

Panama Independence Day Special

Industry reforms reflect new national stage

CARLOS PERE
AMBASSADOR OF PANAMA



On behalf of the government of the Republic of Panama, I would like to extend our warmest congratulations to all Panamanian citizens living in Japan, on the occasion of the 116th

Anniversary of our Independence that we celebrated on Nov. 3 this year.

I would also like to express our greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, as well as to the noble and friendly people of Japan.

First of all, I want to introduce myself as the new Panamanian ambassador, who with only a few days shared in this country, can admire the responsibility, discipline and punctuality of the Japanese people and exotic culture of beautiful Japan.

Until now, the country's reception has been worthy of my admiration, and I hope to cultivate and stimulate the relationship between Panama and Japan. I'll take advantage of this beautiful landscape and culture as a pleasant experience for my family, and create new friendships throughout Japan. This includes playing its beautiful golf courses, to ensure that I can strengthen my professional and personal relationships and dynamically achieve the interests that our nations have in common, for the benefit of both.

As of July 1, the Panamanian government began a new stage under the leadership of a new President H.E. Laurentino Cortizo, who is no stranger to patriotic public service and policies toward our

people.

Our president has had an admirable career; from the province of Colon, he has been a legislator and minister of state. Due to his experience as minister of state for agriculture, Cortizo knows what the Panamanian people need to strengthen their agricultural industry, which today is almost disappearing due to lack of government support as well as the emergence of new professional career agendas in this important industry.

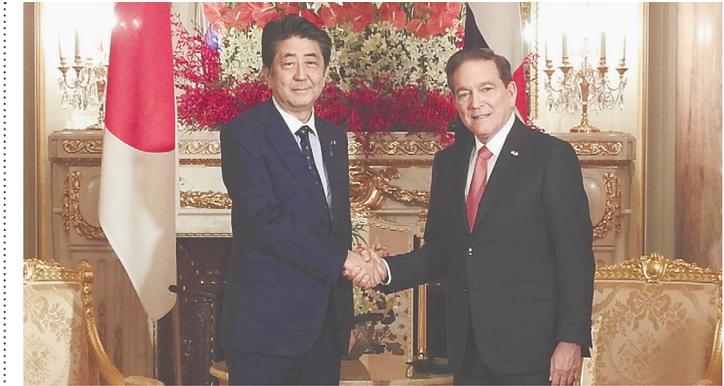
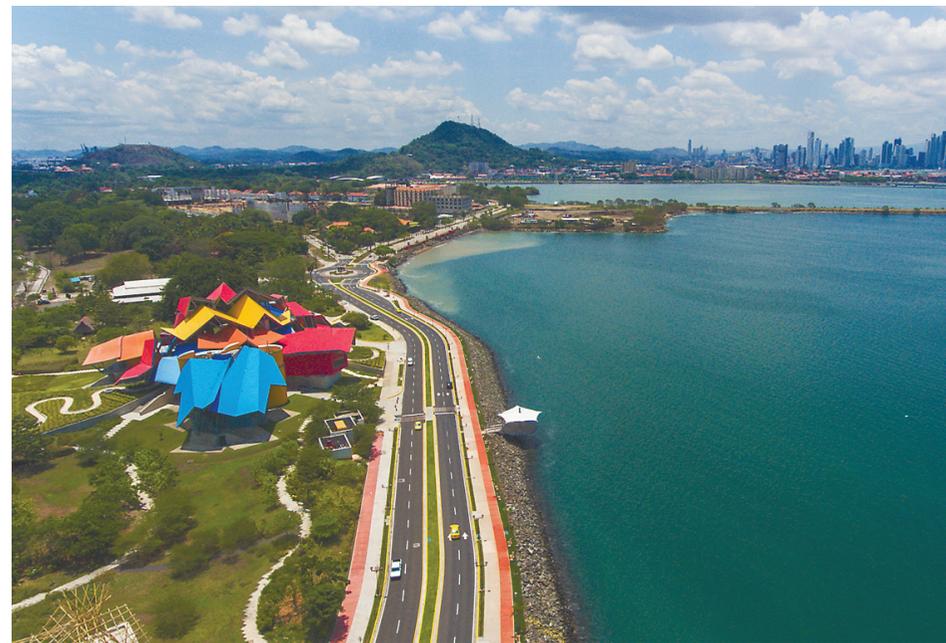
In less than four months, Cortizo has achieved major reforms for the people, including reforming a law on public contracts; presenting a draft of constitutional reforms; transforming the current National Institute of Culture into the Ministry of Culture; and the first and largest bond issue with low interest in the history of this country, in order to solve immediate needs.

Panama's new government, with both its action plan and by enacting a new law that has been rated by the World Bank as one of the best in its area, has been able to carry out crucial legislation projects to improve infrastructure and enhance cooperation between public and private companies.

For the first time the Ministry of Culture will have the structure, adequate financial resources and legal instruments necessary to design and execute following a national culture plan.

At this new stage in Panama's history, the government will make its best efforts to eradicate poverty in the country, revive the economy and improve the security of its citizens.

Other government administrative plans, which are being planned by the president, are the creation of the Ministry of Women, Institute for Development Planning and replacing the Ministry of Economy



Panamanian President Laurentino Cortizo and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Tokyo on Oct. 24
EMBASSY OF PANAMA

A causeway and the Biomuseo, a museum on biodiversity, in Panama City
PANAMA TOURISM AUTHORITY

and Finance with the Ministry of Public Finance.

Unlike other politicians, Cortizo has pledged to fulfill his promises to the people. Therefore, when he completed his first 100 days of government he had already achieved payment to suppliers; the approval and sanction of the law of preferential interests, the norm that establishes the regulatory framework for the creation of the Public Private Association; the implementation of the consultations of constitutional reforms that is in the National Assembly for its approval; and the approval of the reform to Law 4 of 1994 of the Special Fund for Compensation of Interest, a proposal that establishes that 75 percent of distribution of the sums generated will pass to the agricultural sector in the first stage and gradually reaching 100

percent by 2024.

This year we couldn't close this celebration with a golf tournament as my predecessor organized in previous years, but I promise to do in the coming years this type of activity and many more, in order to strengthen our relationship between the friends of the Embassy of Panama and other members of the Japanese community.

Last but not least of what I want to communicate to the Japanese people, on behalf of my country, is that Panama will maintain an increasingly strong and close relationship with Japan, as it was the first Asian country that recognized our independence. It is our cooperative friend and loyal maritime customer, whose relationship we will nurture for many more years to come.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.

Congratulations on the Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Panama

 Mitsubishi Corporation