

INTERVIEW SERIES WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF JAPAN-RELATED ORGANIZATIONS (No. 9)

PANG JENG MIN

Penang Aikido Association (PAA)

Self-introduction

My name is PANG Jeng Min. I have been teaching Aikido in Penang for the past 16 years. I was an engineer prior to teaching Aikido full-time.



Introduction of your organization

Penang Aikido Association (PAA) is the official Penang state Aikido body registered under Malaysia Sports Commissioner and recognized by the Penang State Sports Council. Our first dojo started in 2009 at Bayan Lepas, Penang. Currently, we have 5 dojos in

Penang, one in each district and support more than 100 Aikido practitioners. We are trying to promote Aikido martial art to the community.

PAA is part of Malaysia Aikido Association – our national Aikido body recognized by Aikikai Aikido World Headquarters, International Aikido Federation, Malaysia National Sports Council, and the Olympic Council of Malaysia.

Every year we participate in a few Aikido seminars organized by the Malaysian Aikido Association and other organizations. Aikido is slightly special compared to other martial art whereby there is no competition. Mainly dojo class and seminar (2 to 5 days) taught by Sensei from Japan, Malaysia or other countries.



What is your relationship with Japan?

Our organization promotes Aikido - a martial art from Japan. We continue to support Aikido practitioners from around the world coming to Penang.

How is your involvement in Japanese related activities?

I teach Aikido full-time and often participate in demonstrations in Penang and other states. I also gave self-defense seminars to corporate organizations and filmed martial arts-related documentaries. We conduct Aikido class that is open to the public. We also teach in some schools. Sometimes we will organize or participate in the event that is also participated by the Consulate General office, for example, Bon Odori Festival, to do a public demonstration.



What is the most interesting element about Japan?

The various martial arts. I have met some great Aikido and Judo friends here in Penang, as well as witnessed live demonstrations of some other martial arts such as Shorinji Kempo 少林寺拳法, Kyūdō 弓道, Naginatajutsu 長

刀術, Karatedo 空手道, laidō 居合道, and Sumo 相撲.

Who is the Japanese person who has influenced you the most?

- O'Sensei, UESHIBA Morihei (植芝盛平) was the founder of Aikido. I am grateful that we get to practice Aikido through his life work.
- SUGANO Seiichi (菅野誠一) Shihan was our main teacher when I first learnt Aikido more than 20 years ago. Sugano Shihan awarded my first black belt grade. Although Sugano Shihan passed away in 2010, our organization continues to learn and practice the system he passed down.
- I met Aikido hombu dojo-cho, UESHIBA Mitsuteru (植芝充央) Sensei who was the great grandson of O'Sensei more than 10 years ago and was fortunate to spend some time with him and be his uke in a public demonstration.



What is your favorite place in Japan?

Hombu dojo. It is the Japan dojo headquarters where we learn and sweat. Every 4 years, we will travel there for a big seminar and event to learn and practice Aikido.

What is your favorite Japanese food?

I enjoy most of the Japanese food. I had an excellent Fatty Tuna (トロ) sushi during my visit to Japan last year.



What is the Japan custom/culture that you like the most?

Respect, cleanliness, politeness, and friendliness of the people.

What are the future plans of your organization in terms of promoting Japan?

As there isn't competition in Aikido, we will continue to promote Aikido via dojo practice and public demonstrations.

Together with the Malaysia Aikido Association instructors and members, we continue to organize yearly Aikido seminars inviting Sensei from Hombu dojo and other countries. In addition, we visit Japan at least every 4 years for the IAF Summit to learn and further our relationship with Aikido practitioners worldwide.

