

ISKUL SAMA DILAUT OMADAL

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



Iskul E-News | August 2024

Dear <<First Name>> ,

Greetings from Iskul!

The past month has been an exciting and rewarding journey for the Iskul Sama Dilaut Omadal team. We have made significant strides in our educational activities, community engagements, and the successful celebration of Sabah Day and National Day.

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

- Iskul turns 9!

This August, [Iskul turns 9!](#) We honour the courageous stateless children, and devoted parents who support their education. Many of these young learners brave storms and heavy rains in small boats, yet their determination never wavers. Behind their laughter lies big dreams that shine brightly, guiding them toward a better future. At Iskul, we celebrate this journey, where education is a right for everyone, regardless of their background. We are continually inspired by the hope and courage these children demonstrate every day.



- Visit from Cahaya Society

On the 7th of August, [Cahaya Society](#) visited Iskul to introduce their Module Fizikal dan Kesihatan Komuniti. This excellent session provides in-depth education on various aspects of health, including physical fitness, nutrition, and community wellness.

Their presentation highlighted the module's comprehensive approach to

improving health knowledge, which aligns perfectly with our educational goals. We are eager to incorporate these valuable lessons into our classes, aiming to promote better health practices among our students.

Magsukul to Cahaya Society for their informative session and for equipping us with such a beneficial resource!



- World Indigenous Day

The Bajau Laut community is the indigenous people of the Sulu and Sulawesi Sea. This sea indigenous people include the Bajaus, Suluks and Bajau-Suluks. We celebrate the people of our community on World Indigenous Day, and their rich culture that is an integral part of this country's heritage.



- Visit from MySDG Foundation

On the 24th of August, MySDG Foundation visited us, and we are deeply grateful for the attention they have given to the diverse initiatives we're working on, including education for stateless children, waste management and also the community health centre. Our students were excited with the sandals gifted to them.

Their visit has not only highlighted the importance of these projects but also inspired our community to continue striving for improvement and sustainability. We look forward to our future collaborations and the positive



- MR Injections

On the [24th of August](#), several nurses from Egang Egang Desa Clinic, Bum Bum Island were present to give MR injections, which are Measles and Rubella injections, to more than 20 of our students. The injection is targeted at children aged 9 months to 8 years. Yet, there are still many children who miss out on the opportunity to receive these shots due to not having time to gather all the children in the Omadal Island community.

We would like to express our highest appreciation to the Egang Egang Desa Clinic for providing this opportunity free of charge to all including children without a country. We believe health is a right of every human regardless of background.



- Sabah and National day celebration

When Malaya and Sabah celebrated independence, [Iskul also celebrated this historic day](#) with high spirits. It is a day that celebrates unity, heritage, and history. Iskul is so proud to stand for the Bajau Laut peoples who are an integral part of those pillars. We believe that every child, regardless of background, deserves to experience the meaning of freedom.

On August 30, our students and the Malaysian children from the village engaged in a variety of activities such as independence-themed colouring and drawing competition, tug of war, boat races, underwater tug-of-war, and ball tug. On August 31, they showcased their talents through traditional dances, historical acts and patriotic songs.

Through this celebration, we plant hope for a brighter future where freedom and opportunity are for all, without exceptions. We are grateful that this celebration created a space for children from the Malaysian Bajau and the stateless Bajau Laut to interact and collaborate. We hope these efforts help break down social barriers and promote understanding between the two groups. That has been one of the founding missions

youth from both communities can participate in our activities and have a wonderful time together!"



- Gotong Royong event

The Iskul community (stateless Bajau Laut children), Omdal village's children (Malaysian Bajau), and Wanita Pulau Omdal (WAPO) joined forces for a successful cleanup session. This is just one example of how the stateless Bajau Laut community and the Malaysian Bajau in Omdal are working together to preserve their shared home. Watch our video on the event [here!](#)



- A new teacher arrives

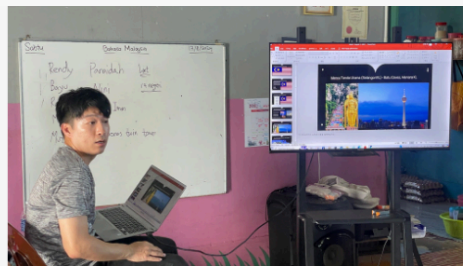
This month, Iskul welcomed a new teacher, Jun Beom, who quickly became an integral part of the team. Jun brought fresh energy and innovative teaching methods, particularly in mathematics, English, and world geography.

Malaysia" to make language learning enjoyable and promote national pride. His English classes were met with enthusiasm, as he used popular songs like "Heroes" and "Dreamers" to engage students and boost their confidence.

Under Jun's guidance, the Vocational class made significant progress, learning to introduce themselves in English. Each lesson enhanced their confidence, allowing them to share information about their favourite foods, hobbies, and aspirations fluently by the month's end. The impact of these activities has created an inspiring classroom environment, resonating with both students and staff alike.

Here's what Jun Beom has to say:

"Over the past month at Iskul Sama Dilaut Omadal, I have had the privilege of serving as an intern, researcher, and supporter within this vibrant community. My experiences have ranged from teaching world geography and English to vocational students, to actively participating in preparations and celebrations for Malaysia's Independence Day. These activities, along with my daily interactions with the Iskul teams, students and community members, have deepened my understanding of the Bajau Laut culture and the educational challenges they face. As an intern and researcher, I have also been gathering valuable insights to help shape future educational initiatives. Your generous support has enabled us to provide meaningful educational experiences and foster a sense of pride and belonging among the students. I am excited to continue this journey of learning and growth, and I sincerely thank you for making it all possible."



- Baby Adli is back home!

We are delighted to provide an update on baby Adli's progress. He has successfully been discharged from the Special Care Nursery at Hospital Tawau and is now safely in the arms of his mother, Kenang. Convincing Kenang to stay at the hospital was initially quite difficult; after her first night, she was overwhelmed and wanted to go home. However, with our supportive encouragement, she decided to stay for another night, though she still felt unprepared. Remarkably, by the third night, she agreed to continue without hesitation, showing true bravery as she overcame her fears for the sake of her child.

treatments, including blood transfusions and laser surgery for retinopathy of prematurity. Thankfully, the bleeding in his eyes has diminished, requiring monitoring every two weeks until he reaches 50 weeks of age.

While we have managed to secure a kind donor and funding for formula milk for the next two years, we urgently need financial assistance to facilitate Adli's frequent checkups. He has five medical appointments scheduled in the coming months. We are immensely grateful for the generosity of our donors and kindly ask for continued support to ensure Adli's health and recovery. Thank you for keeping baby Adli in your thoughts and prayers. ♥

A heartfelt thank you goes out to our generous donors Dr Hartini Zainudin, [Yayasan Chow Kit](#), and everyone who has been keeping Adli in their thoughts and prayers. Your support has truly made a difference. ♥



- Attention in the media

A big part of our advocacy is supported by being highlighted online and in the media. When organizations or outlets shine a light on our work, it spreads the word and connects us with collaborators and donors who make a world of difference.

We were visited by Scoop, who wrote a piece on Iskul, and published a reel to their Instagram. Check it out [here!](#)

Sin Chew also released an [article](#) on our work recently, which we are very grateful for!

- Appreciation towards Teacher Enidah

One of the highlights of the month was Teacher Enidah's devoted efforts in the cultivation class, where she taught students valuable agricultural skills. The class, focusing on root planting and the importance of sustainable cultivation, not only engaged the students but also gave them hands-on experience. Despite the challenging nature of some activities, such as using sharp tools to prepare the planting trays, Enidah ensured that the

the students to take pride in their work.

Enidah started off as one of our students, and Mastal Arikik. We are so proud of the young woman that she has become. She remains deeply committed to her role, juggling the responsibilities of the job with her role as a mother. Her passion inspires her students to love learning, and teaches them the importance of perseverance.

She is a standing ovation to the strength of her community.



- A donor stepped in to apply for an awards/grant for Iskul

We are grateful that one of our donors, Marie Tan, has passionately worked with Ee Chia to apply for her alma mater, Grinnell College's [Wall Service Award](#). Marie is currently working with Médecins Sans Frontières(MSF), and based in France.

Here's her reason to apply for the awards for Iskul:

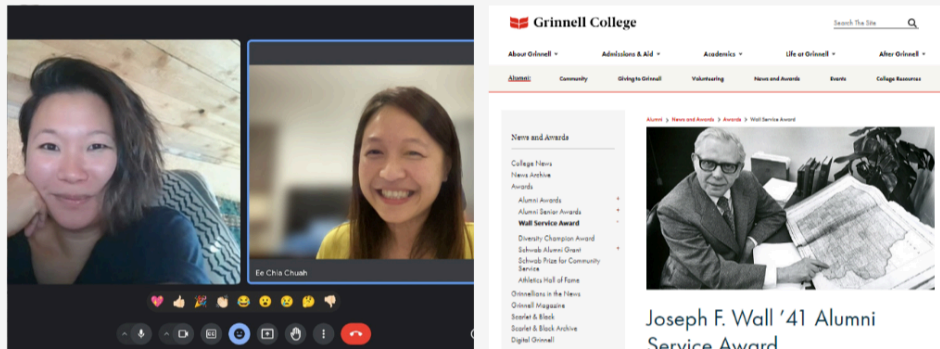
"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead

I started donating to Iskul in 2019. I got to know about Iskul through a Malaysian Women in France WhatsApp group. I subsequently found out that I had multiple friends in common with Iskul's co-founder and director, Chuah Ee Chia. In addition, we are also both mothers of young school-age children who want to try to create a better world for our children to be a part of. Our own children are particularly privileged, but we are all connected; a global community, which is only as strong as its weakest link (Ee Chia's guiding light). I am humbled by Ee Chia's commitment to walking the talk and in establishing Iskul and continuing to advocate tirelessly for the Bajau Laut community and persisting in ensuring that the Bajau Laut children (some if not all) have access to education and basic health and I see applying for the Wall Project as an synergistic opportunity to join two initiatives with goals that dovetail perfectly.

On a personal note, my life path post-Grinnell led me home to Malaysia briefly, and then the UK, and a dozen other countries as a humanitarian aid worker before settling down in France. I've always been asked "Why

that I do not have to justify my life choices to others, this has always been something at the back of my mind and I have always kept an eye open for ways in which I could contribute towards helping make a positive change happen in Malaysia.

We're touched by her effort and her passion. If you, like Marie, have any awards/grants in mind and would like to help Iskul to apply, do reach out!



A Word to Our Readers

Thank You for Your Support and a Call for Continued Assistance

We would like to thank you deeply for all of your support - every little bit means the world to us and our cause. If you haven't gotten it, our [Student Impact Report](#) is available to you! Take a look at how far our students have come and the incredible things they are doing.

Fortunately we have managed to acquire approval from Yayasan Hasanah, to use the excess from a previous grant, to fund student meals until mid-November. We are actively looking for funding to be able to continue our meal programme in 2025.

We humbly appeal to our valued donors and supporters to think about making a contribution to our cause. Your ongoing kindness is vital in strengthening our efforts and sustaining Iskul's mission. By uniting our resources, we can create a significant impact on the lives of stateless children. Together, we have the power to bring about meaningful change and hope for these vulnerable individuals.

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

We thank you for your time and support. Magsukul!

only sustain us for another six months. 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 2025

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

Follow our social media for more real-time updates!



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