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## **TWO NEW FIRSTS FOR BSP:**

**First Bruneian Search and Rescue Commander and Winchman Paramedic in BSP**

A new significant milestone has been achieved in the field of Search and Rescue (SAR) in Brunei Shell Petroleum Sdn Bhd as the company's first female helicopter pilot, Saffawana Suhaili, has now become the first Bruneian Search and Rescue (SAR) Commander under BSP's Aviation Unit.

Saffawana's achievement builds upon a 12-year career with BSP, which all began after she decided she wanted to do something unique for a living after finishing her 'A' Levels. "I have always wanted to do something different. Then I saw a BSP advertisement for helicopter pilot trainees in the newspaper. But when I saw it was for male pilots only, it really challenged me, I know I can do it even as a woman! So I decided to pursue it," said Saffawana.

The fresh school leaver spoke with the interviewers and persuaded them to grant her a spot at the assessment centre. She trained in the United States for a year and signed her contract with BSP as a co-pilot in 2007. That was how she became the company's first female helicopter pilot. Ten years later in 2017, she became a commander, safely transporting passengers to the offshore platforms.

Shortly after, Saffawana took a leap of faith as she took up an opportunity to get into the Search and Rescue field. It took a lot of courage, perseverance and even tears to get to where she is now - a Search and Rescue (SAR) Commander. She said, "I am extremely thankful for the opportunity given by BSP to further develop my career. The journey is not always easy, but the outcome is rewarding. As a woman, it is especially gratifying as the field of Search and Rescue is traditionally more male-oriented."

From managing the aircraft, handling the patient that needs help inside the aircraft and executing the mission safely and efficiently, the challenges of being an SAR Commander also requires Saffawana to be able to quickly think outside the box, especially when dealing with situations at night or when flying during thunderstorms. "Ultimately, the mission is to rescue and save lives. There's a lot of responsibility in this. Lives rely on our dependability, and there must be no let-up in focus. Search and Rescue work involves a lot of collaborative efforts and effective communication between myself and the people I work with, the crew members."

Speaking on Saffawana's achievement, Jamie Mitchell, Head of Search and Rescue Operations for BSP said, "When you are responsible for a high-tech aircraft and three other very talented people, that is a very big weight on your shoulders. So to have that responsibility vested in a young Bruneian is absolutely incredible. It is an achievement that she, her family and her peers should be very proud of."

**Brunei's First Search and Rescue Winchman Paramedic in BSP**

Another significant milestone was achieved when Sahreme bin Idris became the first Bruneian to become a qualified SAR Winchman Paramedic. Sahreme joined BSP SAR in September 2018, having previously spent four years working as a paramedic for a government hospital, and another four years as a remote site medic, onshore and rig site medic.

Sahreme completed the initial SAR winchman training offered by ACE Air & Ambulance (Pvt) Ltd. in Australia. Speaking on the training, he said, "It was an immersive learning environment. I was introduced to flight procedures regarding "conning and clearances" and Confined Area Landings. I also learnt critical skills and procedures through the live hoisting training tower (LHTT) and the Wet Winch simulator. Sometimes in emergency situations, there are moments when you will have to land and perform the rescue on an unprepared, confined area. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to learn, practice and develop the vital skills required to effectively rescue a casualty from the water, in a safe and expedient manner."

"On top of the physical requirements, you need to manage the medical side too. When you are winched out, you are by yourself and you will need to make quick decisions, adapt to your surroundings and know how to react swiftly and safely."

Dr Ceri M. Powell, Managing Director BSP stated "We are immensely proud and grateful to our top-quality Search and Rescue professionals, and I am personally so proud to see the development of Saffawana and Sahreme, forging an inspirational path for others to follow".

### **BSP Search and Rescue**

Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the aircraft and the crew from the BSP Search and Rescue (SAR) provide emergency response capability to offshore operations. The emergency situations range from rescuing someone who is sick or injured, an accident offshore, missing person or boat – anything that may require a search and rescue. BSP SAR provides additional support to the company's workforce offshore to ensure that they come home safely.

BSP SAR has also worked with relevant government agencies; the Marine Police, the National Search and Rescue, and the Fire and Rescue Department. BSP is always dedicated to working collaboratively with others in the event of an emergency. The BSP SAR team includes four well-trained and highly-skilled Bruneians: Saffawana as the first Bruneian SAR Commander in BSP, Sahreme on the technical crew side and two Bruneian co-pilots.

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