

# Hungary National Day Special

## Proactive steps for steady post-pandemic growth

**NORBERT PALANOVICS**  
AMBASSADOR OF HUNGARY



Today, Hungarians all over the world commemorate the beginning of the 1956 revolution. Distinguished readers may remember that 65 years ago the people of Hungary rose up against the oppressive Soviet forces.

This time, we are in the midst of a different fight: a global pandemic that continues to threaten our lives. Hungary is a Central European country, living astride important crossroads, and Hungarians know that isolating and locking up have never offered long-term benefits in any situation. That is why Hungary was among the first EU nations to introduce mass vaccinations, inoculating a large share of its population by spring 2021.

Actually, the fact that the world now has a safe and effective vaccine against COVID-19 can largely be attributed to a Hungarian scientist, Katalin Kariko, the “mother” of the messenger RNA vaccine, who received many awards for her discovery, including this year’s Keio Medical Science Prize.

Largely thanks to the new vaccines, we have been able to keep Hungary a safe and free place where people can openly socialize, travel and engage in daily productive activities. We are very proud that our efforts against the pandemic have been acknowledged in Japan, as Hungary’s name consistently appears among the top countries in the Nikkei COVID-19 Recovery Index.

Keeping our open economy running continues to be of the utmost importance for us. Hosting more than 180 Japanese companies, Hungary has always remained open for business and business-related travel from Japan. Fortunately, the pandemic has in no way affected our strong bilateral political relations, either. Hungary’s Peter Szijjarto was the first foreign minister to visit Tokyo this year,

which indicates the important role Japan plays as a political partner for Hungary. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Japan for successfully hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games despite the enormous challenges posed by the pandemic. We will always be grateful to the Japanese organizers and stakeholders, including the thousands of volunteers. Hungarian athletes garnered 20 medals, including six gold at the Olympics, and 16 medals with seven gold at the Paralympics, making both Games an enormous success for our country.

With the COVID-19 situation significantly



**Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peter Szijjarto meets with his counterpart Toshimitsu Motegi in Tokyo on March 9.**  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE OF HUNGARY

improved, we have restarted our “visible” live cultural activities in Japan. We just held a successful Hungary Festival in Ark Hills in Tokyo, and the Art Nouveau and Japonism masterpieces from the Budapest Museum of Applied Arts are being exhibited at the Pana-

sonic Shiodome Museum of Art until Dec. 19. I sincerely hope to welcome the many distinguished readers of The Japan Times at Hungary-related activities around Japan and at the Hungarian Cultural Institute in Tokyo’s Azabu Juban district.

## Gateway to European auto market

**TAKASHI KAYAMOTO**  
PRESIDENT & CEO, NHK SPRING CO., LTD.



It is a great honor for me to celebrate the National Day of Hungary. Our Hungarian subsidiary was established in 2015 to supply suspension springs to the auto-makers in Europe.

I was one of the key persons who made the decision to go to Hungary. Hungary was always in my mind from the first stage. The most significant point was the generous, enthusiastic welcome from the Hungarians,

and the fact that it’s a safe and comfortable place for our expatriates and families. The Hungarian plant is our newest, with state-of-the-art machinery, however, to keep the company’s commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2039, which will be our 100th anniversary, we will still need to make efforts there to become more efficient and eco-friendly. In 2019, one of our colleagues died in a car accident in Hungary. We’ll never forget how much support the colleague’s bereaved family received from the Hungarian Embassy in Japan and the Hungarian authorities. The kindness extended by the Hungarian people touched the family’s and our hearts, and we would like to express our sincere appreciation to everyone for the support; we will always be grateful.

**Congratulations  
on the Occasion of  
the National Day of  
Hungary**

**NHK**  
**NHK SPRING HUNGARY KFT.**  
**NHK SPRING CO., LTD.**

3-10, Fukuura, Kanazawa-ku, Yokohama, Japan

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

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on Hungary’s National Day**

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