

International Students Showcase Eswatini and Indonesian Cultures, Broadening Global Perspectives on Campus

Campus focus

To deepen campus internationalization and promote cross-cultural understanding, Tamkang University's Office of International and Cross-Strait Affairs has long organized the "International Cultural Kaleidoscope" series. In addition to inviting international students to share the cultures of their home countries on campus, the program also encourages them to engage with local communities and promote international exchange. On May 22, the Tamkang University Indonesian Student Association (TKUISA) visited Xinxing Elementary School in New Taipei City to introduce Indonesian culture through interactive activities. On May 28, an international student from Eswatini shared the history and traditions of one of Taiwan's diplomatic allies in Africa with faculty members, staff, and students on campus.

On the afternoon of May 22, members of TKUISA led an engaging cultural program at Xinxing Elementary School, introducing Indonesian customs and traditions through a variety of interactive activities designed to foster international understanding. The event began with an introduction to Indonesia's location, national flag, and basic language using a world map, followed by a lesson on common Indonesian greetings, giving elementary school students their first taste of Indonesian culture.

The cultural session also introduced Indonesian cuisine, traditional customs, and iconic symbols such as the Komodo dragon and batik.

Comparisons between Indonesia and Taiwan—including island geography and daily lifestyles—helped students appreciate both the similarities and differences between the two countries. The event concluded with hands-on experiences of traditional Indonesian games, sparking students' curiosity through fun and interactive learning. During the question-and-answer session, the children enthusiastically asked questions and actively participated, demonstrating a strong interest in learning about different

cultures.

On the evening of May 28, the International Cultural Kaleidoscope continued in the lobby of the Ching-Sheng Memorial Building, where Sikhosana Luyanda Yendziwe, a sophomore in the English-taught Computer Science and Information Engineering Program from Eswatini, led participants on a cultural journey spanning geography, history, language, and traditional festivals. Opening with the lighthearted question, "How many countries are there in Africa?", Wang quickly engaged the audience. She introduced Eswatini as a landlocked country in southern Africa, surrounded by South Africa and Mozambique, with a population of approximately 1.2 million. She also explained that in 2018, King Mswati III officially changed the country's name from Swaziland back to the Kingdom of Eswatini, reaffirming the nation's cultural identity and sovereignty.

As one of the few remaining absolute monarchies in the world, Eswatini maintains a unique dual monarchy, jointly represented by the King, symbolized by a lion, and the Queen Mother, symbolized by a she-elephant. Sikhosana Luyanda Yendziwe explained that, for the people of Eswatini, the monarchy represents far more than a political institution—it embodies their culture, traditions, and collective sense of belonging. During the presentation, she introduced the symbolism behind the colors of Eswatini's national flag and even taught the audience several greetings in the Swazi language, filling the room with laughter and applause as participants practiced the unfamiliar pronunciations together. She also introduced the country's two most significant cultural celebrations—the Umhlanga (Reed Dance Festival) and the Incwala (Kingship Ceremony)—using videos to showcase traditional attire and dances that reflect Eswatini's strong cultural identity and pride.

Troya Shanine Tiesha GajaDhar, a sophomore student in the English-taught Computer Science and Information Engineering Program from Saint Lucia, said she knew very little about Eswatini before attending the event. After watching the videos of the traditional dances, she was deeply impressed by the strong sense of community and the dedication of the Eswatini people to preserving their cultural heritage. "As someone who also comes from a

country that values traditional culture, I could really relate to it. It was incredibly fascinating," she said. She added that after attending the cultural sharing session, she had already learned how to greet her classmates in Swazi, making her feel even closer to her fellow international students.



