Pehin Naren Dhoj Joshi joined the Brunei Medical service in October 1965 and was the second state ophthalmologist replacing Pehin Philip Franks, who at that time was also the State Medical Director in-charge of the health care services for Brunei.

Pehin Joshi graduated from the Calcutta Medical College, Kolkata India. He later continued his training in London (1952-56) at Moorfields Eye Hospital, St Mary’s Hospital and the Institute of Ophthalmology (University College London Institute of Ophthalmology). He was trained by some of the pioneers in ophthalmology namely, Sir Stewart Duke-Elder (Duke-Elder Undergraduate Prize Examination and founder of the Institute of Ophthalmology), Sir Harold Ridley (pioneer of artificial intraocular lens implants) and Norman Henry Ashton (pathologist famed for his work in retinopathy of prematurity). Upon completion of his training, Pehin Joshi went back to Nepal and became the first Nepali eye specialist. He was awarded the Prabal Gorkha Dakshin Bahu (PGDB) in 1956, one of the highest honours bestowed by the King of Nepal. Pehin Joshi also performed the first ever organ transplant in Nepal in 1964 which was a corneal transplant.

When Pehin Joshi joined the Brunei Medical Service, the eye clinic consisted of just a single room in the Brunei General Hospital. With a team of nursing staff, he also ran regular eye clinics in the other three districts (Tutong, Kuala Belait and Temburong). The most common ophthalmologic conditions then were cataracts and infections related disorders (i.e. conjunctivitis and blepharitis).

Pehin Joshi introduced new services such as cataract surgery or intra-ocular lens implants, corneal transplant, screening and treatment for diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma) and oversaw the development of the department and its relocation to RIPAS Hospital in 1983. For his service to Brunei, he was bestowed the title of Pehin Orang Kaya Tabib Indera Setia Dato Seri Laila Jasa in 1970s. Pehin Joshi retired in May 1995 and now resides in London, England. The Department of Ophthalmology is now under the leadership of his son, Mr Nayan Joshi.

Guest editor: Dato Samuel Yapp Kai San (Senior Consultant Surgeon, RIPAS Hospital).

Based on the information provided by Mr Nayan Joshi (Administrative Head of the Department of Ophthalmology, RIPAS Hospital).