

National Day of Bulgaria

Publicity

Bulgaria-Japan partnership remains active

By Marieta Arabadjieva
Ambassador of Bulgaria

It has been exactly one year since I assumed office as the first woman Ambassador of Bulgaria to Japan, and today it is my pleasure on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Bulgaria — March 3 — to address the distinguished readers of The Japan News and to extend warm greetings and best wishes for good health, prosperity and happiness.



Marieta Arabadjieva

On March 3, 1878, Bulgaria gained its long-sought liberation and embarked on the road of independent development. Today, Bulgaria is an active member of the global democratic community and a member of the European Union and NATO. In January 2022, Bulgaria received an invitation to begin negotiations to join the OECD.

For the past 110 years, Bulgaria and Japan have developed a strong bond of friendship and cooperation founded on mutual respect and a shared interest in each other's culture. Today, our two countries enjoy a dynamic and multilayered partnership based on shared values and common aspirations.

In 2019, Bulgaria and Japan celebrated a "triple anniversary" in their bilateral relations. Bulgarian President Rumen Radev visited Japan to attend the Enthronement of His Majesty Emperor Naruhito.

Despite the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, Bulgaria and Japan maintained their active partnership and cooperation in 2021. The foreign ministries of both countries continued to consult on global issues and cooperate on joint projects related to disaster management and SME support for the Western Balkan countries. In July 2021, Bulgaria hosted the Three Seas Initiative Summit and invited Japanese businesses to invest in transport, energy and digital projects in 12 associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

2021 was highlighted by another memorable event — the Tokyo Olympics. The Minister of Youth and Sports of Bulgaria visited Japan to attend the opening ceremony and held a productive meeting with his Japanese counterpart, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan. Bulgarian athletes performed outstandingly and won six Olympic and two Paralympic medals. Bulgaria's rhythmic gymnastics team won its first ever Olympic gold. Bulgarian athletes



Courtesy of the Embassy of Bulgaria
Minister of Youth and Sports of Bulgaria Andrey Kuzmanov meets Japan's then-Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Koichi Hagiuda, in Tokyo on July 24, 2021.

were wholeheartedly supported by six Japanese Host Towns and we would like to continue nurturing this cooperation well beyond the Olympics.

Over the past three decades, Bulgaria has undergone a significant social and economic transformation. Today, it is a fast-growing economy and an attractive investment destination. Bulgaria ranks third in the world of IT specialists per capita. A number of Japanese companies have recognized the benefits of Bulgaria's strategic geographic location and impressive intellectual and technical skills and have set up successful businesses there. Despite the pandemic last year, our trade volume with Japan increased. Bulgarian wines won some of the most prestigious awards in Japanese wine contests.

Today, more high-quality Bulgarian foods can be found on the Japanese market.

Bulgaria and Japan continue to promote cultural and academic exchanges, people-to-people interactions and better mutual understanding. We are happy to see the growing interest among Japanese students in Bulgarian language and culture, which are currently taught at five Japanese universities.

Both our countries see multilateralism and international cooperation as the only effective way to address global challenges. Bulgaria is committed to working closely with Japan to further strengthen our longstanding bilateral friendship and deepen collaborations and partnerships in various fields.

Tokai Univ. maintains close ties with Bulgaria

By Tatsuro Matsumae
President, Tokai University Educational System
President, Japan Bulgaria Society

I would like to extend my best wishes to the people of Bulgaria on this special day.

Tokai University Educational System (TES) is a private educational institution established in 1942 by Dr. Shigeyoshi Matsumae, with a burning ideal to nurture people who could be entrusted with building a future in order to achieve happiness and harmony for human society. Since then, we have sought to be pioneers of change and have made it our task to contribute to the building of a harmonious and civilized society, while focusing on international exchange activities.



Tatsuro Matsumae

The Bulgarian government and TES signed a mutual exchange agreement in 1969. We are proud of not only the exchange of students and researchers, but also our cooperation with the excavation of the Thracian ruins and the hosting of concerts by the Children's Choir of the Bulgarian National Radio. As a result of many years of academic and cultural exchanges, our Bulgarian alumni set up the Bulgarian Branch of the Tokai University Alumni Association in 1994 and have subsequently hosted various events.

As President of both the TES and the Japan-Bulgaria Society, I am honored to contribute to fostering friendly relations between the two countries. Please accept our best wishes for the continued peace and prosperity of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Celebrating Bulgarian Day with utmost wishes for calm in world

By Hisashi Nakayama
Former Honorary Consul of the Republic of Bulgaria
Executive Councilor of Meiji Co., Ltd.

I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to the Republic of Bulgaria and its people on the anniversary of Bulgaria's National Day.



Hisashi Nakayama

The spread of COVID-19 is forcing people across the world into a period of unrest. Even exchanges between Japan and the Republic of Bulgaria, which date back over 110 years, are difficult to conduct as smoothly as we would like. However, last summer, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games were held without incident, and we were able to welcome the Bulgarian delegation of over 40 athletes. The Bulgarian athletes won six medals in the Olympics— including three gold medals — and two silver medals in the Paralympics. I am confident that these honors were a great joy and inspiration for the Republic of Bulgaria and its people amidst their concerns over the

COVID-19 infection. The people of the Japanese Host Towns and we at Meiji Co., Ltd., cheered for and supported the Bulgarian athletes, sharing in the great sense of joy and pride generated by their achievements.

In April of last year, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Marieta Arabadjieva assumed office. I was delighted about the inauguration of the Ambassador, with whom I have a 20-year-long friendship, and it was truly an honor to once again exchange words with her about the recent events and futures of our countries. It is my sincere hope that the Ambassador, who is greatly knowledgeable about Japan and the Japanese people, will play an active role in promoting political, economic, and cultural exchanges between our countries.

In addition to the spread of COVID-19, the world is presently experiencing heightened tensions between countries: even in Eastern Europe, matters are not entirely peaceful. Since its founding, the Republic of Bulgaria has overcome a multitude of difficulties, such as the two world wars and the Cold War, and its conclusion, and has endeavored toward greater growth. Since joining the EU, it has played a guiding role as a

leader in order to achieve the stability and development of Eastern Europe. I am sure that moving forward, the Republic of Bulgaria will devote even greater efforts toward world peace and people's happiness.

On this glorious day, it is my utmost wish that the world can regain its calm, and that, based upon our close friendship, our two countries can build an even more favorable relationship.

Congratulations
to the People of the Republic of Bulgaria
on their National Day

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CONGRATULATIONS to the People of the Republic of Bulgaria on their National Day

Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Bulgaria in Izumiotsu



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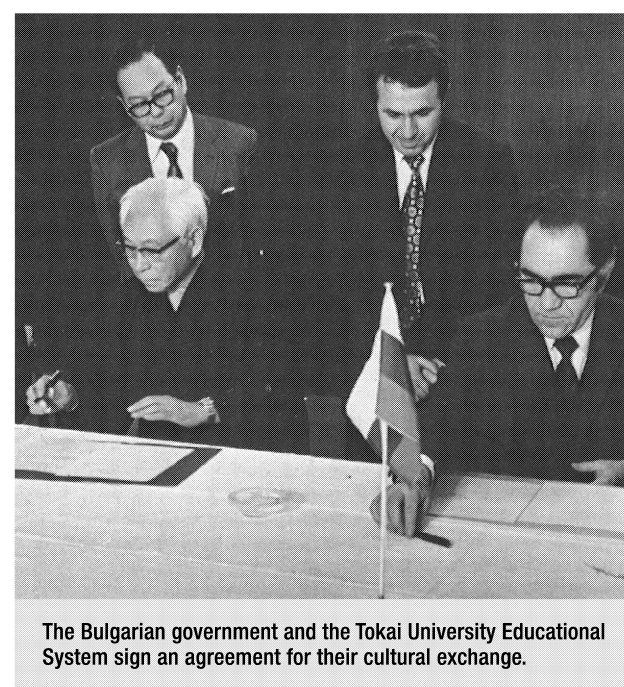
meiji

Congratulations

to the people of the Republic of Bulgaria
on their National Day



Meiji Co., Ltd.



The Bulgarian government and the Tokai University Educational System sign an agreement for their cultural exchange.

Congratulations to the People of the Republic of Bulgaria on their National Day

Deeper Ties of Friendship

The Tokai University Educational System has been engaged in academic and cultural exchanges with Bulgarian government bodies, universities and private organizations for many years.

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EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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