



Welcome to Our Newsletter!

Hello everyone,

In this edition, we're excited to share stories that highlight the resilience, creativity, and unity of the Malaysia Independent Living Association for Disabled (MILAD) community. From celebrating cultural festivities to advancing inclusivity through strategic partnerships and initiatives, we've been busy weaving connections and championing the cause of accessibility and empowerment for all.

Highlights include health and wellness collaborations, impactful webinars on Independent Living across Asia, our participation in the Subang Jaya city roadmap for a sustainable future, and the joyous establishment of the MILAD Wheelchair Dance Sport Club.

These stories showcase not just our activities but the collective spirit and determination of our community. As we move forward, let's keep building on this momentum to create an inclusive world where everyone is valued.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Let's continue this journey together.

Best,
Malaysia Independent Living Association For Disabled (MILAD)



Empowering Voices: Reflecting on the Groundbreaking International Webinar

On the 17th of February, 2024, a significant milestone was achieved in the journey towards a more inclusive future for individuals with disabilities across Asia. The Malaysia Independent Living Association For Disabled (MILAD) and the Human Care Association of Japan co-hosted the "Empowering Voices: International Webinar on the Evolution of the Independent Living Movement in Asia." This landmark event marked a pivotal moment, bringing together 70 participants from Malaysia, Japan, Taiwan, The Philippines, Thailand, and India.

A Confluence of Insights and Aspirations

Esteemed speakers from across the region, including Hiroaki Furihata of the Human Care Association, Japan; Udomchok Churut from the Thailand Council for Independent Living; Lin Chun Chieh from Taiwan Independent Living; Sia Siew Chin from MILAD; Francis Siva from @ILTC Malaysia; Liu Bee Sang from ILC Sibul Spinal Cord Injury Association; and Kamaruddin A Rahman from ILC Melaka, shared their profound insights and spearheaded discussions on the critical elements and challenges faced by the Independent Living (IL) movement in Asia.

Key Takeaways from the Webinar:

- 1. Clarification of Misconceptions:** A significant emphasis was placed on distinguishing Independent Living Centers (ILCs) from rehabilitation centers, underlining their role in empowering people with disabilities to lead self-determined lives.
- 2. Need for Government Engagement:** The discussions highlighted a vital need for Asian governments to deepen their understanding of the IL concept and integrate it into their policies and practices.

The banner features a pink and yellow background with a white dotted pattern. At the top left, it displays the logos for MILAD (Malaysia Independent Living Association For Disabled) and Human Care Association of Japan, along with the text 'JOINTLY ORGANISED BY: MALAYSIA INDEPENDENT LIVING ASSOCIATION FOR DISABLED (MILAD) & HUMAN CARE ASSOCIATION, JAPAN'. The main title 'Empowering Voices: International Webinar on the Evolution of the Independent Living Movement in Asia' is prominently displayed in the center. Below the title, the date and time are listed: '17 FEBRUARY 2024 | 10:00 AM - 13:00 PM (MYT - MALAYSIAN TIME) | ZOOM MEETING ROOM'. On the right side, three speakers are featured with their photos and names: Mr. Hiroaki Furihata, International Program Coordinator at Human Care Association; Mr. Udomchok Churut, Chairperson at Thailand Council for Independent Living; and Ms. Lin Chun Chieh, President at Independent Living Taiwan. At the bottom, contact information is provided: 'info@miladmalaysia.org', 'miladmalaysia.org', and '+60 18 - 281 3178'.

Empowering Voices: Reflecting on the Groundbreaking International Webinar

3. The Importance of PA Services:** The webinar stressed the critical role of Personal Assistant (PA) services in supporting the IL framework, urging governments to recognize and support this essential service.

4. Utilizing CRPD: Leveraging the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) more effectively was identified as a key strategy for ILCs to encourage government cooperation in the inclusion of IL services.

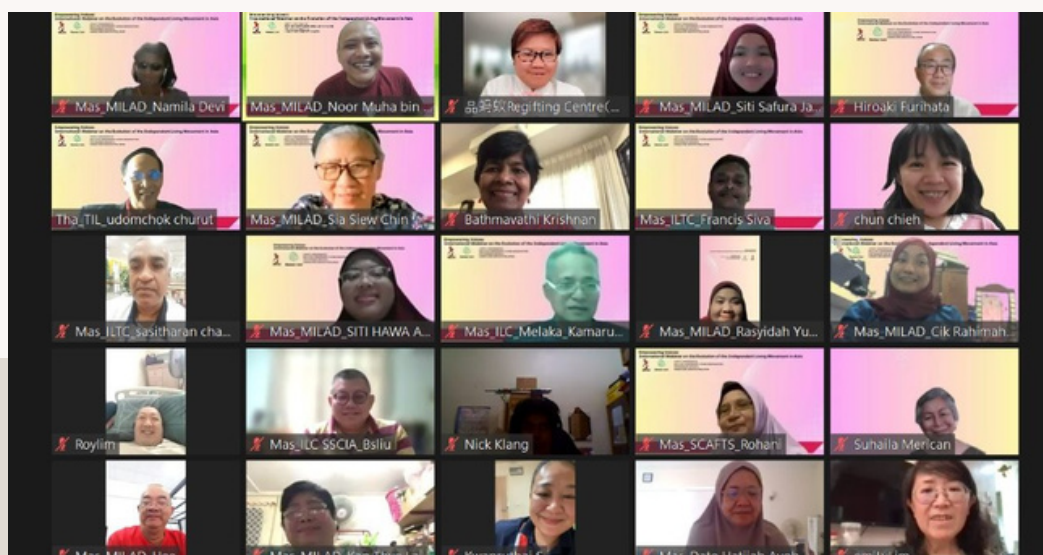
5. A Call for Unity: A passionate call was made for stronger unity and collaboration among ILCs across Asia to enhance the strength and reach of the IL movement.

Moving Forward Together

The "Empowering Voices" webinar served not just as a forum for sharing knowledge and strategies but also as a reaffirmation of our collective commitment to advancing the Independent Living movement in Asia. By uniting voices, experiences, and visions, we are paving the way for a future where every person with a disability can live a life marked by dignity, choice, and independence.

We extend our deepest appreciation to all speakers, participants, and supporters whose contributions turned this event into a resounding success. Inspired by the insights and resolutions shared, let us continue to work hand in hand, striving to build more inclusive communities and a world accessible to all.

Together, let's maintain the momentum, keep the conversations alive, and turn our shared visions into reality!





Advancing Accessibility: MILAD's Role in Shaping Inclusive Transportation

In a pivotal move towards creating a more inclusive society, the Malaysia Independent Living Association For Disabled (MILAD) proudly took part in a critical discussion with the Agensi Pengangkutan Awam Darat (APAD) focused on enhancing the accessibility of taxis in Malaysia. This meeting marked a significant step forward in addressing the transportation challenges faced by the disabled community across the nation.

MILAD's representative, Muha Aziz, joined a distinguished panel of advocates, including Ms. Christine Lee from The Barrier-Free Environment and Accessible Transport (BEAT), Ms. Ivy Pau from the Beautiful Gate Foundation, Former Senator Ms. Bathmavathi, Mr. Murugeswaran, and Puan Mehboob from the Damai Disabled Person Association Malaysia. Together, this formidable team united their voices to emphasize the critical need for Accessible Taxi Services in Malaysia, advocating for tangible changes that would foster a more accommodating and inclusive transportation system.

The collaboration among these passionate individuals and organizations underscores a collective commitment to breaking down barriers and ensuring that everyone, regardless of physical ability, has equal access to transportation. The discussions with APAD represent a hopeful step towards realizing a vision where mobility is not a privilege but a right accessible to all.

As we await the outcomes of this meeting, MILAD remains optimistic that the government will heed our collective suggestions and implement measures that reflect a deep understanding of and response to the mobility needs of the disabled community. We are on the cusp of a transformative shift towards a more accessible and inclusive transportation future in Malaysia.

Stay tuned to MILAD for further updates on this critical initiative. Together, we are working towards a brighter, barrier-free future for everyone.

MILAD's Commitment to a Sustainable Subang Jaya

The Malaysia Independent Living Association For Disabled (MILAD) is proud to have taken part in the third Focus Group Discussion (FGD) for the Subang Jaya Voluntary Local Review (VLR), contributing to the development of the SDG's Subang Jaya City Roadmap. Our participation underscores our dedication to fostering a sustainable and inclusive future for everyone in our community, particularly for persons with disabilities.



Represented by our esteemed staff member, Robin Chow, MILAD voiced the essential needs and rights of the disabled community, advocating for their inclusion in the city's strategic planning towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This event is a testament to our commitment to ensuring that our urban development leaves no one behind, paving the way for a city that is accessible, equitable, and inclusive for all its inhabitants.



By engaging in such crucial discussions, MILAD is at the forefront of promoting and implementing policies that are mindful of the disabled community's needs, aligning with our mission to make Subang Jaya a model city for sustainability and inclusivity. Together, we are taking significant strides towards creating a better future for all citizens, demonstrating the power of community and collaboration in achieving the global SDGs.





Spotlight on Partnership: MRDIY's Visit

Exciting News! A remarkable day unfolded on 12 January 2024 at MILAD, as we had the honor of hosting a visit from MR DIY. This visit was much more than a simple courtesy call; it represented a profound gesture of support and solidarity with our OKU Community. Renowned for its commitment to community welfare, MR DIY stepped forward with a generous contribution that truly warmed our hearts.

The donation comprised 33 sets of essential daily necessities and equipment, items that are vital for the everyday comfort and well-being of individuals within the OKU Community. This significant contribution is a shining example of how community support can play a crucial role in improving the quality of life for those facing unique challenges.

We are deeply thankful to MR DIY for their dedication to aiding our community. Their contribution reflects the immense potential of corporate social responsibility to make a meaningful difference in the lives of many. However, the path to creating a lasting impact does not end here. It marks the beginning of a collaborative journey towards greater inclusion and support.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to MR DIY for setting an inspiring example. With your involvement, we can forge a stronger, more compassionate community for the OKU. Let's seize this opportunity to effect meaningful change, inspired by MR DIY's generous act.

Together, we have the power to accomplish remarkable things.

Unity in Healing

In the spirit of unity and care, we are honored to spotlight the incredible success of the 18th Compassionate Outreach and Traditional Chinese Medicine Charity Treatment Event (第18场弱势群体爱心巡回关怀与中医义诊活动), a testament to the power of community and compassion. This remarkable initiative aimed at supporting the marginalized communities has once again shown us the profound impact of collective effort.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the 马华堂女将团 - MCAH Wanita and Lion TCM for their unwavering dedication and expertise. Their traditional Chinese medicine consultations provided much-needed support to vulnerable individuals, offering both healing and hope. The generosity of these groups was further highlighted by their donation of 10 sets of Julie's Lunar New Year goodie bags, a gesture that brought joy and warmth to many.

But their commitment doesn't stop there. With a noble goal set to distribute an additional 100 goodie bags to the less fortunate within our community, they have truly embodied the spirit of giving and kindness. This initiative not only offers immediate relief but also fosters a sense of belonging and care among those who need it most.



To all participants, volunteers, and donors who contributed to the success of this event, your compassion has not only brightened the lives of individuals but also strengthened the fabric of our society. Your efforts have created a ripple effect of kindness, inspiring others to join in the cause of building a more caring and inclusive community.

A special thanks to the 马华堂女将团 - MCAH Wanita and Lion Tcm for making a significant difference in the lives of many. Your dedication to serving those in need is a beacon of hope and an example for us all.

Spring Festival Gathering

The Malaysia Independent Living Association For Disabled (MILAD) is delighted to share the unforgettable highlights from our recent Spring Festival Gathering. This event marked a significant milestone as our first major assembly post-pandemic, drawing over 60 members from diverse backgrounds into a vibrant tapestry of unity and joy.

Event Highlights

Reunion of Hearts: After a prolonged period of separation due to the pandemic, this gathering served as a heartfelt reunion for many. Friends, old and new, came together, reinforcing the bonds of community and friendship that MILAD cherishes deeply.

A Symphony of Joy: The air was filled with the melodious sounds of singing, the excitement of lucky draws, and the spectacular sight of fireworks lighting up the night sky. These moments of joy and celebration created an atmosphere of warmth and happiness that enveloped everyone present.

A Mosaic of Cultures: In a beautiful display of Malaysia's multicultural essence, participants from various ethnicities shared and celebrated together. This gathering was a vivid illustration of our belief in unity in diversity, showcasing the strength and beauty that comes from our differences.

This Spring Festival Gathering was more than a celebration of a season; it was a reaffirmation of MILAD's commitment to building a supportive and inclusive community. It was a testament to the resilience, spirit, and unity of our members, who, despite challenges, continue to inspire and uplift one another.

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who participated and made this event a memorable one. A special thanks to Sin Chew for capturing the essence of our celebration and sharing our story. We invite you to read more about our joyous gathering and join us in celebrating the spirit of togetherness and hope.

Spring Festival Gathering

As we move forward, let us continue to support each other, embracing each day with gratitude and optimism. Here's to more celebrations, more unity, and more milestones achieved together!

[🔗](https://shorturl.at/dwHMQ) Relive the moments of joy: [Sin Chew Coverage] (<https://shorturl.at/dwHMQ>)



Empowerment on the Move: Unlocking New Horizons with Free Passes

We're excited to share a glowing milestone from our continuous journey toward greater accessibility and independence within the OKU community. The Malaysia Independent Living Association for Disabled (MILAD) is witnessing firsthand the empowering outcomes of our latest initiative, spearheaded by the compassionate and dedicated Hee Yong Wah, our peer counselor.

Our recent expedition to the Pasar Seni LRT Station - a vital node in the heart of our bustling city - marked a pivotal moment for our members. The mission was clear and profoundly impactful: assisting our friends with disabilities in securing the Free Pass for Persons with Disabilities. This pass is far more than a simple transit tool; it represents a gateway to autonomy, an emblem of freedom, and a significant stride toward self-reliance.

Why This Matters

Navigating the complexities of public transportation presents a significant challenge for individuals with disabilities. The acquisition of these free passes transcends mere physical mobility; it embodies the essence of opening up a world filled with opportunities, experiences, and the priceless feeling of independence. It's about moving freely, on one's own terms, in a world that's becoming increasingly accessible.

MILAD records a note of appreciation to Prasarana and hope this gesture of kindness to the disabled community will be permanent. And a heartfelt thanks goes to Hee Yong Wah, whose guidance and support have been instrumental in this process. His commitment not only reflects the spirit of MILAD but also enhances our collective efforts to foster an environment of support and empowerment.

Join us as we celebrate these steps towards freedom and independence. Your support, encouragement, and involvement play a crucial role in transforming lives and making the dream of a fully accessible world a tangible reality. One journey at a time.



Lunar New Year Celebration

This Chinese New Year, the Malaysia Independent Living Association For Disabled (MILAD) and our friends from the Intellectually Disabled Association Malaysia (IDA) experienced a truly heartwarming celebration, thanks to the extraordinary kindness of Ms. Wong and her team at Restaurant 2323.

In an incredible display of love and inclusivity, Ms. Wong opened the doors of Restaurant 2323, welcoming our members to a memorable Lunar New Year celebration. It was a gesture that went beyond mere hospitality; by presenting Ang Pows to our members, Ms. Wong not only shared the festive joy but also imbued it with hope and a sense of belonging. This generosity reflects the true essence of the Lunar New Year—celebrating prosperity and joy with everyone, regardless of abilities or backgrounds.

The event was filled with smiles, laughter, and an atmosphere of genuine happiness, highlighting that the spirit of the Chinese New Year knows no boundaries. It's a celebration of community, togetherness, and the joy of spreading happiness.

We are profoundly grateful to Ms. Wong for her heartfelt invitation and for embodying the true spirit of the Lunar New Year. Her thoughtful actions remind us all of the joy of giving, sharing, and celebrating together. This generosity has not only made the festival more meaningful for our members but also serves as an inspiring example for others to embrace inclusivity and kindness.

As we continue to support and foster a culture of inclusivity, let's take forward the spirit of sharing and love throughout the year. Together, we can ensure that every celebration is inclusive and special for everyone involved. Thank you, Ms. Wong, and to all who champion inclusivity and kindness in our communities.



A Cut Above: Celebrating Generosity with Mr. Frankie's Team

In the heart of our mission to foster a supportive and inclusive community, we've witnessed an act of kindness that truly stands out. Mr. Frankie and his team brought their talents to MILAD, offering free haircuts to the OKU community. This gesture of goodwill not only provided a practical service but also brought smiles and a sense of dignity to many. Such acts of generosity illuminate the power of community and the impact of sharing our skills and time with those who appreciate it the most. Mr. Frankie and his team's contribution goes beyond just haircuts; it's a testament to the human spirit's capacity for compassion and support.

We're inspired by their example and extend a heartfelt invitation to anyone with a skill, service, or simply a desire to contribute to the well-being of the OKU community. Whether it's through offering your professional services or volunteering your time, every act of kindness helps build a network of care and support that can significantly impact lives. Interested in joining this movement of generosity and support? We encourage you to reach out and become a part of our growing community of volunteers and supporters. Together, we can create lasting change and spread a message of inclusivity and love.

A massive thank you to Mr. Frankie and his team for leading the way with their amazing service. Your generosity shines brightly as an example for all of us. Let's continue to band together in making a difference, one act of kindness at a time.



Harmonizing Accessibility: Designing for All Needs

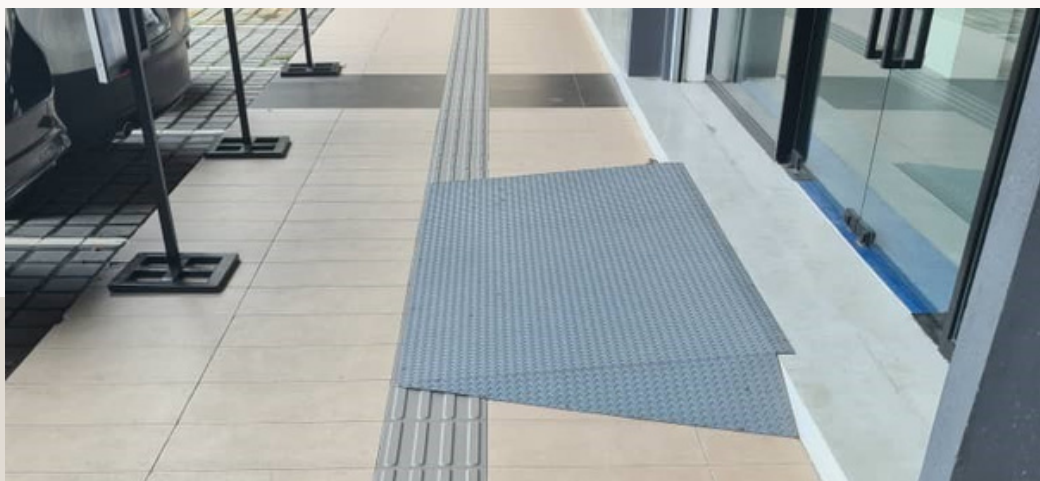
The quest for inclusivity brings to light the intricate challenge of implementing accessibility features for diverse disabilities. A prime example is the introduction of ramps over tactile paving paths, aimed at assisting wheelchair users but potentially hindering those with visual impairments. This highlights the essential need for designs that consider the full spectrum of community needs.

Tactile paving and ramps are both critical for enabling safe, independent navigation and access, yet their coexistence in shared spaces demands innovative, inclusive design solutions. It raises an important question: How can we craft our public spaces to truly accommodate everyone?

This challenge calls for a collective, creative effort from designers, urban planners, and policymakers to prioritize inclusivity. Finding solutions that universally enhance accessibility without disadvantaging any group is crucial.

The juxtaposition of ramps and tactile paving serves as a reminder of our broader goal: to build an inclusive world that caters to the diverse needs of all its inhabitants. It encourages us to strive for comprehensive, thoughtful planning and design that embodies true inclusivity.

Let's commit to creating a future where public spaces welcome everyone, recognizing that embracing the complexity of this challenge is key to making inclusivity a lived reality. Together, we can ensure that no one is left behind in our journey toward accessible, navigable public spaces for all.



MILAD Partners for Health and Wellness Initiative

The Malaysia Independent Living Association For Disabled (MILAD) recently spearheaded a groundbreaking event in collaboration with Persatuan Mencegah Dadah Malaysia (PEMADAM), The Malaysia Chinese Assembly Hall, and Dr. Noor La Nature Clinic. This initiative aimed at providing essential health services and education for our OKU community members marked a significant milestone in our mission to promote health and well-being among those with disabilities.

Event Highlights:

- **Comprehensive Health Services:** 20 MILAD members received free, compassionate healthcare, addressing crucial health issues that had been overlooked.
- **Educational Sessions:** Dr. Noor led informative talks on managing chronic conditions alongside disabilities, emphasizing prevention and management strategies.
- **Community Support and Donations:** Generous contributions from the Malaysian Chinese Association and others ensured the provision of medical supplies, demonstrating a strong community backing.
- **Empowerment and Knowledge:** Beyond immediate medical care, participants gained valuable insights into better managing their health, fostering a sense of empowerment.

A Celebration of Community:

This event was a testament to what can be achieved when organizations and communities come together to support the vulnerable. It wasn't just a day for health services but a celebration of the collective strength and resilience of our members.

Gratitude and Looking Forward:

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the organizers, volunteers, and donors who contributed to the success of this event, with special appreciation for PEMADAM and the MCAH wanita. Their dedication and support are invaluable to our ongoing efforts.

This initiative is only the beginning. We're excited to continue this journey, advocating for a healthier, more inclusive future. We invite everyone to join us, share their stories, and help spread awareness. Together, we can make a lasting impact.



Dive Into the Rhythm with MILAD Wheelchair Dance Sport Club

We're super excited to invite you to become a part of something truly special - our MILAD Wheelchair Dance Sport Club! It's not just about dancing; it's about joining a community that thrives on joy, creativity, and unity.

Whether you're a seasoned dancer or have never danced before, we welcome you with open arms. Our club offers customized dance programs, exciting social gatherings, and the chance to shine in dance competitions, all crafted to be fully inclusive.

Imagine the thrill of expressing yourself through dance, making lifelong friends, and discovering the pure freedom that comes with it. Your wheelchair isn't just a mobility device; it's your dance partner in this beautiful journey.

Eager to get started? Simply click the link to join our WhatsApp group, and let the magic begin.

Let's hit the dance floor together - we're so excited to welcome you to the family!



DONATION PLEDGE FORM

I (WE) WOULD LIKE TO PLEDGE TO MILAD

NAME(S) MAKING PLEDGE:

TOTAL AMOUNT OF PLEDGE:

ADDRESS:

.....

.....

PHONE:

EMAIL:

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ABOUT US



Malaysia Independent Living Association for Disabled (“MILAD”) is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation run by a group of people with disabilities, to help people with disabilities toward Independent Living, regardless of their background, race and religion.

OUR VISION

It is our vision to establish a society that embraces the concept of Independent Living which promotes the disabled people’s full inclusion and participation in the community, wherein the disabled people are given the same life opportunities and the same choices in everyday life that the non-disabled people take for granted.



OUR GOAL

Our goal is to train, equip and empower the people with disabilities to live independently, and at the same time advocating for equal rights and opportunities for them. We strive toward creating awareness so that the general public will have the right perspective toward disability and people with disabilities, and hence able to help transform the society to allow full inclusion and participation at every possible level by the disabled people.

