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Headline: Chief of Keppel unit named BH Achiever of the Year

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Poly grad worked his way up, fulfilling work and military duties with passion

Sue-Ann Tan

He graduated with a diploma from Singapore Polytechnic and, through grit and determination, rose through the ranks in Keppel from 1990 to become chief executive officer of the firm's joint-venture shipyard in Qatar in 2011.

During that period, Mr Abu Bakar Mohd Nor, 51, also juggled work overseas with being the commander of the 27th Singapore Infantry Brigade.

There were even months in which he would take the seven-hour flight from the Middle East back to Singapore just to attend meetings with his men.

Beyond the military and his work in the maritime industry, Mr Abu Bakar also decided to further his education, graduating with a Master of Business Administration from Singapore Management University in June 2015.

Yesterday, he was recognised for his zeal for lifelong learning and contributions to society by being named Achiever of the Year by Malay daily Berita Harian.

The award is presented annually to Malay/Muslim individuals who have shown perseverance, determination, integrity and the ability to overcome the odds.

They must also be regarded as role models for the Malay/Muslim community in Singapore.

Mr Abu Bakar, who was commander of the infantry brigade from 2009 to last year, is now managing director of gas and specialised vessels at Keppel Offshore & Marine.

Berita Harian editor Mohd Saat Abdul Rahman said: "Mr Abu Bakar's dedication and discipline towards the development of his professional career and national service commitments are both noble and inspiring, making him a worthy winner."

Berita Harian's Young Achiever of the Year award went to Ms Nur Yusrina Ya'akob, 30. The teacher is the first Malay/Muslim woman from Singapore to reach the summit of Mount Everest, a feat she ac-



Berita Harian's Achiever of the Year Abu Bakar Mohd Nor was recognised for his zeal for lifelong learning and contributions to society, while Young Achiever of the Year Nur Yusrina Ya'akob was lauded for being the first Malay/Muslim woman from Singapore to reach the summit of Mount Everest. ST PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI

complished in May.

Ms Yusrina was 11 years old and attending a school camp when she developed a desire to climb.

"We had to swing ourselves from one place to another on ziplines, and I was afraid. But after going through the experience, I realised it is possible to overcome fear and it makes me want to push my own boundaries," she said.

Ms Yusrina was part of a Singapore expedition that aborted its climb in 2015 after the Nepal earthquake struck. But she made another attempt this year and succeeded.

"I felt so overwhelmed when I reached my goal. It shows that a small, petite girl like me can also do such things. There were many times I wanted to give up, but I decided that I wanted to finish what I started," she said.

In conjunction with its 60th anniversary this year, Berita Harian also gave out two Lifetime Achiever and four Business Achiever awards.

The Lifetime Achiever awards were given to Singaporean rock singer Ramli Sarip, who was mostly active in the 1980s until the early 2000s, and football personality

Fandi Ahmad.

The awards were given to "honour icons" and recognise their contributions and achievements in their chosen fields, said Berita Harian, and were presented by President Halimah Yacob. She was herself the Berita Harian Achiever of the Year in 2001.

Ramli said: "This is an extraordinary tribute for me. I never thought I would go this far in the arts scene, but when I thought about it, it is a long, hard road, but a very beautiful journey."

In a video recording, Fandi, who

is in Qatar with the national team for a friendly match, said: "This is a very special award for me, and I didn't think I would get it. Hopefully, it will inspire others as well."

As for this year's winner, Mr Abu Bakar's message to the community is to always "do your best, stay humble and never give up".

"I realise that if you just have passion for something, it will not be too tiring or difficult to do. As the saying goes, if there is a will, there is a way," he said.

suetani@sph.com.sg

And the winners are...

ACHIEVER OF THE YEAR

• Mr Abu Bakar Mohd Nor, managing director of gas and specialised vessels at Keppel Offshore & Marine

YOUNG ACHIEVER OF THE YEAR

• Ms Nur Yusrina Ya'akob, teacher, first Malay/Muslim woman from Singapore to reach the peak of Mount Everest

LIFETIME ACHIEVER AWARD



• Ramli Sarip, rock singer who was active mostly in the 1980s to the early 2000s



• Fandi Ahmad, football legend

BUSINESS ACHIEVER AWARD

• Mr Mohamed Ismail Gafour, chief executive officer of PropNex
• Ms Jumaida Rusdon, chief executive officer of Busy Bees Asia
• Mr Suhaimi Salleh, chief executive officer of SSA Consulting Group
• Mr Mohamed Abdul Jaleel, founder and chief executive officer of MES (Mini Environment Service) Group

Sue-Ann Tan

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