

University of Lay Adventists of Kigali NEWSLETTER

1st of May, 2024





UNILAK commemorates 30th anniversary of the Genocide against Tutsi across campuses

On May 21st, 2024 the University of Lay Adventists of Kigali (UNILAK) marked the 30th anniversary of the genocide against the Tutsi with solemn events held on both its Kigali and Rwamagana campuses. The Nyanza campus had observed the commemoration on May 16th, setting a somber tone for the subsequent events.

The day began with wreath-laying ceremonies at the genocide memorials of Nyanza and Rwamagana district located in both Kigali and Rwamagana. Students and faculty members gathered to honor the victims, placing wreaths as a sign of respect and remembrance. The memorial sites, where countless victims of the 1994 genocide are laid to rest, served as poignant reminders of the atrocities committed three decades ago.

Following the ceremonies, participants returned to their respective campuses to continue the commemoration. The events commenced with a minute of silence to honor the memory of those who lost their lives. This act of collective mourning was a powerful display of unity and remembrance.

This was followed by a series of speeches delivered by various university officials, government officials and members of survivor organizations who emphasized the importance of remembrance and the ongoing fight against genocide ideology. They spoke of the need for continuous education about the genocide, the importance of unity and reconciliation, and the role of youth in preventing future atrocities.

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"Be vigilant against any form of discrimination or violence, and always stand up for what is right. Together, let us ensure that "Never Again" is not just a slogan, but a reality for all humanity", he stated.

In Rwamagana, the Campus Coordinator, Dr Javan Semana Vice-Chancellor, emphasized the role of education in fostering peace and reconciliation. He highlighted the university's efforts to ensure that students understand the historical context and the imperative of unity and reconciliation.



Honorable Senateur
KANYARUKIGA Ephrem

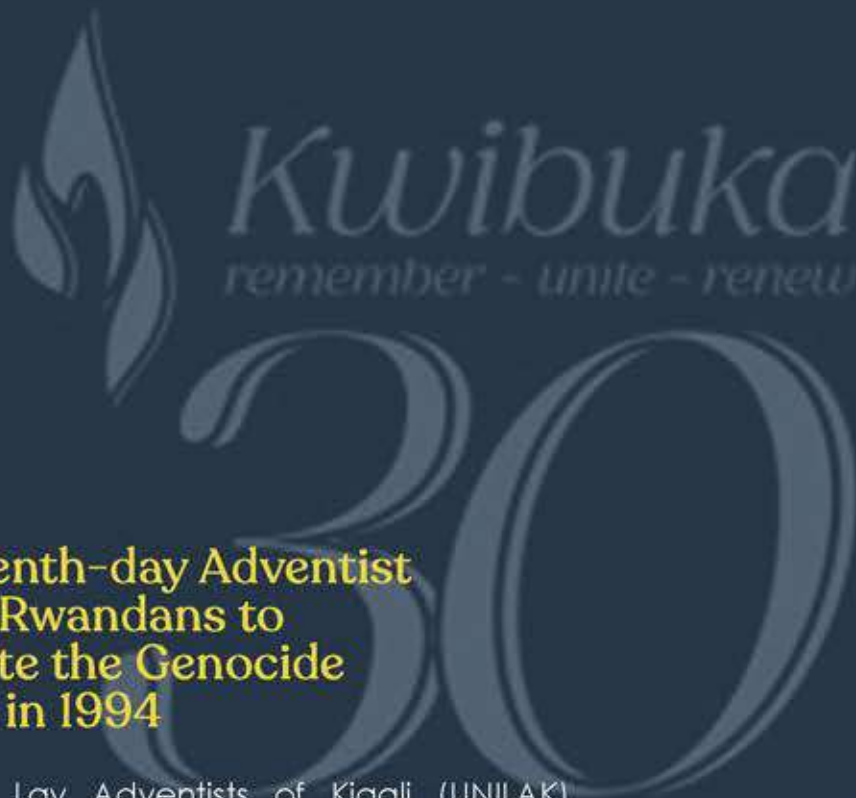
The most moving part of the commemoration came with testimonies from genocide survivors. Their stories of unimaginable suffering and incredible resilience brought many in the audience to tears. These testimonies served as powerful reminders of the human cost of hatred and the strength of the human spirit.

The commemoration at the Nyanza campus on May 16 was similarly marked by a wreath-laying ceremony, moments of silence, and survivor testimonies. The campus held a night vigil, a solemn and reflective gathering that pays homage to the victims and honors the resilience of survivors.

These events across UNILAK's campuses reaffirmed the institution's commitment to honoring the victims of the genocide against the Tutsi and educating its students and community about the critical importance of remembrance and reconciliation.

As Rwanda continues to rebuild and heal, the annual commemoration serves as a crucial reminder of the need for vigilance against hatred and the importance of fostering a society grounded in empathy and understanding.





UNILAK Seventh-day Adventist church joins Rwandans to commemorate the Genocide against Tutsi in 1994

The University of Lay Adventists of Kigali (UNILAK) Seventh-day Adventist Church stood in solidarity with Rwandans to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the genocide against the Tutsi. The church, located in Kigali, held a special service on the 11th of May 2024 to honor the memory of the victims and reflect on the tragic events that unfolded in 1994.

Members of the church gathered to pray for healing, reconciliation, and peace in Rwanda. They remembered the lives lost during the genocide and paid tribute to the survivors, many of whom still bear the physical and emotional scars of the atrocities.

During the service, Pastor Sadock Ngabo, the church's pastor, delivered a sermon emphasizing the importance of forgiveness and unity in the process of healing. He encouraged the congregation to continue working towards a more peaceful and harmonious society, where such atrocities could never happen again.

The commemoration at UNILAK Seventh-day Adventist Church was part of a series of events held across Rwanda to mark the anniversary of the genocide. It served as a poignant reminder of the need to remember the past while striving for a better future.

Prof. Kalu Ibe Ekpeghere visits UNILAK to strengthen collaboration with Woosong University

Prof. Kalu Ibe Ekpeghere Ph.D, Director of Africa Partnerships, recently paid a courtesy visit to UNILAK to oversee the progress of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between UNILAK and Woosong University.

The agreement, inked last year, aimed at fostering a seamless collaboration between the two institutions in staff and program exchanges, as well as in research endeavors.

During his visit, Prof. Ekpeghere engaged in discussions with key stakeholders at UNILAK to strategize on future initiatives to deepen the partnership between the universities.

The MoU between UNILAK and Woosong University signifies a commitment to promoting academic excellence and fostering international cooperation in higher education.

By facilitating the exchange of faculty and students, as well as collaborative research projects, the partnership aims to broaden the horizons of both institutions and create opportunities for cross-cultural learning and innovation.

Prof. Ekpeghere emphasized the importance of nurturing such collaborations in advancing educational objectives and addressing global challenges.

He underscored the significance of leveraging synergies between African and international universities to drive socio-economic development and contribute to the advancement of knowledge on a global scale.

As both UNILAK and Woosong University continue to work towards strengthening their partnership, they remain dedicated to realizing the shared goals outlined in the MoU.

Through sustained cooperation and mutual support, they aim to cultivate a thriving academic community that transcends geographical boundaries and enriches the educational experience for students.





On May 4th, 2024, the judiciary held an insightful public talk with students from UNILAK law faculty, focusing on the significant judicial reforms implemented over the past two decades. The event was a highlight of the ongoing Judicial Week and was themed "Judicial Journey in the Last 20 Years."

The talk, which drew a large audience of eager law students and faculty members, featured prominent speakers from the judiciary, including Supreme Court justices and senior legal practitioners. These experts provided a comprehensive overview of the milestones achieved in Rwanda's judicial sector, discussing the challenges faced, the reforms instituted, and the impact of these changes on the rule of law and access to justice.

Mr. Harrison Mutabazi, the spokesperson of the Judiciary delivered the keynote address, emphasizing the transformative journey the Rwandan judiciary has undergone since the early 2000s. He highlighted key reforms such as the establishment of specialized courts, the digitization of court processes, and measures to enhance judicial independence and transparency.

"The last 20 years have been marked by significant strides towards building a more efficient, transparent, and independent judiciary. These reforms have not only improved the delivery of justice but have also restored public confidence in our legal system," said Mr. Mutabazi.

Students had the opportunity to engage with the speakers, asking questions and discussing various aspects of the reforms. Topics ranged from the impact of technology on judicial efficiency to the ongoing efforts to ensure fair and equitable access to justice for all Rwandans.

One student, Musanganya Issa who attended the public talk expressed his appreciation for the event, stating, "It is inspiring to hear firsthand about the progress our judiciary has made. As future legal practitioners, understanding these reforms helps us appreciate the importance of continual improvement in our legal systems."

In closing, Retired Justice of the Supreme Court Mutashya J. Baptiste encouraged the students to be proactive in their legal careers and contribute to the ongoing development of Rwanda's judicial system. "Your generation has the potential to build on the foundations laid over the past two decades. Continue to strive for excellence and integrity in your professional endeavors," he urged.

The public talk was part of a series of events planned for Judicial Week, which aims to promote legal awareness and foster dialogue between the judiciary and the public.

"JUDICIARY ENGAGES UNILAK LAW STUDENTS IN DIALOGUE ON TWO DECADES OF JUDICIAL REFORMS"

"The judiciary held an insightful public talk with students from UNILAK law faculty"



UNITY AND RESILIENCE CLUB FROM UNILAK NYANZA CAMPUS INSPIRES STUDENTS AT MARANATHA COLLEGE

On May 23rd, 2024 members of the Unity and Resilience Club from UNILAK Nyanza Campus visited Maranatha College Secondary School, where they engaged with students in a public talk focused on the concept of "Ndi Umunyarwanda." This initiative aimed to foster unity and resilience among the youth.

The university students passionately engaged with the secondary students, sharing the significance of Ndi Umunyarwanda in promoting reconciliation, peace, and national cohesion. They emphasized the importance of internalizing these values to build a stronger and more united community.

During the talk, the university members urged the Maranatha College Secondary students to establish their own club dedicated to the principles of Ndi Umunyarwanda.

The proposed club will serve as a platform for students to actively participate in unity-building activities, discussions, and community service projects that reinforce the values of togetherness and mutual respect among their peers.

The event was marked by interactive discussions, personal stories, and practical advice on how to embody the spirit of Ndi Umunyarwanda; a program aimed at fostering a sense of unity and shared identity among Rwandans.

Mr. Jean Baptiste Niyitegeka, the head of students at Nyanza Campus, expressed his pride in the students' initiative. "This is a remarkable effort by our university students to extend the spirit of Ndi Umunyarwanda to younger generations. It's a testament to their dedication to fostering unity and resilience within our society," he remarked.

The students of Maranatha College Secondary School responded positively to the initiative, expressing enthusiasm and a willingness to foster unity within their school.

As a result, plans are now underway to officially launch the new club in October this year. The launch event is expected to be a significant milestone, reinforcing the commitment of the students to uphold and promote the values of unity and resilience in their daily lives.

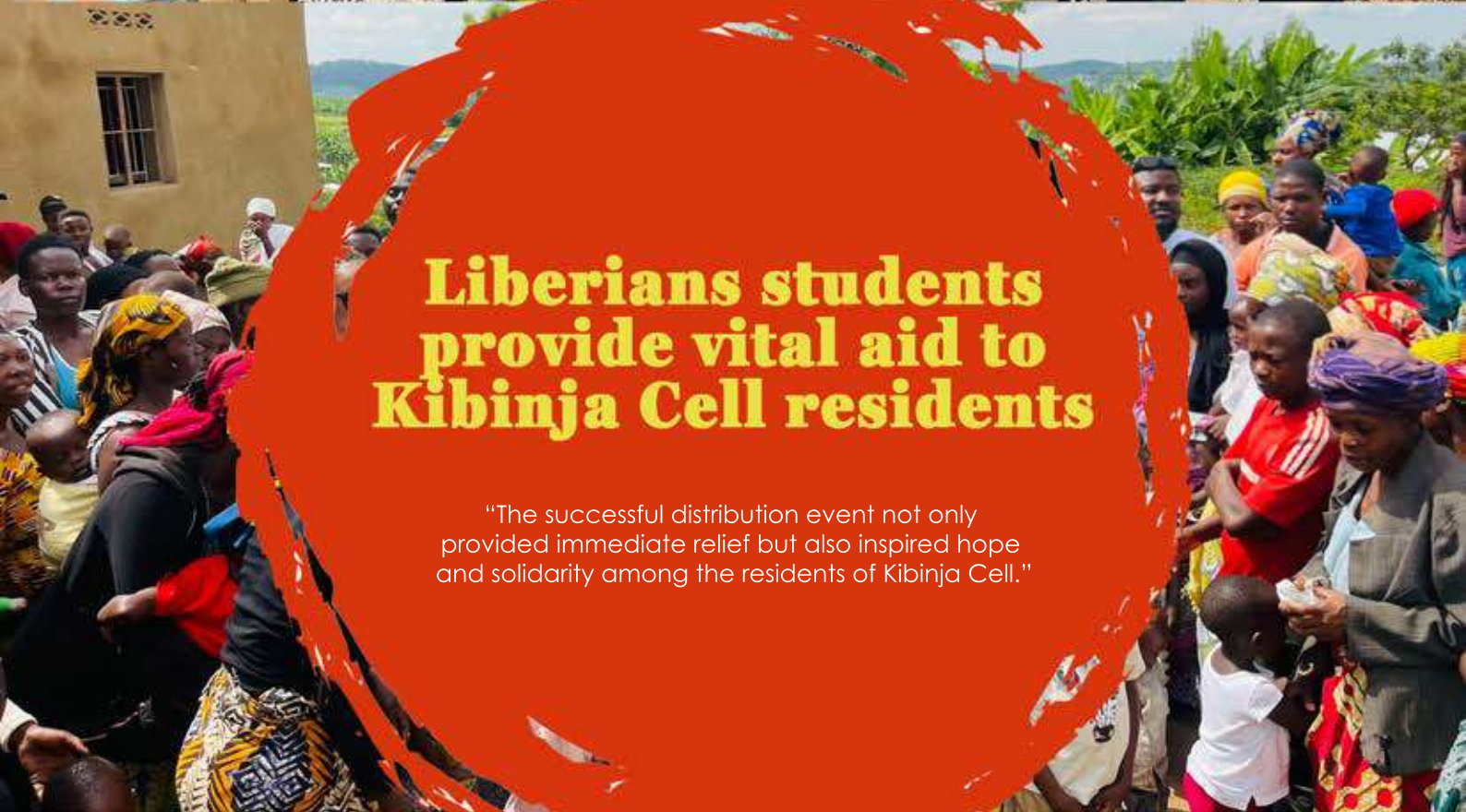
This initiative is part of a broader effort by the Unity and Resilience Club at UNILAK Nyanza Campus to extend their reach and impact, promoting societal cohesion and resilience among the younger generation.

As preparations for the October launch continue, both UNILAK Nyanza Campus and Maranatha College Secondary School are optimistic about the positive changes this new club will bring, fostering a stronger sense of unity and community among students.



Liberians students provide vital aid to Kibinja Cell residents

"The successful distribution event not only provided immediate relief but also inspired hope and solidarity among the residents of Kibinja Cell."





On May 20, 2024, Liberian students from UNILAK Nyanza campus, representing the REACH Association, extended a helping hand to the needy residents of Kibinja Cell. These dedicated students distributed 200 medical insurance policies and 200 pairs of bodaboda shoes.

The initiative, aimed at improving the health and welfare of Kibinja Cell's vulnerable population, was met with heartfelt appreciation from the local residents. The provision of medical insurance ensures that the beneficiaries will have access to essential healthcare services, a critical need in an area where medical costs often pose a significant barrier to receiving proper care.

The REACH Association, known for its commitment to community service and development, organized this outreach as part of its broader mission to support underprivileged communities. This latest effort underscores the association's dedication to making tangible improvements in the lives of those in need.

"We are deeply moved by the generosity and support of the UNILAK students and the REACH Association," said a representative from Kibinja Cell's local council. "Their contributions will have a lasting impact on our community, ensuring better health and improved quality of life for many."

This act of kindness from the Liberian students highlights the power of youth engagement in addressing global challenges and emphasizes the importance of educational institutions in promoting social responsibility. The successful distribution event not only provided immediate relief but also inspired hope and solidarity among the residents of Kibinja Cell.

SHIFT YOUR FOCUS

Hebrew 12:2

Speaker :
Mr Moses KIRUI



Date: 13th -18th/05/2024
(Day Program): 11:00 - 1:00 Pm
(Evening Program): 18:00 - 19:30

SHIFT YOUR FOCUS

UNILAK has launched a week-long series of prayer sessions under the inspiring theme "Shift Your Focus."

The initiative, aimed at fostering spiritual growth and unity among the university community, commenced on May 13th, 2024 and will continue for five consecutive days.

The prayer sessions are being led by the esteemed Pastor Moses Kirui, a well-known spiritual leader renowned for his dynamic and uplifting messages.

Pastor Kirui has been invited to guide the university through this period of reflection and devotion, emphasizing the importance of reorienting one's focus towards faith and inner strength amidst the challenges of modern life.

During the opening sermon, Pastor Kirui highlighted the need for individuals to realign their priorities and seek spiritual guidance to navigate the complexities of daily life.

He urged attendees to take this opportunity to deepen their faith and cultivate a renewed sense of purpose.

"Shifting our focus is about redirecting our thoughts and energies towards what truly matters," said Pastor Kirui. "In times of uncertainty and stress, turning to prayer can provide clarity, peace, and strength. I am honored to be part of this transformative journey with the UNILAK community."

The schedule for the week includes daily prayer meetings, interactive discussions, and special worship sessions, all designed to engage participants in meaningful spiritual practice. Each day's events will center on different aspects of the theme, such as gratitude, perseverance, compassion, and hope.

Dr. Ephrard Rulinda, the Dean of Students and Chaplaincy expressed his enthusiasm for the initiative, noting its significance in promoting holistic well-being among students and staff.

"At UNILAK, we believe in nurturing not just the minds, but also the hearts and souls of our community.

This week of prayer is a testament to our commitment to providing a supportive and spiritually enriching environment for everyone."

The "Shift Your Focus" theme serves as a powerful reminder of the potential for growth and renewal that lies within each individual, waiting to be unlocked through the practice of faith and prayer.

SHIFT YOUR FOCUS