

## **Bujinkan Malta members awarded new grades in Japan.**

This week, eight members of the Bujinkan Malta martial arts group have returned from a trip to Japan, where they have been training for the past 3 weeks under the guidance of Dr. Masaaki Hatsumi, the Grandmaster and Head (Soke) of the 9 styles taught in the Bujinkan system.

The Maltese group left Malta on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2008 with their teacher Mr. Alfred Galea 8<sup>th</sup> Dan. In Japan they were joined by Shihan (Senior Master Teacher) Norman Smithers 15<sup>th</sup> Dan from the U.K., who also regularly visits Malta to hold training seminars for Bujinkan Malta.

The three weeks of intensive training were held at the Hombu (main) Dojo of the Bujinkan Ninpo Taijutsu organization in Noda Shi (in the prefecture of Chiba), as well as at the National Budokan (Martial Arts Hall) in Ayase (in the prefecture of Tokyo). The training sessions were conducted by Dr. Hatsumi himself, as well as three of his closest instructors, namely Shihan (Senior Master Teachers) Someya, Noguchi and Nagato. The lessons focused on various forms and techniques, both armed and unarmed, with a high emphasis being made on the fact that all movements should reflect good basics. In fact one point which was stressed was the importance on building a solid set of basics from which every other movement can be developed. A great importance was also given to the philosophical aspects of Ninpo (or Ninjutsu as it is more commonly known).

During the visit, on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September, Marvin Zammit sat for his Go Dan (5<sup>th</sup> Dan) test, which was performed by Shihan Nagato under the supervision of Soke Hatsumi and other Shihans present at the Honbu Dojo. Marvin passed the test very successfully, thus becoming the second Maltese Shidoshi (Master Teacher).

On the 30<sup>th</sup> September, just before concluding a training session held at the Budokan in Ayase, Soke Hatsumi personally congratulated the Maltese students, commenting on their high level of preparation and awarded Alfred Galea the grade of 9<sup>th</sup> Dan. Dr. Hatsumi was pleased with the way that the Maltese students performed during their stay, and encouraged them to keep up their training.

Towards the end of their visit, Alexander Grech was also awarded his 2<sup>nd</sup> Dan by Norman Smithers and Alfred Galea.

For further information about Bujinkan Ninpo Taijutsu in Malta, visit [www.bujinkanmalta.com](http://www.bujinkanmalta.com), or contact Mr. Alfred Galea on mobile number 99424809 or through email: [alga@bujinkanmalta.com](mailto:alga@bujinkanmalta.com).

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