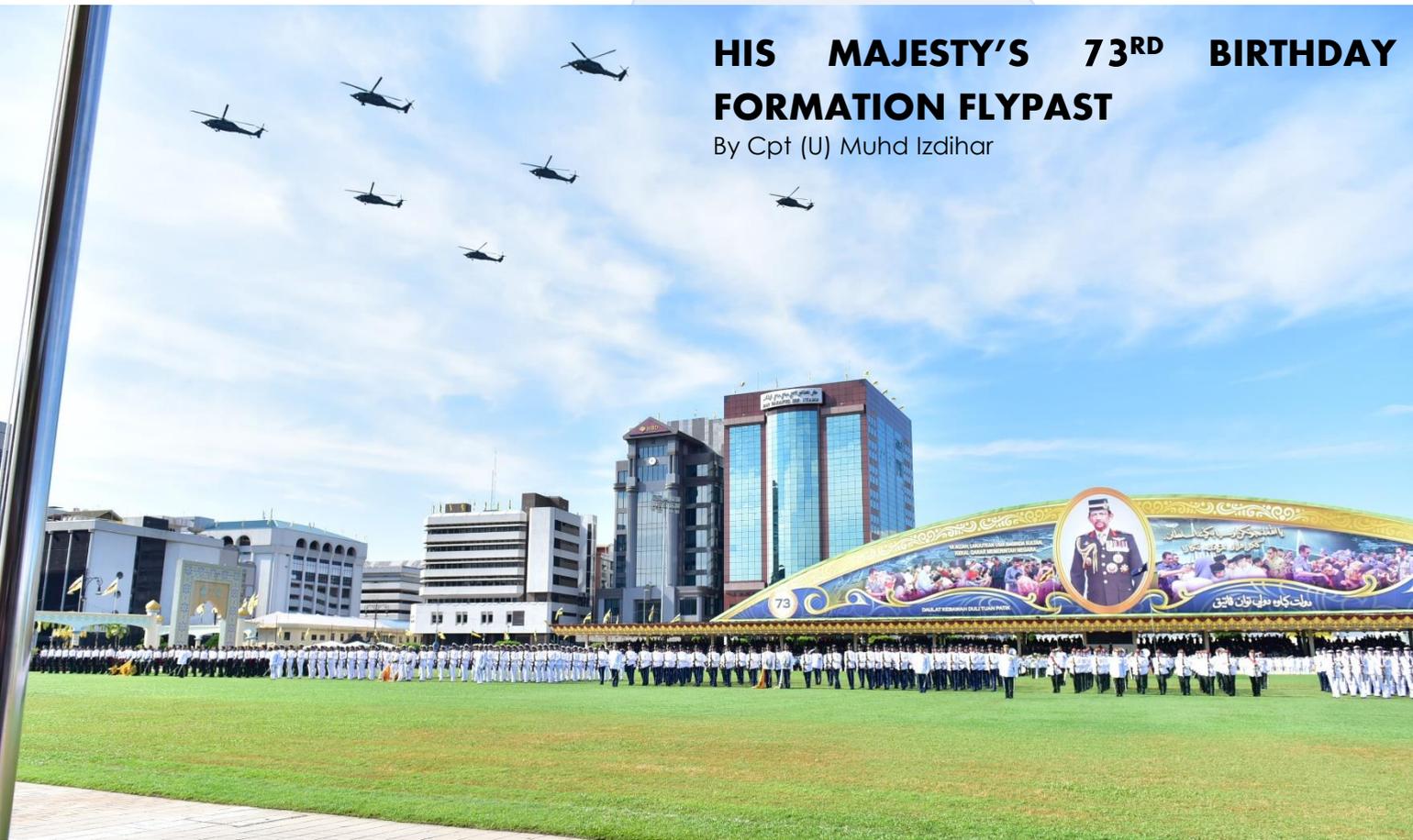
In any workplace, having a stress-free environment and job satisfaction would be an ideal situation to hope for, even amongst aircrew. Various studies have identified certain stresses that exists in aircrew's daily routine, including life stress, organisational stress, flight environmental stress, and task-based stress. As an aircrew, it is very crucial to understand and appreciate your own emotions and temperament. It is not just "us" in the aircraft but also other people's life at stake- lives that have been entrusted to us to keep safe and sound, something that is invaluable and irreplaceable.

As we take on this responsibility, some may argue that there are certain intrinsic and necessary traits have become common amongst aircrew. Aircrew tend to be more attentive to minor details, trained to adapt situational awareness, possess a required level of self-confidence. We learn to value humility as we go along the duration of our flying career, we must have clear communication skills, we are able to remain calm under pressure, and we are always in the pursuit to learn. I urge every aircrew to remember those traits!

Last but not least, I end this reflection piece with some advice to the men and women who will continue to serve in the skies. Please look after your health and maintain fitness, routinely and rigorously. Keep calm and fly safe, and always remember as you step onto the aircraft and progress in your flying careers: "There are precious souls on board".

HIS MAJESTY'S 73RD BIRTHDAY FORMATION FLYPAST

By Cpt (U) Muhd Izdihar



"Overhead...Overhead...Now!" Flying exotic machines, we flew across the capital in front of His Majesty himself and thousands others, hoping for one thing and one thing only - to give His Majesty the best aerial salute we possibly could. The team did just that.

That was the music to my ears indicating the His Majesty's 73rd Birthday Formation Flypast was a success. The formation flypast team's goal was simply 'be there time on target'. In an aviator's dictionary, simple orders as such was easily translated as no room for errors. We had one shot to execute it perfectly, and that opportunity was embraced with open arms by the team.

Rewind back to my childhood days, I was enchanted by the spectacle – the sound, the colours and the beauty of the Royal Brunei Air Force's fleet flying in perfect formation – and I longed to be part of it. I was one of those kids who would sit, wait and look up in the skies waving at any passing aircrafts, in the hope that the pilots would wave back at me. Personally, that was love at first sight and I remember dreaming that one day I will be up there.

Fast forward to 2019, 11 Sqn Flight Commander of Operations summoned me into his room and broke the news. I will be the in the Blue Lead aircraft for His Majesty's Formation Flypast. At that very moment, I finally realized the fact that I am finally here. Being part of the Blue Formation Flypast team was already a significant milestone for some, but to be selected as the Blue Lead crew was not only a great privilege but also the biggest honour for any aircrew. The child who used to sit on the grass and wave at the passing aircrafts would be in the lead, for one of the biggest official events of the year. That childhood dream was no longer a dream.

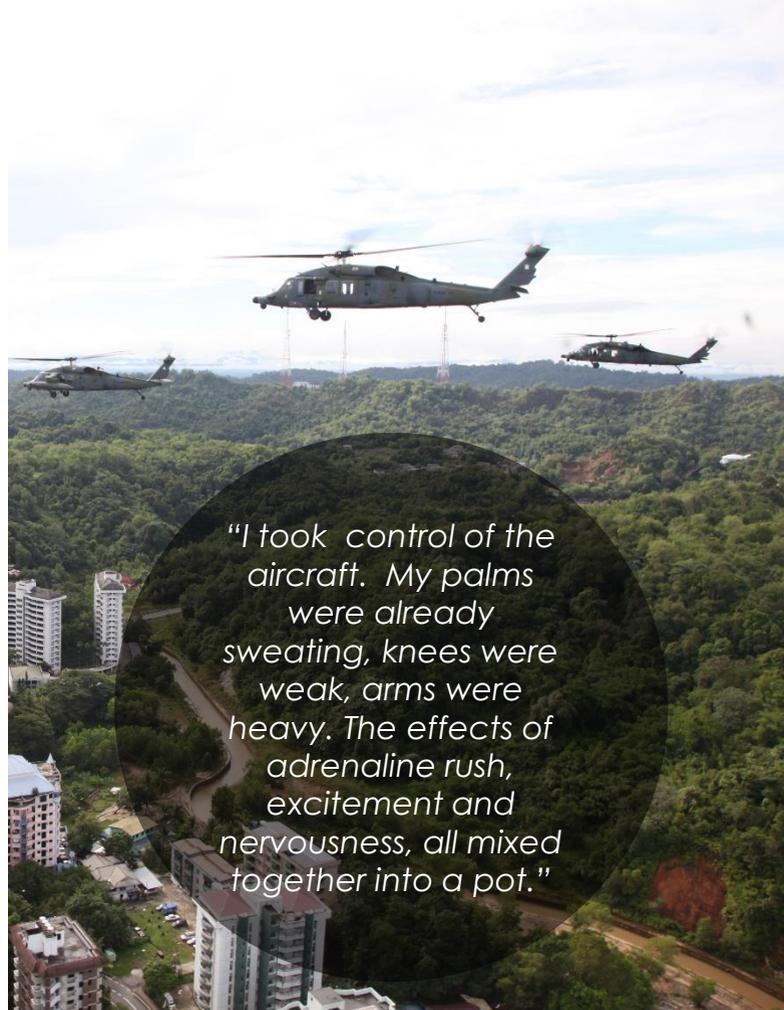
In the aviation world, flypasts are often tied in with Royal or national events, anniversaries, or to honour someone – where they function as a particular kind of aerial salute. Ultimately, they serve to show respect, display unity, showcase flying skills and precision as a form of aerial component to support the parade on the ground. In our case, it was to honour His Majesty The Sultan And Yang Di-Pertuan of Negara Brunei Darussalam as part of our annual parade in Bandar Seri Begawan. But, behind every flypast is a parallel universe where a million mundane things happen. What goes on behind the scenes and what's the day-in-the-life really like for us?

Weeks before the D-day, the paperwork, briefing slides, map planning, timing calculations, ground coordination and contingency plans have already rigorously started. Our mornings started with a too-early, but mandatory briefing, conducted by our Blue Lead Captain, Lt Col (U) Johar bin Abdullah, the Head of Standards and Evaluation of RBAirF at that time. A senior Qualified Helicopter Instructor (QHI) who has amassed thousands of hours in various aircrafts throughout his career – no stranger to Formation Flypasts. In attendance were the Wing Commander of No 1 Wing, Head of Aviation Safety, Ground Coordinators and the Flypast aircrew. Briefings could sometimes be fun, informative or frustratingly long – or better yet, all of the above. However, professionalism has never taken a step back throughout our rehearsals and no shenanigans would be tolerated at any time. The rehearsals started off with the Blue Lead conducting the initial route check which involved flying the entire planned route, marking any obstacles and potential hazards along the way, checking communication clarity to ensure no dead zones existed throughout the route, and ensuring the planned route timings were in sync with the parade on ground to name a few.

As days went by, the Formation Flypast grew from a single S70i Blackhawk to a fleet of seven aircrafts. As the number grew, merging the formation as we flew in close proximity to one another became more challenging. That said, the training, the briefings and the trust that has already been built amongst the aircrew over the years came in handy for any challenge that may arise throughout the rehearsals.

15th July 2019. The big day finally arrived. It was a great day to fly, with the sun warming into the deep blue Brunei sky. The morning started off with the mandatory briefing which covered the planned route, contingency plans, bad weather plan and last but not least, the emergencies we may encounter throughout the flight. As it got closer to show time, our synergy homed in came into focus, and by the time we taxied out, nothing came between us and our mission. In the Blue Lead aircraft, my focus blocked out unnecessary distractions while I kept a million details and the big picture in sight. Never mind my lack of experience, or the fact that I was only a Limited Combat Ready Captain on the S70i Blackhawk, acting as co-pilot to Lt Col (U) Johar – who probably would have flown the Formation Flypast better off without me.

“Izdihar, you have control”, said Lt Col (U) Johar. “You will fly the flypast today. Enjoy it!” I took



“I took control of the aircraft. My palms were already sweating, knees were weak, arms were heavy. The effects of adrenaline rush, excitement and nervousness, all mixed together into a pot.”

control of the aircraft. My palms were already sweating, knees were weak, arms were heavy. The effects of adrenaline rush, excitement and nervousness, all mixed together into a pot. I was no longer thinking, rather, it was a feeling that the team became a part of me and I was in a state of “flow” – that wonderful transcendent of state of mind where a person is fully immersed in the activity at hand. On the radio, the ground coordinators cleared us for take-off. I eased the cyclic forward, gained some speed as we lifted off from the military dispersal. The team flew overhead the capital in single arrowhead formation time on target. The rest was history.

That was just a small piece of the puzzle. The time and effort that the RBAirF put into the team were immense. The engineering team worked tirelessly to provide the aircrafts required months before the event. Ground coordinators and the signaller team were on the ground everyday to calculate precise timings, ensuring the Blue Formation was in perfect synchronization with the parade. Flying was only a small part of the job, but to be honest, that 15 seconds of fame flying the S70i Blackhawks with the entire team – in front of His Majesty – was the only payoff we ever needed, an euphoric moment that will remain with me. Always.



RBAirF Students Course 54 , Lt (U) Khairi, Lt (U) Fuad and Lt (U) Pg Izzat with BAE Systems Flying Instructors, in Tamworth, New South Wales, Australia

STUDENT PILOT TRAINING – THE INITIAL JOURNEY OF A MILITARY PILOT

by Lt (U) Muhd Fuad

On the last sortie of the day, I find myself restless yet relieved as I placed the pitot cover back on to the pitot tube. I have just completed my Final Handling Test (FHT) and now walking nervously to the Instructor's room for a debrief on my performance. The walk felt long back to Hangar B.

Pilots spend the majority of time along their careers in the sky. However, before being able to fly in an operational squadron in the RBAirF, one had to undergo the selection process and training requisite. There are two stages to the selection process. The first stage comprised of the aptitude test. This is to select potential student pilots from the Air Force cadets in training at the Officer Cadet School. The second stage is the screening process, involving candidates to fly a few sorties on the Bell 206B Jet Ranger III at the Basic Flying Training Squadron, 73 Sqn at the RBAirF. This is to ensure the selected candidates possessed the mental capacity and basic rotor skills to fly an actual aircraft as guided by a qualified helicopter instructor. Once selected, pilot training will then start with the Basic Pilot course on a fixed-wing aircraft, and subsequently by the Basic Helicopter or an Advanced Fixed-Wing course.

Aptitude testing, being the first milestone in every pilot's professional career, is meant to determine the ability of an individual to adapt and succeed in processing a certain task without having any previous knowledge or training. It is done through a software on a computer, much like playing a video game, only more mentally challenging. It has a series of tests which assesses memory capacity, problem solving and multi-tasking capabilities.



Graduation gift from a BAE Systems Flying Instructor

The various Types of Tests that are presented during an Aptitude Test

Next, the screening process. I finally had a chance to fly an actual helicopter, the Jet Ranger - although the instructor did most of the heavy lifting. Prior to the sortie, we were briefed on how to perform basic handling skills like flying straight and level, executing speed changes, climbing and descending. During the sortie, the instructor would demonstrate the manoeuvre and we would then have to perform it there and then. It was definitely challenging, yet with every sortie, my interest to pursue flying and to be a pilot grew. This interest continued to grow as I trained for the Basic and Intermediate Pilot Course at the BAE Systems Flying Training College in Tamworth, Australia. The 8-month course had its own set of challenges. Far from home, my fellow course mates and I had to quickly adapt to the foreign environment. We had to work hard as we knew this rare opportunity was difficult to come by. Our initial training aircraft was the PAC CT4B, a single-piston aircraft, but was nonetheless capable to perform aerobatic manoeuvres like the loop, barrel roll and the stall turn.

In November 2018, after all the hard work, restless nights and nerve-wrecking sortie debriefs, we completed the course. What was to follow once we returned, the next training phase was the Basic Helicopter Course held here in the RBAirF. What are the differences of flying a fixed-wing and a rotary-wing aircraft one may ask? Well both are similar in essence, yet at the same time explicitly different. Similarly in terms of communication procedures and meteorological knowledge although the weather in Brunei Darussalam is different from Australia. The difference came in flight controls and systems, aerodynamics and manoeuvres.

Although the skills that we had acquired during our basic flying training in Australia benefitted us, the difference meant we had to start with the basics to fly a totally new machine and put in the additional hard work in order to achieve the standards of the RBAirF.

Another year has passed, and I now find myself entering the instructor's room to find out the result of my FHT. The instructor started debriefing me and asked, "What have you learned throughout the course?". I answered with a long explanation. Then, followed a pause from the both of us. "Well done, you passed your FHT". The smile on my face would not go away for the rest of the day.

Throughout the training as a student pilot, not all landings will be perfect, not all sorties will be performed at the best outcome that you have strived for. It is how one learns and recovers from it, and continue to perform the next day that will determine one's success. A concept that can cross over to regular life and experience. I am grateful for the engineers, that have worked hard to get the aircraft up and running, and grateful especially to the instructors who tirelessly train to deliver the best for the force. Knowing that they want the highest of standards from a student not because of pride, but because they know that whoever they train will ultimately be responsible for the safety of the crew and passengers on the aircraft in the future flying tasks they undertake. The RBAirF is filled with stories of airmen and airwomen that relied on their training and experience to get the mission done. This is the start of mine.



WING PRESENTATION

By Lt (U) Muhd Fuad

RIMBA AIR FORCE BASE, Friday 26 June 2020 The RBAirF held a Pilot Wing Presentation Ceremony for two RBAirF officers at the Rajawali Hall, RBAirF Headquarters.

Commander of the RBAirF, Brig Gen (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sahat presented the wing badges to the pilot graduates, witnessed by senior officers, officers and family members.

The recipients of the pilot wings were 1149 Lt (U) Muhd Khairi Zulfritri Hafizuddin bin Zulkapli and 1189 Lt (U) Muhd Fuad bin Hj Salleh, who have completed a 9 months Fixed Wing Flying Training Course at BAE Systems, Tamworth, Australia and another 12 months Basic Helicopter Course locally here at the RBAirF. The training commenced in early 2018 and was successfully completed in April 2020.

The ceremony commenced with the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah and proceeded with the presentation of the pilot wings to the recipients. To conclude the wing presentation ceremony, the recital of *Doa Kesyukuran* was led by Ustaz Pengiran Fakhru Syakirin bin Pengiran Haji Zainuddin.

Following the pilot wing presentation, the newly qualified pilots will now embark on their journey to become operational pilots as additions and support towards achieving the RBAirF vision and mission.



THE MILITARY LIFE: A JUNIOR OFFICER'S REFLECTION

By Lt (U) Siti Nur Aqidah

It is not uncommon knowledge that any occupation comes with its fair share of obstacles and challenges and the military is no exception. In my limited experience thus far, the challenges have included: upholding personal and organisational standards, achieving work-life balance, and managing the steep learning curve.

Have you ever found yourself being bombarded with various tasks and running around like a headless chicken, asking yourself, which task do I complete first when they're all of equal importance? What am I even doing here? The military can do that to you, especially if you're not in the correct headspace. When pressure and deadlines are added to the equation, one can easily forget that there are organisational and personal standards to uphold, resulting in poor and mediocre quality of work. Further putting one's work ethics, leadership, and delegation skills under some level of scrutiny from practically, anyone and everyone. It's inevitable that these days of feeling burnt out, hitting all-time lows, and making poor judgements are bound to happen but it's how one decides to handle and rectify the situation afterwards that speaks volumes. Essentially, it's important to grow some thick skin and appreciate any feedback that is given. As learning to

not take things to heart will enable one to survive longer in this field of work.

There's also the factor of trying to achieve work-life 'balance', where the word balance does not necessarily mean equal, like two sides of a scale, as it is very situation dependent. There will be times where you spend more time at work than you do at home and vice versa. It's a difficult skill to drop everything or anything when the military comes to call, but a skill one should learn nonetheless even if one lives by "family comes first". The faster one and their family members come to terms with the reality of a military career, the longer of a military career you'll have and a longer and happier marriage at that. Whatever the case, it's important to be physically and mentally present both at home and at work, making full use of the time when it's there.





Post turn-around inspection by ground crew just before an early freefall training sortie.

Taken by : Cpl (U) Mohammed Azwandee



Air Traffic Control personnel guiding aircraft safely back to base



Moving aircraft for static display during silent hours

Lastly, though women have long been present in the RBAirF, it is still predominantly male, many a time finding myself the only female present in a room, which can be quite daunting as a junior officer. Questions of will I be able to answer the questions?, or if I will be able to execute a task entrusted to me come to mind. It's a constant mental battle and a test of self-confidence. In addition, there's also the unconscious added pressure of wanting to prove myself to be as competent as my male counterparts, just as a means to prove the naysayers wrong. Fortunately, there are seniors, colleagues and peers, men and women alike, who are more than willing to share their experiences and indirectly mentor to help navigate the way through the ins and outs of military life and its steep learning curve. It all comes down to having the humility to ask for help, having the willingness to learn, and putting in the commitment.



Bandarku Ceria



Engineering Officer Foundation Training course participants commemorating months of hard work at RAF Cosford, UK

The steep learning curve, the endless tasks, and the pressure can be quite discouraging to some but a career in the military is rewarding as long as you know what to expect from it. The journey of overcoming the obstacles and challenges adds value and purpose, and helps build one's character. And with experience and exposure, one will be able to handle various situations and tasks with greater efficiency in the future.



RBAirF participants in the 8th ASEAN Air Forces Junior Officers Interaction Program AAFJOIP, Manila, Philippines in 2019



REFLECTIONS FROM COMMANDING OFFICER NO. 4 WING

By Lt Col (U) Pg Irwandi

In the name of Allah most gracious and most merciful. Peace be upon the Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu alaihi Wassalam and greetings to everyone. Being given the opportunity to write an article in the RBAirF's *Keris Terbang*, one does wonder what topic would be best to talk about, that may be of benefit to everyone, particularly the future generations to come. I believe sharing one's reflection and sharing past experiences enables people to learn from one another whilst continuously striving to improve together. Under the current circumstances, I would like to share my reflection as the Commanding Officer of the No.4 Wing, RBAirF, and share some insights and perspective as the Chief of Staff for the COVID-19 Task Force Support, a responsibility I am currently undertaking.

December 2019 was a very interesting time for everyone as the world announced the outbreak of COVID-19. For me, it was also the month that I officially took the leadership mantle for Commanding Officer of the No.4 Wing Royal Brunei Air Force. Alhamdulillah all praises and thanks are to Allah for the opportunity to rise up the ranks, to be granted with this fortunate position, and my sincere and humble gratitude to His Majesty Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan Negara Brunei Darussalam, and to all RBAF and RBAirF senior officers for the trust in undertaking such responsibility. A wise senior officer once shared, 'Rezeki' (or sustenance), if it is meant to be yours, it will come not sooner nor later; it will come at the right time. 'Rezeki' may not necessarily be in monetary terms. It is in fact, things that you are gifted with, to be appreciative and thankful of sincerely. I have also learned that age and longevity is beyond our control, as narrated by Ibnu Hibban "surely sustenance goes in search of a person just like one's appointed time (death) goes in search of a person". I believe these reflections should be shared to everyone for those who are willing to learn, and as such hopefully enlighten us to appreciate whatever you we have and be thankful to Allah and those around you.

Being in Command of No.4 Wing, reminds me of when I started my career in Logistics Wing at a point in time a while back. The very thought of becoming a CO was non-existent at all sixteen years ago, since there was none. Previous COs were predominantly Engineers by trait, however, as the unit evolved from what was known as the Domestic Supply Flight, or affectionately called 'DSF', it had transformed into a Squadron, and now, as a Wing. What can be reflected from this? Ability to change or evolve from any situation is dependent on how much we are willing to change. As stated in the Al Quran "Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves" (Surah Ar-Ra'd verse 11). Alhamdulillah, as a local saying goes, "*Berkarih, Berjarih, Beluriah*"; with perseverance, patience and willingness to change, hopefully No.4 Wing and the RBAirF as a whole, will continue to evolve and progress together, aiming towards a Credible Air Force in the future.



COVID-19 Task forces assisting at the airport

As I shift gears to the COVID-19 Task Force Support RBAF, I am proud to attest to how much collaborative effort was put in place to overcome the pandemic, solidifying the inter-governmental level of teamwork and whole of nation approach. As it stands now, COVID-19 has affected 215 countries with 4.8 million cases, deaths of 572,722. However, Alhamdulillah for Brunei, we have been on zero cases for more than two months now. The COVID-19 Task Force Support was set up on 19 March 2020 in order to aid mainly in transportation for those who have arrived into Brunei Darussalam, to the allocated isolation centres, as well as providing mobile administrative support assistance to the Ministry of Health. In addition to that, the Task Force is delegated to ensure safe conduct of Friday mass prayers, together with the Royal Brunei Police Force and Ministry of Religious Affairs. As I witnessed and reflected upon the cooperation of all our sister units within RBAF, and Ministry of Defence as a whole in this noble contribution to keep our nation safe, I am overwhelmed with humility and gratitude, and I hope to carry on this momentum in my future undertakings not only as a leader, CO, but as a Bruneian.

The past six months had been a very interesting journey for everyone around the world, including the RBAF and Brunei Darussalam as a whole and personally for myself. Quite a number of reflections can be pondered back upon throughout this experience and I hope, with the events that have happened recently, the future generation of officers and leaders will be more prepared, as they take into account these experiences, as they march on to a brighter future ahead of us, in our beloved Negara Brunei Darussalam.



Temperature check during Friday prayers

SUSTAINING OPERATIONS AMIDST COVID-19

By Lt (U) Abdul Haqim



Temperature screening prior to passengers boarding the S70i

In view of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, all nations around the world are adjusting to the 'new norm' which are such as social distancing, proper hygiene practices and quarantines/isolations. Brunei Darussalam is no exception, where the nation is going through this life changing situation with caution. Specifically, flying operations by the Royal Brunei Air Force needed to be adjusted to adhere to rules and regulations set by the Ministry of Health. The Royal Brunei Air Force's pilots and aircrews are prepared for any changes and requirement needed in the national level.

MEDEVAC ACTIVATED

On 5th April 2020 at 1300H, Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) call out was activated, whereby the condition and situation of the patient was unknown. The patient was located at the deep jungle of Temburong where there is no road access and it will take a few days to walk to the nearest populated area. The only way to evacuate the patient out from the area and to the hospital is only by the means of helicopter transportation. The pilots and rear crew rushed to the aircraft, getting ready to get airborne. Apart from that, paramedics from the RIPAS Hospital were also contacted immediately.

The COVID-19 pre-emptive measures required all pilots and crew inside the aircraft to utilise Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), on top of the already heavy lifejacket, helmet and other flying gear. With these measures in place, coupled with the scorching Brunei heat during the day, pilots and crew are subject to limited air ventilation throughout the sortie, with restrict movements in the aircraft. Whilst situational awareness must be at its peak at all times, wearing extra PPE might become a distraction to the crew, and taking into consideration the possibilities of prolonged flights this will inevitably exhaust the crew faster than usual. A risky and dangerous sortie indeed, as the crew inside the aircraft might be affected if the patient is tested positive with COVID-19. To mitigate the possibilities of lesser situational awareness due distraction, a heightened level of Crew Resource Management (CRM), is of utmost importance in order to fly safely back to the base. Upon landing for pick up, the patient's body temperature is to be measured immediately and it was 40 degrees Celsius. For further precaution and to eliminate unwanted uncertainties, the patient is placed at the far end of the aircraft to adhere to social distancing practices.

The journey took 1 hour and 15 minutes, an amount of time that was of concern for the aircrew and medics, as the condition of the patient is still unknown. As soon as the aircraft has safely landed at the Air Force base, ambulance arrived and took the patient, another new norm came into play. As we commenced with our post flight checks, as a preventive measure after flying with patients suspected of COVID-19, the aircraft was washed and sanitized immediately by the MRS and was then subject to further cleaning by the aircraft technicians. Additionally, all of the helmets and life jackets utilised throughout the flight, were also sanitised immediately. To safeguard operational continuity and to avoid any uncertainties and risky possibilities, the pilots and rear crew involved in the sortie were asked stand down, until the patient's medical results, clearing him/her from COVID-19 was out. After 2 days of from the activation, the result was released and the patient was negative from COVID-19.

● OPERATIONS ●

Apart from the preventive measure used on the 5th April, to sustain the flying operational capability of the Royal Brunei Air Force, Business Continuity Plan (BCP) has been implemented throughout, including the Operations Group (Ops Grp). There are “two sets” which was divided equally and both sets will work on alternative days. With the implementation of BCP, sustaining operations were more effective and daily mission can be achieved in terms of daily tasking and operational requirements such as duties, MEDEVAC, CASEVAC and Search and Rescue (SAR).



Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE) to be worn on top of flying gear during a MEDEVAC call out

After the breakout of COVID-19, the daily requirements, especially for pilots, have increased. Such requirements include simulator training, currency training, upgrade training, initial training, whilst catering to the daily national requirement and duties. Since the implementation of BCP, aircrew sets have been divided into half which also means that the operational capabilities in achieving the daily missions are stretching the capabilities of aircrew sets. For example, each aircrew set will work extra hours in order to fulfill the missions. Regardless of the extra hours, the mission is safely executed, and no flight safety violation was made. In terms of training wise, training is planned a week to a month ahead. Due to working alternate days, there are alterations on training schedule. For example, the training for initial pilots was scheduled on Monday, this will depend on the weather of that day. If the weather is bad, that means a NO-GO for training on that particular day and will be resumed on the next alternative day. Planning for training sortie is a little bit slower than usual. Therefore, without training sortie in place frequently, the pilots and crews can be out of currency in roles and limits the operational capability. In order to sustain the flying operation of the Royal Brunei Air Force during the COVID-19 period, the qualified Helicopter instructors work extra hard and beyond normal working hours to compensate the hour loss and keep all pilots and crew to be current at all time, always on alert and ready to go!



Aerial view of troops ready to be picked up

PARACHUTISTS ASSEMBLE: PREPARATION FOR PARACHUTE DEMONSTRATION

By Cpt (U) Pg Shahri



Since its establishment in 1979, the Parachute, Airborne and Tactical Division Unit (PATDU) has been responsible for conducting all of the freefall and parachuting courses for Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) personnel. This includes frequent requirements from the Royal Brunei Land Forces as well as the Special Forces Regiment. In addition to that, PATDU has always been called upon to provide freefall displays and parachute jumping demonstrations particularly during significant and special occasions such as the National Day Parade, Arena Displays during RBAF Anniversary celebrations as well as making appearances during International Military Tattoo events held in Brunei.

The requirements that make up PATDU's yearly calendar include currency training that is conducted every month, which utilises the Blackhawk S-70is. The week long training encompasses recapping drills as well as procedures for the jump, and thorough immediate drill refreshers to prepare jumpers in the event of parachute or even aircraft failure. Not only does PATDU caters to training jumpers and parachutists from RBAirF, her training portfolio includes training for personnel from the Special Forces Regiment as well as occasional students that join Freefall or Military Airborne courses here in the base from *Tentara Nasional Indonesia- Angkatan Udara (TNI-AU)*.

Category 10 parachutists are those who have qualified in advanced maneuvers and landed within 1 metre of the target centre on three consecutive descends.

● FEATURE ●

For this year's highlight, PATDU will assemble her most advanced parachutists for a parachute display for the closing ceremony of the 12th Brunei International Skills at Arms Meet (BISAM) which is planned for sometime in 2021. The display will involve collaborations with sister units from across RBAF, to provide the audience with a spectacle display marking the end of BISAM with the trophy delivery to the champions via the air. Multiple jumpers will exit the aircraft, free falling from 10,000ft and form a geometric shape. Combined with canopy skills and utilising smoke for added visual effect, a large trailing formation of BISAM participating flags will be accurately landed on a designated drop point, prior to revealing the exciting finale, the BISAM trophy.

In preparation for the big event, the highest standards of planning, coordination and training is required. The experience, awareness to safety and parachuting skill of every PATDU personnel is essential in order to avoid parachute accidents (PARAC). As we stand now, the number of highly experienced jumpers in PATDU remain low and the number of highly experienced parachutists in the RBAF, possessing a Category 10 qualification, is less than 20. This is a great challenge that PATDU has to overcome in preparing for future display team for National and RBAF events.

Category 10 parachutists are those who have qualified in advanced manoeuvres and landed within 1 metre of the target centre on three consecutive descends.



Freefall currency training in July 2020



PATDU FREEFALL GEAR



SILHOUETTE 170

The Silhouette 170 comes in different sizes and features, and RBAirF maintains 20 sets of Silhouette 170s specifically for advanced parachutist displays.



PARA GLOVE

Specialised gloves used during parachute descends, and must be comfortably fit to the parachutist's hand in order to firmly grip the parachute's handle and the toggle.



EXPERT CYPRES

Expert Cypres is one of the Automatic Activation Devices (AAD) designed to activate reserve parachutes when the parachutist is unsuccessful at deploying his main chute. It works when the parachutist is still freefalling at the height 1500 feet above ground level (AGL) and below, with a descent speed of more than 78 mph. The Cypres will automatically activate the reserve parachute at the height of 750 feet AGL.



ALTI-2 ALTIMETER

A compulsory gear for every parachutist, as it indicates the height of the parachutist during freefall. Prior to any live descent, every parachutist is to ensure their altimeter is operationally functioning by verifying it with others' altimeter at every height.



PHANTOM FULL FACE HELMET

The full face helmet is impact-rated, offering head and eyes protection. It also helps protect the ears from loud noises while freefalling at extraordinary speeds. This helmet is specially designed for skydiving and has anti-fogging lens.

INTAKE 18 HIKE WITH CAF

By Lt (U) Najib



A typical Tuesday or Thursday morning PT session usually involves a morning run in the RBAirF base with the whole force, or during the COVID-19 pandemic, limited to individual wings or squadrons.

On one of the Tuesday's during the pandemic however, officers from OCS Intake 18 were invited to a morning hike with the Commander of the RBAirF (CAF) at Bukit Sipatir. Also present for the hike was the Deputy Commander of the RBAirF (DCAF), and several other personnel.

The group started off with a warmup at around 07:30 in the morning at the parking area of the location followed by a recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah to bless the morning's hike. The hike involved hustling through varying degrees of elevation from start to finish with a total of around 5.6km in distance lasting one hour and thirty-three minutes. Along the route, the group stopped at several checkpoints for water breaks, a necessity given the known heat and humidity that usually elevates just after 07:30 in the morning.

The hike ended with a cool-down session led by Lt (U) Dayang Nikmatul Fatinah, with a final health check at the end to ensure the group was in a proper healthy condition. Fitting to say the least as we were informed of our next challenge by CAF himself- an 18km hike challenge!



THE FALLIBLE MIND: PLAUSIBLE YET INEVITABLE

By Lt (U) Dyg Nikmatul Fatimah

The cockpit of Flight 5191 after the crash.

“Of the 50 people on board, only First Officer James Polehinke survived the crash, when the jet failed to become airborne while moving forward with the intent to take off.”

On the morning of 27th August 2006, with 47 passengers and 1 flight attendant on board, a Canadian-made Bombardier CRJ-100 scheduled to commute to Atlanta, Georgia from the Blue Grass Airport in Lexington, Kentucky, was found to have taken off on the wrong runway. It lifted briefly before crashing into a ridge, a fence and a grove of trees and was eventually, consumed in flames. Of the 50 people on board, only First Officer James Polehinke survived the crash, when the jet failed to become airborne while moving forward with the intent to take off. The sole survivor was found badly injured while trapped in the remains of the cockpit. Physically and mentally traumatised, he was not able to explain how he had made such a perplexing error nor tell the story of how Comair Flight 5191 failed to become airborne.

The investigation looked into history of errors and violations of the two pilots. Both were highly experienced and constantly praised for their performances by those working with them. Also, no issues were found with their records of training, the airline and its federal oversight. Both pilots were very familiar with the airport as well as the runway. The investigation then had to shift their

focus on the subtler factors that had misled the pilots in the critical minutes while taxiing towards the runway.

Before starting the engines, Captain Clay was supposed to discuss the taxi route but instead he quickly concluded the taxi briefing to a quick statement “Comair Standard” feeling confident with the routine. First Officer Polehinke, nonetheless, discussed the route during the take-off briefing anyway, but did not include crossing runway 26 despite looking at a map that showed this. After engine start and while taxiing away from the gate, the pilots appeared to have violated the “sterile cockpit rule” where they engaged in off-topic conversations which distracted them from carrying out important duties.



● FLIGHT SAFETY ●



Planned taxi route for flight 5191. Image source: the NTSB

Planned taxi route versus where they actually went. Image source: the NTSB

Getting to runway 22 should have been simple: after taxiing across the apron following taxiway A, they should have crossed the threshold of runway 26. Instead of crossing it, Captain Clay turned left and lined up with runway 26! Cues that could have notified them of being on the wrong runway included lack of edge lightings and specialized markings – on the surface of runway 26, the sign did not contrast sharply enough with its background due to poor painting. The layout of the holding points at both runways looked similar, coupled with confirmation bias, it seemed possible that the pilots could have missed signs that they were not on the intended runway. Studies showed that human mind is terrible at processing information that undermines previously held beliefs, hence, it is possible that contradictory cues may simply be ignored by the pilots.

In addition, investigations found that the crash could have been avoided if the air traffic controller had not turned away from the window after having cleared flight 5191. Unfortunately, the controller shifted his attention to an administrative task preventing him from monitoring the take-off. It was also found that the controller was alone in the tower during his shift, violating the guidance previously issued by the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA).

While there were seemingly reasonable reasons why the Captain Clay and First Officer Polehinke did not notice their mistake, the investigation board was not able to come up with an explanation of why and how they lined up with the incorrect runway in the first place. One can only jump to a conclusion that they resorted to some sort of a peculiarity of the human mind, delved into a brief moment of distraction skipping a step on their mental road map upon perception of some subtle, subconscious cue. Mankind is vulnerable to such mistakes and we rarely understand the underlying reasons why we made them in the first place. The same was true for First Officer Polehinke.

As we read through this Flight Safety piece, parallels can be drawn and applied to RBAirF as well. In the world of aviation, it is almost impossible to expect a pilot to be exempted from committing mistakes. The existence of redundant system checks ensures that mistakes are caught and corrected. At times the safety barriers in place that filters us from going beyond the box of standards; Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), the Flying Order Book (FOB) and Engineering Orders and Instructions (EOIs) and Flight Reference Cards (FRCs) to name a few. However, as mentioned before, underlying cognitive reasoning will differ from one person to another, and thus justifying why mistakes happen can sometimes be difficult. It is therefore of paramount importance for RBAirF to continue to draw parallels with more developed aviation industries, and try and relate to adapt any necessary lessons to enhance our future safety systems.

AIRSPACE CONTROL & EARLY WARNING SQUADRON: THE EYES AND EARS OF THE SKY KEEPING THE NATION SAFE BEHIND THE GLASS WINDOW

By Lt (U) Muhammad Radzi

The Airspace Control/Early Warning Squadron (ACEWS) is a sub-unit under No. 3 Wing of the Operations Group which was officially established 3 years ago on the 2nd May 2017. The Royal Brunei Air Force (RBAirF) has initiated the training of its own Air Traffic Control Officers (ATCO), where some have already been sent for Basic Air Traffic Control training in Singapore and Malaysia. After completing their ATCO training overseas, officers will be attached to the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA), Ministry of Transport and Information Communications (MTC), in order to further incorporate the knowledge that has been attained and to apply it to real life situation and to further understand how it could be utilised in the military context. Furthermore, ATCO will require further knowledge in local airspace control in order to acquire ratings for the advancement of training for the officers making them more experienced in handling emergencies on a normal day.



View from the control tower Sikorsky S70i Blackhawk training on Brunei International Airport (BIA) Runway



Workstation for the BIA Control Tower

Current Roles & Functions

Current role and function of the ACEWS is the basic collaborative means between RBAirF and the DCA, by supplementing manpower to the Air Traffic Control Tower and also providing air traffic control services to all aircraft (Civil and Military aircraft) operating within Brunei Airspace, and surface movement in Brunei International Airport in accordance to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) policy and regulations.

The main purpose of an a ATC is to prevent collisions, and to sequence and expedite the flow of aircrafts movement, both in the air as well as on the ground by providing instructions, information and other essential information for the pilots. In some countries, ATC play a security and defensive role, and some can be operated solely by the military.

“Cobra 41, Brunei Tower, Clear for take off!”

Air Traffic Control instructions as such may sound simple, but talking on the radio is only less than 5% of what ATC does while on duty.

ATCOs are people trained to maintain the safety of air traffic which means they also need to ensure the infrastructures, equipments and the surroundings are in good shape for the use of pilots. The position of air traffic controller is one of that requires highly specialized knowledge, skills and abilities. Controllers apply separation rules to keep aircraft at a safe distance from each other in their area of responsibility while on duty and make countless real-time decisions on a daily basis, the ATC profession is consistently, regarded around the world as one of the most mentally challenging careers, and can be notoriously stressful depending on many variables (equipment, configurations, weather, traffic volume, human factors, etc).

Apart from the Air Traffic Controllers, RBAirF also stationed personnel in the Radar Centre, under the console specifically for the military where they are responsible of supplying information to the Air Operations Centre, RBAirF in assisting and monitoring RBAirF's aircraft movement within the Brunei airspace which includes operation, tasking, medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) as well as training flights. They also alert respective agencies during an emergency or exercise when needed



RBAirF Board of Executives visit to BIA Control Tower



Lt (U) Radzi receiving his certificate during training at Kuantan Airbase, Royal Malaysian Air Force

The Pioneers of RBAirF ATC

Currently there are four RBAirF officers of the initial batch of ATCOs from the RBAirF attached to the Control Tower who are the ATC license holders of which two of them have acquired the Aerodrome Control rating and the other two who are still Student License holders. Maj (U) Dk Aainaamolyatie and Lt (U) Faeiqah Nadzirah were the first two to have completed their aerodrome control training and are now "CONTROLLING SOLO" in the Control Tower. However, training does not stop there as there is a total of five ratings in order to be a fully-pledged Air Traffic Controller which are Aerodrome Control, Approach Control (Non-Radar), Approach Radar Control, Area Radar Control and Search & Rescue.

The journey to be a qualified Air Traffic Controller can take three to four years but that is only to get their first rating whereas to be a fully rated controller will take longer than four years. The responsibility for the safety conduct of aircraft in the air moreover the safety of hundreds or thousands of people every day is not something to take lightly so finding the right people suited for the job with the right attitude and training them well enough to do the job is crucial as there is absolutely no room for error. Below are some of the characteristics that Air Traffic Controllers must possess:

1. **Spatial Awareness** – the ability to build a three dimensional picture of where each aircraft is relative to the others and to foresee any potential conflicts.
2. **Simultaneous capacity** – reading instruments, transmitting or receiving and writing simultaneously are just part of the routine of controllers on duty.
3. **Excellent Memory** – the task of controlling aircraft requires controllers to remember both distant and recent events.
4. **Respect for authority and the rules** – aviation is a highly regulated industry, which requires adherence to maintain safety.
5. **Making decisions under pressure** – air traffic controllers must think faster than the aircraft can fly if they are to keep safety in the air.

The Future Plan

The future plan of ACEWS is to establish the Early Warning and Surveillance (EWS) capability in accordance with the strategic guidance outlined in the RBAF Defence White Paper (DWP) 2011. The EWS capability represents the outer-most stratum of the Multi-Layered Air Defence (MLAD), it's primary aim is to optimize the decision-making process for Ground-Based Air Defence (GBAD) to protect vital national assets and deployed military forces, mainly in urban and littoral areas, against a wide variety of air threats. Additionally, it will be required to enhance the level of shared situational awareness through the provision of a recognised air picture (RAP) and deliver core airspace management functions.

EWS capability is intended to provide persistent surveillance in all climatic extremes found in Brunei without inhibiting system performance. The capability will provide a surveillance capability to cover the entirety of Brunei and national airspace, including an extended out from Brunei's land borders to cover the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) out to a minimum of an instrumented range of 250NM. In addition, it will draw an organic and non-organic sensor feeds to generate and disseminate a RAP and provide airspace management functionality to Defence.



UP CLOSE WITH OUR RBAIRF COMRADES AT UNIFIL

By Cpt (U) Mohd Qamarul

There are currently 30 of our local troops over there with two personnel from Royal Brunei Air Force namely: 932 Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim bin Pg Idris and 51067 LCpl (U) Akmal Hidayatul Liadi bin Hj Mohd Kamil. They have been serving UNIFIL since 2nd October 2019 and their tour will last for at least a year.

In this feature, KT has the great pleasure getting in touch with our lads in blue and get to hear some insights and updates from Lebanon.

KT: It's really great to hear from you both. Hope things are okay in Lebanon and really glad you can find time to talk with us.

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: Likewise. It's nice to get in touch.

LCpl (U) Akmal: Same here. Thank you for featuring us.

KT: So how did this all started for you two, joining UNIFIL?

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: Peacekeeping operations such as UNIFIL and IMT have always appeal to me. With the gracious of Allah the Almighty, I was given this once in life time opportunity, especially with the honour to serve the United Nations on behalf of my country. There were a series of assessments that I had to go through which include fitness test, weapon handling and shooting, English language, general knowledge (about Lebanon and UNIFIL), signal and basic navigation. Thankfully I managed to get through them.

LCpl (U) Akmal: For me, I actually got it from a memo shared by my fellow colleague in the Royal Brunei Land Force. So I looked it up for more information and thought, this is what I really want to.

experience, an operational deployment oversea. So, I went ahead and applied for it after given permission from my WOIC and OC. After my application went through, just like Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim, I had to go through series of tests before going to Port Dickson for integrated training with the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF).

KT: And what is the purpose of going to Port Dickson? And how many personnel actually joined the selection in RBAF?

LCpl (U) Akmal: It was for training, structured to train all tri-services personnel as one MALBATT. Prior to Port Dickson, there were about 86 local soldiers joining the selection. 34 local personnel were sent to Port Dickson and at the end of it, only 30 were selected to go to Lebanon. Really thankful that I am part of the thirty selected ones

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: Yeah, Port Dickson is where we had the Force Integration Training (FIT) at the Malaysian Battalion for two months. The training was practically aimed at gelling all soldiers from around the country (Malaysia) and Brunei, to ensure we are trained with the right skills for taskings that we will undertake at Lebanon. There was also a session that was really useful where we got to listen to some ex-UNIFIL Malaysian soldiers sharing their knowledge and experience.

KT: Are you both in the same area of operation?

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: We are in different areas but both in Southern Lebanon.

LCpl (U) Akmal: By vehicle, I would say we are approximately one-hour drive apart.



“COVID-19 has significantly deteriorate the country’s economy and this worries the population”

KT: What is a daily routine for you both in Lebanon as a peacekeeper?

LCpl (U) Akmal: As peacekeepers, we usually do a lot of patrolling by vehicle or on foot. It's important to interact with the locals and build good relationships with them. After all, they are who we are protecting. In relation to that, we are also involved in Civilian-Military Cooperation (CIMIC).

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: The main bulk of it is to keep a close relationship with the local communities here, showing presence and build that trust and friendship with people over here as what LCpl (U) Akmal mentioned. CIMIC is an active activity each camp is doing to achieve this. And a lot of the times, we are doing routine 24 hour patrolling within our area of responsibility. And of course lots of training in our roster as well to keep us sharp!

KT: Can you give us a feel of how is it like in Southern of Lebanon in terms of its environment?

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: It is a beautiful country over here with its moderate, Mediterranean climate. They say Lebanon enjoys about 300 days per year of sunshine and its true! The winter is mild on the coast and snowy in the mountains while the summer is quite hot on the coast and little mild on the mountains. It is actually possible during the spring season to ski in the mountains and yet swim on the coast later in the same day!

LCpl (U) Akmal: Imagine many tiny villages with built houses in very close proximity which can be seen along the hills. There are always a lot of people out and about in these villages however at this time, restriction are in place due to COVID-19. So people are usually stay indoors during this period.

KT: Oh! How does COVID-19 affect operations?

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: Greatly affected especially when Lebanon announced full quarantine for its population, our troops can only do routine patrol and not stop anywhere. It's difficult when we cannot interact with the population, even interacting with Lebanon Armed Forces (LAF) is tough which is challenging in terms of cooperating and working together.

KT: Besides the effects of COVID-19, any other particular challenges you both went through as a UNIFIL peacekeeper?

LCpl (U) Akmal: For me, there are a few. First of all, it is difficult to communicate with the locals just because they don't really speak English. Therefore, we have to be creative with sign and body languages sometimes. Secondly, is how we deal with public perception on UNIFIL. Sometimes things can be unstable and escalate especially when UNIFIL's presence is misinterpreted, which can make peacekeeping operations problematic.

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: LCpl (U) Akmal is absolutely right. I believe applying what we have learned theoretically from Port Dickson here in Lebanon is difficult because situation and reality is just different and unique every time. I think this is true especially with the volatile situation and how complex the political condition is. Therefore, it is important to always be on our feet, keeping abreast with the current affairs here, and be diligent towards our duties and men.



KT: What would you say was your most memorable experience by far during your tour?

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: That would be presenting the Brunei flag during the UNIFIL Force Commander Handover-Takeover ceremony along with all the participating nations. Get to meet and make many new friends that day. Just a superb and unforgettable day.

LCpl (U) Akmal: I cherished the moment when we had an exercise with the French battalion. It was very eye opening especially in terms of exchanging experiences, practices and techniques in carrying out missions.

KT: Do you experience homesickness? If yes, how do you handle them? And what do you miss most about home?

LCpl (U) Akmal: Video-calls help me overcome homesickness when I am free. I really miss spending time with family and hanging out with friends, without a doubt. And I really miss my mom's and wife's cooking terribly.

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: With the convenience of technology and praying to Allah definitely help overcome homesickness. Miss my family and friends at home for sure. Just the ambience, the culture, even spending time with my colleagues in Brunei. Being far away from my family has given me the chance to reflect, especially on how I must appreciate the little things and not take it for granted. Really looking forward to be back home.

KT: Last but not least, what advice would you give to our new candidates for UNIFIL?

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: My advice would be to work hard, give out your best performance and most importantly be sincere towards your commitment whether it be at work or not. Peacekeepers need to be vigilant and able to apply their knowledge and training experience especially during rough times. Those who are interested in oversea deployment, peace monitoring/keeping missions, want to experience new environment and challenges; UNIFIL is probably right for you.

LCpl (U) Akmal: For those who wish to join, I would advise to always have a security mindset and prepare physically and mentally as peacekeeping will tax you. During peacekeeping, be sure to always keep in touch with your family so they know you are doing okay. Lastly, make sure to practice a healthy lifestyle and relationship with your fellow friends on tour - it will benefit you.

KT: You both have been delightful and thanks again for taking the time to do this interview with Keris Terbang. Our readers will be pleased to know you both are doing well. Stay safe over there and hope to see you both back soon!

Cpt (U) Pg Abd Azim: It has been a pleasure. Thank you Keris Terbang.

LCpl (U) Akmal: Thank you very much.

LESSONS FROM 30 DAYS OF FASTING IN RAMADHAN

By Lt (U) Mohd Hazwan

This year, Brunei Darussalam observed the end of Ramadan and start of Syawal for the year 1441 Hijrah on the evening of 23 May 2020. Surely, many will miss the blessed month of Ramadhan, a month of forgiveness, spiritual training and self-improvement. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, Muslims around the world, in general, was had to adapt to a different type of Ramadhan. In Brunei, the normal scenes of hustling at the night-market for scrumptious food, organising family gatherings for *sungkai* (breaking of fast) together, arranging "*sungkai outing*" with friends, have all come to a halt. However, despite the new norm, it did not hinder us to attain the maximum outcome and have a productive and fruitful Ramadhan.

"O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous"

Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 183

Indeed, attaining the maximum amount of righteous deeds is the ultimate goal of Ramadhan. For some, Ramadhan is a starting point of individual spiritual journey, a stepping stone for self-improvement and betterment. For others, Ramadhan is a "recovery month", a month to catch up and redeem multiplied deeds. The holy month of Ramadhan allows up to immerse ourselves in numerous opportunities of prayers, and in some ways or other be given the opportunity of time and encouragement, to accomplish 'Khatam Al-Quran'; completing the recitation of the Al-Quran as well as additional supplications. However, Ramadhan also reminds us of the basic qualities that we can emulate in our daily lives (not only during the Holy Month), continuously allowing us to capture lessons in life that majority of us perhaps lose track of while we continue with our normal routines. In this article, we are going to explore three lessons in life that we can obtain throughout Ramadhan that could improve not only our life but also to the community in general.

Ramadhan teaches us that we are capable of refraining and practicing self-control. Throughout Ramadhan, people were able to refrain, from eating or drinking, from before dusk to dawn; a means of self-discipline. This self-discipline includes training in anger management, respecting others, and to limit ourselves from meaningless thoughts and conversations. All the thoughts and words were meant to take care of our fast. As mentioned in the hadith below:

"The Messenger of Allah PBUH said: '(Allah says) Every deed of the son of Adam is for him, except fasting; it is for me and I shall reward for it. Fasting is a shield. If anyone of you is fasting, let him no utter obscene talk or raise his voice in anger, and if anyone insults him or wants to fight, let him say: I am fasting. By the One in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, the smell coming from the mouth of the fasting person is better before Allah than the fragrance of musk. The fasting person has two moments of joy: When he breaks his fast, he rejoices at breaking his fast and when he meets his Lord, the Mighty and Sublime, he will rejoice at having fasted."

Hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah

Exercising self-control is crucial and that itself is a message that Ramadhan and all the actions shall be rewarded by Allah. This kind of spiritual refrainment is not easily attained, and requires effort and humility knowing that it cannot be achieved in a single day, but rather transitional process that needs time and patience. Financially, it could help prevent us from overspending on irrelevant items/belongings; money that could be used for good deeds such as charity and investments for future use instead. 'Holding back' moderates our standard of living, balancing our 'needs' and 'wants'. Socially, being able to hold back emotions such as anger, which may allude to unnecessary banter or squabbles, could improve our

relationship with others. This discipline and quality could be applied to various situations, particularly so within a military workplace, which may indefinitely improve our daily decision making and routines.

Following this, Ramadhan also teaches us to be grateful. This is most evident especially during Ramadhan. Allah the Almighty has ordained in *Surah Al-Baqarah*:

"The month of Ramadhan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion. So, whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it; and whoever is ill or on a journey - then an equal number of other days. Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship and [wants] for you to complete the period and to glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful"

Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 185

As we complete the humbling period and observe the end of Ramadhan, commencing the 'Takbir Raya' represents an act of our gratitude to Allah the Almighty, glorifying Him, for giving us the opportunity to have reaped benefits from the holy month of Ramadhan, and be able to greet Syawal with a celebration, the 'Hari Raya Aidilfitri' or Eid-ul-Fitr with our beloved family and friends. At times, we misinterpret it for a month long of 'makan-makan', and we forget the purpose of Ramadhan is to experience the hunger and hardship of our Muslims brothers and sisters around the world. This feeling of gratitude is coupled with a realised appreciation whatever He has bestowed on us, particularly so for things that we have been blessed with right now; the opportunity and ability to fast in Ramadhan, to wake up every day to continue living, and simply being healthy, just to name a few. As we reflect on the current COVID-19 pandemic situation, at the time of writing, there are 552,395 deaths globally due to the pandemic, and Alhamdulillah, our nation has been blessed with good health and is still able to continue with our daily affairs; something that would indefinitely be of reason for gratitude to the Creator. Gratitude helps us realise how blessed our life is, allowing humility and a peace of mind to surround us, whilst developing empathy for the suffering and less fortunate. Gratitude paves our willingness to help others in need, and throughout Ramadhan, it is encouraged and practised daily. Gratitude opens one's eyes to we view life not only for self-improvement but also in wanting to help improvement in others, an invaluable lesson that was magnified as we went through Ramadhan.

The third quality that we could learn from fasting in Ramadhan is endurance, both mentally and spiritually, training our mindset to persevere as we anticipate that with every hardship comes ease, or as we say in Malay, "*bersusah-susah dahulu, bersenang-senang kemudian*". Allah the Almighty stated in *Surah Ash-Sharh*:

" Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease"

Surah Ash-Sharh , Verse 96:5-6

While many may have different reasons to push for Ramadhan, be it worldly reasons or hereafter. We do understand the spiritual journey is not just about self refrain from eating and drinking but rather shaping and transitioning. We must look beyond the *hikmah* and highlight the spiritual journey as a part of personal change and individual enlightenment. The conditioned enduring mindset will prove useful particularly in our daily struggles, be it in achieving a fitness goal or even making difficult decisions at work. By having trained the mind in enduring the mental and spiritual journey in Ramadhan, unbeknownst to the trainee, will have already set the path for a self-developing progress to face what is to come post Ramadhan.

Ramadhan holds many secrets in daily life lessons for us to uphold, and what has been mentioned are only some the qualities that is honed as we continue to practice, the ability to hold back or refrain, to realise gratitude and endure. Hopefully as we continue to embody these lessons while we anticipate the opportunity to meet with Ramadhan again, it not only helps us improve as a Muslim, but individuals as well.



Course participants in the "Core Values" lesson

THE LEADERSHIP COURSE FOR JNCOS 2020

By Lt (U) Najib

In preparation to embark upon the next step of their military careers, military personnel anticipating promotion from the rank of acting Lance Corporal to Lance Corporal are required to attend a mandatory leadership course. The course runs for two weeks consisting mostly of classroom-based lectures and talks. This year's course commenced on the 22nd of June until 3rd of July.

The lectures/ talks include subjects that emphasises the importance of their role within the institution, and imparts necessary knowledge on their journey of future leadership within RBAirF. Lessons include topics such as Security Awareness delivered by The Defence Security Branch (CSP), a talk on Drug Abuse implication from the Royal Brunei Armed Forces Counselling Centre, and a short lecture on Military Discipline by RBAirF Drill Sergeant Major (DSM), exposure to Act 149 of RBAF (offences that can be charged unto a Lance Corporal) and a lecture on the attributes of being a leader as well as on the core values of the organisation.

Over the duration of the course, personnel are tested on all the aforementioned subjects, as well as basics of religious studies. In addition to that, they are also assessed on their analytical thinking skills, as well as their command by a language teacher from the Evolution Centre and taught the Malay Islamic Monarchy concept.

Their final assessment will comprise of a leadership exercise, attesting to an emphasis command & task. Overall, all personnel are required to meet a 60% passing mark to succeed in the course.

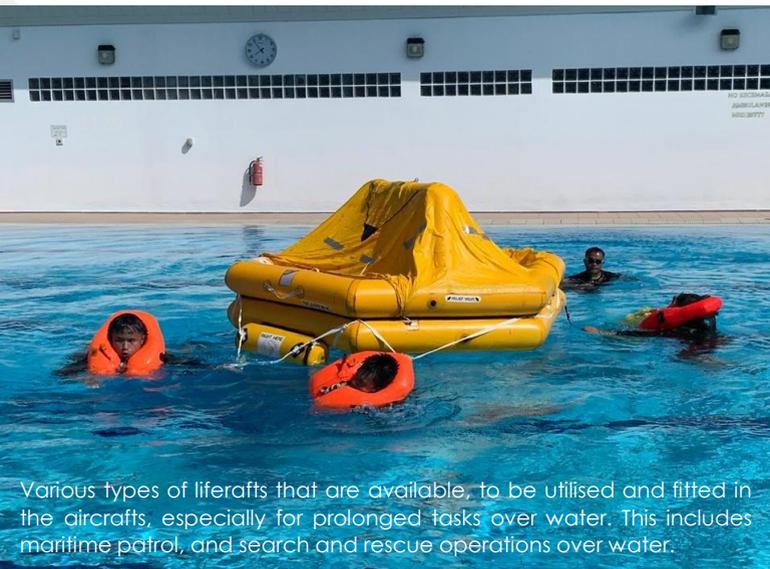
The course concluded with a closing ceremony, marking the beginning of their journey with leadership skills to be applied within their respective units.



Course participants being exposed to Act 149 of RBAF

SURVIVAL EQUIPMENT FITTER (SEF) BASIC COURSE

By Lt (U) Ahmad Abdurrahim



Survival Equipment Section (SES) is a small unit in Royal Brunei Air Force (RBAirF) under the Engineering Support Squadron from No.5 wing. As a unit that is responsible for the readiness of Survival Equipment, this unit is one of the most important as it serves to provide serviceable equipment for daily operational task for RBAirF and ultimately the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF). SES roles are to prepare and provide servicing and maintenance of daily aircrew flying equipment, such as helmets, items within the Aircrew Survival equipment pack training, as well as life jackets and life rafts.

Various types of liferafts that are available, to be utilised and fitted in the aircrafts, especially for prolonged tasks over water. This includes maritime patrol, and search and rescue operations over water.

75 Squadron of No.7 Wing RBAirF is responsible in training and producing dynamic and professional technical personnel to fulfil the RBAirF's operational requirements. The three mandatory courses given by 75 Squadron are Survival Equipment Fitter (SEF) Basic Course, Survival Equipment Fitter (SE Fitt) Intermediate Course and Survival Equipment Fitter Advance Course.

Under SEF Basic Course, the course objective is to equip personnel with the Trade Skills which are appropriate to the SE Fitt Trade that will help to enable them to fulfil the job description of SE Fitt at Class 3, as defined in the RBAirF Trade and Employment Regulation. The duration of the course is 12 weeks and after attending this course, qualified personnel will be able to carry out professional preventive and restorative maintenance and scheduled servicing on the Aircraft and Survival Equipment currently in-use throughout RBAirF.

Some of the subjects under SEF Basic Course are safety lessons, skill development and familiarisation on survival equipment.

Basic SE Fitter performing lessons on assembly, repack and reinstallation of accessories into lifejacket.



Basic SE Fitter practical lesson, dismantling and assembling of the winch kits. This includes inspection and replacement of parts that are vital to ensure serviceability, and items are safe and ready to go.



Basic SEF participants are also exposed to the utilisation of the life raft, simulating dangerous situations at sea. The training is conducted at the RBAirF Swimming Pool. In RBAirF, life rafts are required to be fitted near emergency exit doors of aircrafts.

In RBAirF, life rafts are required to be fitted near emergency exit doors of aircrafts. Basic SE Fitter Participants learning how to operate and do maintenance work on the winch kits. This equipment is commonly used by aircrew during winching operations in order to rescue survivors/casualties. Basic SE Fitter participants are also trained to examine and ensure serviceability of life jackets. Life jackets are designed to provide maximum protection for pilot, aircrew and passengers, in order to avoid risk of injury that leads to loss of life especially during emergency situations over water. Several other equipment that are also included in the courses familiarisation into survival equipment, such as Group survival pack, Helicopter Aircrew Breathing Device (HABD), and flying helmets.



RBAIRF FUTURE PROJECT: UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS (UAS)

By Lt (U) Hanif

Aerial surveillance is one of the means to support an effective control of the air. This is particularly evident in surveillance in maritime as well as monitoring national boundaries. The Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) is a commonly utilised asset in many military forces, as it possessed the advantage of being a relatively simple platform that can be equipped with a range of sensors and, if required, able loiter at extended ranges.¹

The element of ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) is integral to overall situational awareness and information sharing and UAS have played a major role in the development of ISR capabilities for global military forces. Its capability to conduct ISR including target identification and acquisition has assisted in the overall situational awareness and Battle Damage Assessment (BDA) for commanders at a strategic and tactical level.²

The Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) capability comprises of measures, courses of actions, and operating procedures taken to counter a multitude of unconventional threats such as illegal logging, human and drug trafficking, illegal fishing and natural disaster.

The UAS project aims to fulfil the strategic requirement in RBAF's Aerial ISR capabilities, specifically along the maritime and land borders, through acquisition of UAS capability and it is forecasted to be delivered in 2021.

The UAS is one of many viable assets that may be used to conduct Aerial ISR operations. Compared to manned Aerial ISR platforms such as helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, an unmanned platform has no aircrew to limit its range and endurance sustainability, hence its capacity is designated to carry on more useful payloads such as sensors and extra fuel. The risk attributed to the operator is also lower.³

Surveillance and response operations throughout the nation's maritime approaches are essential to protecting national security interests both in peace time and any future crisis. This project would help reduce the knowledge gap on unmanned system operations and may better prepare the RBAF in exploring the possibility of leveraging further on unmanned technologies to satisfy RBAF requirements in the future. It will also test not just RBAF but other aviation stakeholders in terms of interoperability and comfort as it is the first time that an unmanned system are operating within Brunei Darussalam airspace which operates similarly as a manned aircraft.³

1. Shaping The Force Today', Defence White Paper, Ministry of Defence, 2007.

2. A Brief History of Drones', IWM, United Kingdom, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/a-brief-history-of-drones> accessed on 2 July 2020.

3. Defending the Nation's Sovereignty', Defence White Paper, Ministry of Defence, 2004.

PHOTO OF THE QUARTER

Have you ever taken photos that you have always wanted to share with everyone? Send us your best photographs and we will showcase the best one every quarter!

What to enter:

Picture submissions must be RBAirF-related.

Any photograph taken with a mobile device (phone or tablet) is accepted. The contestant certifies that he/she is the sole creator and copyright owner of the submitted photograph.

Cropped photos are eligible. Minor adjustments of pictures, including sharpening, contrast, toning, slight color adjustment and conversion to grayscale are acceptable.

For a photo in which a person is recognisable, you must be prepared to provide a model release from the subject in the form of permission, whether written or verbal. Photos that violate or infringe upon another person's rights, including but not limited to copyright, are not eligible.

Term:
Submissions accepted
from now till Tuesday
29 September 2020.

Who may enter:
All RBAirF personnel,
TEMD and Civilian staff
may enter.

How to Enter:

Please submit photographs via email to hassanal.ali@mindef.gov.bn along with a simple declaration in the email that you are the sole creator and copyright owner of the submitted photograph/s.

You may submit up to 3 photographs. In order to be judged by the editorial committee without being stretched or distorted, each photograph must be submitted in .jpeg, or .jpg format and no larger than 10 MB.