



PINNACLE CLUB OF ASEAN: NEWSLETTER 04/16

Welcome to the latest issue of the Pinnacle Club newsletter, the fourth one this year, all of which we hope have helped to keep you updated on our past and future news, events as well as updated notes on our members.

Reflections of Pinnacle Club Members

We have received several contributions from members and are grateful and encouraged by the response.

We are very pleased to kick off this series with, appropriately, a write-up by Founding Patron Major-General (Ret'd) Pehin Dato Haji Mohammad Haji Daud.

Pehin Mohammed is a friend to many of us. We know of his distinguished service to his country and his unyielding efforts in promoting the spirit of camaraderie among the armed forces of ASEAN.

Here are his personal reflections published as he had written it.

“As background information, I was recruited in January 1961 to become a future officer for the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) which was only to be formed in May 1961. The RBAF started as a small infantry battalion, trained in Malaya, and after its formation was commanded by a Malayan Armed Forces officer.”



Pehin Mohammad being congratulated by Former Prime Minister (Ret'd) Chavalit Yongchaiyudh

PINNACLE CLUB OF ASEAN, c/o STRATAGEM GROUP

391B Orchard Road #22-06/07

Ngee Ann City Tower B Singapore 238874

Tel: +65 62622114

secretariat@pinnacle-asean.org



When Brunei did not join Malaysia in 1963, the Malaysian Armed Forces officers serving in the battalion were withdrawn and were replaced by officers seconded from the British Armed Forces. These officers commanded the battalion, which expanded in due course to become a tri-service armed forces for 23 years until I was appointed as Chief of RBAF on 31 December 1985. My greatest achievement therefore was being the first Bruneian to be entrusted to command the RBAF 25 years after it was formed.



Greeted by Lieutenant-General (Ret'd) Winston Choo on arrival in Singapore for an official visit.

During my 30 years service (1961 – 1991) in the RBAF, I received a number of honours and awards from my country as well as from foreign countries. I received two awards from Malaysia and one each from Thailand, Indonesia and the Republic of Korea. But my proudest moment was on 28 September 1992 at the Istana, Singapore when President Wee Kim Wee presented me with the highest military order, the Distinguished Service Order (Military) (Darjah Utama Bakti Chemerlang (Tentera)). This award came two years after I retired from the RBAF. Extracts of the citation for this award are:

“During his tenure as Chief of Armed Forces, Pehin Mohammad actively supported bilateral cooperation between the RBAF and the SAF. His efforts were instrumental in assisting the SAF’s conduct of training in Brunei. This training has contributed significantly to the professionalism of the SAF. Pehin Mohammad took personal interest in fostering closer consultation, dialogue, and professional exchanges between the armed forces of both countries. These bilateral activities between the RBAF and SAF have increased steadily in scope and frequency, and been of substantial value to the SAF.

“Pehin Mohammad’s personal commitment, enthusiasm and leadership by example has also contributed to the existing atmosphere of warmth and friendship between the officers and men of the RBAF and the SAF”

PINNACLE CLUB OF ASEAN, c/o STRATAGEM GROUP

391B Orchard Road #22-06/07

Ngee Ann City Tower B Singapore 238874

Tel: +65 62622114

secretariat@pinnacle-asean.org



“For his enduring contribution in bringing about excellent ties between the RBAF and the SAF, and thereby enhancing close friendship at the national level, between Brunei Darussalam and the Republic of Singapore, Pehin Mohammad is awarded the Darjah Utama Bakti Chemerlang (Tentera).”

The Investiture Ceremony was memorable in that I received this award as a civilian and in civilian clothes



Receiving a plaque from Gen Benny Moerdani, Defence Minister of Indonesia while General Try Sutrisno and the Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam look on.



With some of the former Commanders of RBAF with the late Gen Benny Moerdani of Indonesia (third right)

My greatest challenge was my lack of formal education. I only passed the school certificate “O” Level examination. In order to progress in my career, I had to put up long hours of study to pass promotion examinations. But attendance at professional

PINNACLE CLUB OF ASEAN, c/o STRATAGEM GROUP

391B Orchard Road #22-06/07

Ngee Ann City Tower B Singapore 238874

Tel: +65 62622114

secretariat@pinnacle-asean.org



courses including as student at army staff college and higher defence college helped to widen my horizon as a professional and enhanced my overall knowledge. Years later, after my retirement from the armed forces, for my lack of formal education I did not feel hampered or barred from doing my job as a diplomat (I was Brunei's ambassador to Egypt and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, New York – 1993 to 1997) or as a Cabinet Minister in Brunei (Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, and Minister of Energy – 2005 to 2010). Learning after all, is a lifelong process and not just the period spent at schools or universities.



After a golf farewell tournament for the Yang Dipertuan Agong of Malaysia. From left, Major-General (Ret'd) Pehin Dato Haji Mohammad, Former Defence Minister of Malaysia Tengku Rithaiddin, Former Vice-President (Ret'd) Try Sutrisno, Sultan Iskandar, the Agong of Malaysia, Lieutenant-General (Ret'd) Winston Choo and General (Ret'd) Tan Sri Hashim Ali

The Pinnacle Club provide opportunities for members to keep in close touch with one another and cement stronger relationship with former colleagues across the region.

As we age and become disabled, it is harder to attend gatherings especially when they involve long travels. It is while we are still healthy and able that we must grab every opportunity to meet as often as we can. Time does not wait for us and it may be too late when our time is up”.

PINNACLE CLUB OF ASEAN, c/o STRATAGEM GROUP

391B Orchard Road #22-06/07

Ngee Ann City Tower B Singapore 238874

Tel: +65 62622114

secretariat@pinnacle-asean.org



Secretariat Coordination Visits

Part of the Secretariat comprising Maj-Gen (Ret'd) Goh Yong Siang and Mr. Adrian Phua called on His Excellency General (Ret'd) Chavalit Yongchaiyudh in Bangkok on 15 Jun 2016, to update the former Prime Minister on the Club's developments and activities. We are pleased to note that the former Prime Minister is in good health and in fine spirits.



From left to right: Major-General (Ret'd) Goh Yong Siang, His Excellency General (Ret'd) Chavalit Yongchaiyudh and Adrian Phua

Calls were also made on Thai Club members General (Ret'd) Mongkon Ampornpisit, Air Chief Marshal (Ret'd) Amorn Naewmalee and General (Ret'd) Winnai Phattiyakul to explore possible future Pinnacle Club events to be held in Thailand. The Secretariat will provide early information when these activities are firmed up.

The Secretariat routinely make calls on Club members in ASEAN to solicit ideas, get feedback and to seek guidance from the Founding Patrons and other senior members. These calls are opportunistic when they coincide with the business travels of the Stratagem Group.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Please feel free to respond to or comment on Pehin Mohammad's thoughts. Please email us at the Secretariat, secretariat@pinnacle-asean.org and we will publish them in the subsequent Newsletters. We welcome more contributions by members. We hope to have a diverse collection from all the member countries, all service branches and through several generations of retired chiefs."

Please email secretariat@pinnacle-asean.org if you wish to submit any documents, photos or special messages and we will be happy to include them in our next issue.

*ALICE AND HIDAYAH
THE PINNACLE CLUB SECRETARIAT*

PINNACLE CLUB OF ASEAN, c/o STRATAGEM GROUP

391B Orchard Road #22-06/07

Ngee Ann City Tower B Singapore 238874

Tel: +65 62622114

secretariat@pinnacle-asean.org