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ISKUL SAMA DILAUT OMADAL

*To build young leaders among the local community
(Malaysian citizen and stateless) through holistic education*



Iskul E-News | June 2023

Dear <<First Name>> ,

Happy Eid-ul-Adha to all Muslims, and greetings from Iskul!

As always, we have been busy making sure that our students on Omadal get the education they deserve. We hope you have had a good month, and write to you with updates on what we've been doing on Omadal. Thanks to your continued support, our school is still up and running. Every day we get to provide for these children is a blessing.

Recognition for the work we do is a little boost that keeps us going. One such encouragement has been the feature of our co-founder, Chuah Ee Chia on the Wiki Impact 100. This was a list of one hundred individuals in Malaysia who are making change in their fields. The highlight details the intentions that went into the creation of Iskul and what it took to be here today. Click [here](#) to check it out!

Here's a rundown of what we've been up to

- From the 1st to the 4th of June, the second marine module training, a collaboration between Iskul and Reef Check, was conducted as a result of funding from the National Democratic Institute (NDI) Malaysia grant. This took place in Iskul, Kampung Omadal Hujung, and along the coast of Pulau Omadal, Semporna, Sabah. Two representatives from Reef Check, were present to facilitate the training, which included seven members from the Iskul team. Over the four-days, two topics were covered: "Warna-Warni Biodiversiti Lautan (The Colours of Ocean Biodiversity)" and "Masa Depan Plastik atau Laut? (The Future of the Plastic or the Ocean?)". Both training

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activities included lectures and field activities.

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- Iskul has always advocated for responsible tourism, and recently one of our teachers, Jefry, was involved in an argument with tour guides. This incident started because Teacher Jefry recorded the actions of tourists under their travel agency who did not respect the sensitivity and culture of the people of Pulau Omadal. The argument was resolved by the village chief and some police officers, but Teacher Jefry was later informed by the villagers that there were [death threats](#) against him by these tour guides. He made a [police report](#) on the 16th of June and a [media statement](#) was issued by the Semporna District Police Chief. This issue has been stressful for our teachers and staff, but highlights the [importance of sustainable tourism](#) for local communities.
- On the 18th of June, Iskul held a productive parent-teacher conference with all our dedicated students' parents. We discussed the introduction of the mini clinic within the school premises, a step towards accessible healthcare and awareness for the stateless students. Concerns were also brought up regarding privacy in the face of tourism, and how uncomfortable some parents were; we are trying to work closely with local authorities to address the concerns and ensure a safe and respectful environment. The parents of our students actively participate and provide insight and support in our effort to build a future for these children, and the community. We are extremely grateful for all of this.



- Regarding the Iskul Mini Clinic, our mission at Iskul has expanded beyond our core goals of education. Thanks to the incredible support from Yayasan Gamuda, Dr Carmen from UNSW, and University Community Transformation (UCTC) UPM, we have built a new space for our Mini Clinic. This expansion

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the UCTC UPM visited Omadal, to discuss our plans for the Iskul Mini Clinic, and to the training of Community Health Helpers (CHH.) Four community members will be selected to go for a health internship with a private clinic in Semporna. This will give them the skills to help their community and sustainably run the clinic. The representatives from UCTC also sat down for a conversation with the seaweed entrepreneurs based in Omadal (facilitated by our headmistress).



- On the 15th of June, Gusung Melanta Library organised a book reading and coloring activity, and invited 10 Iskul students along with three of our teachers to join them. These opportunities may not seem remarkable to students of local schools, but it is a step forward for Iskul as we strive to integrate our students with communities outside of their own.



We end our correspondence with you today on a positive note- one of our Mastal Arikik, Enidah, has had a child! She gave birth to her son on the Iskul boat, while being taken to the Semporna hospital on the 26th of June. The baby brings joy to Enidah and her family, as well as the entire Iskul team.

We look forward to writing to you soon with more updates; thank you for being with us on this journey!

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We thank you for your time and support. Magsukul!

The grants that support our operation and activities end by December this year. If our work resonates with you, please consider making a contribution to keep us going.

To build young leaders in Omadal, you can transfer to:

Bank: Public Bank

Account Number: 3-2165146-31

Account Name: Persatuan Pendidikan Bajau Laut

(Iskul Sama diLaut Omadal)

Donation Subject: For 2024

Please email a transfer receipt to info@iskul.my to let us know! Every bit of help makes all the difference to us!

With gratitude,
Iskul Team

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