

What Russia Wants in Afghanistan

INTERNATIONAL
Newsweek

THE
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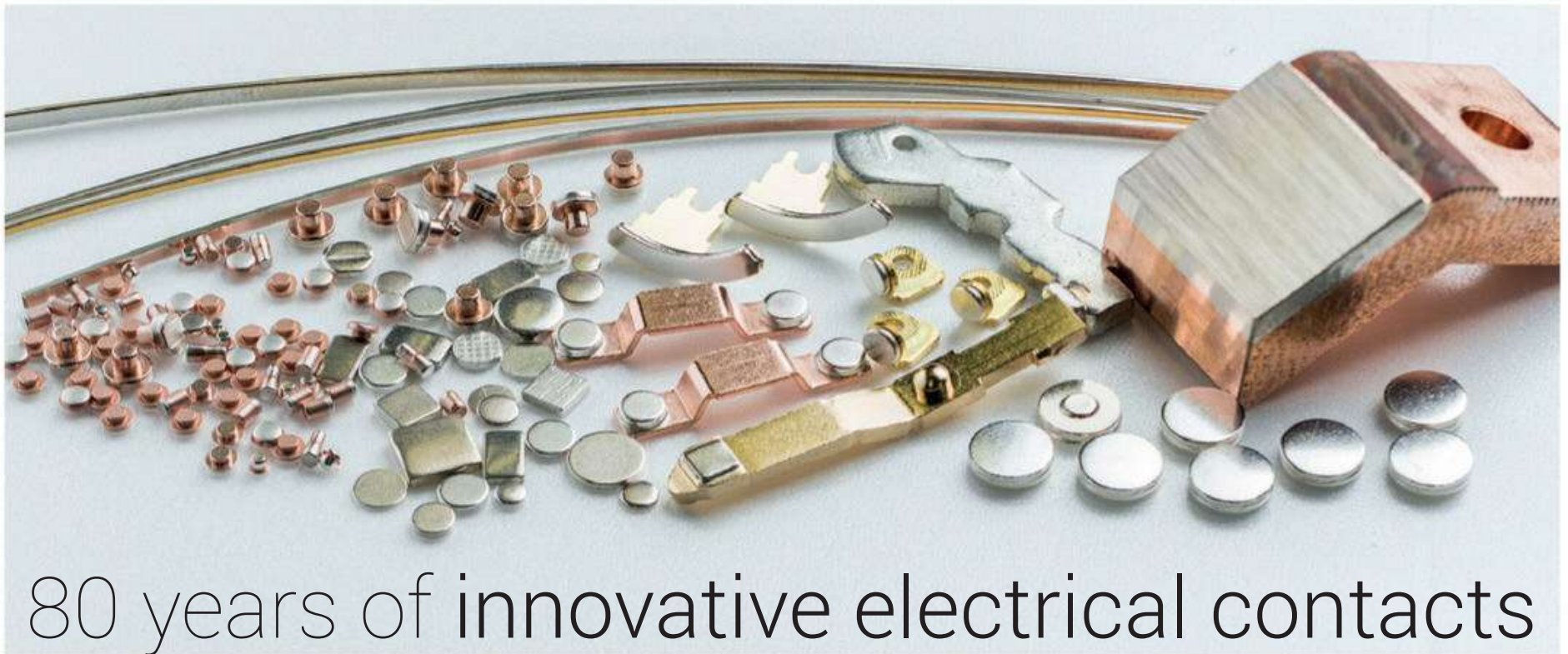
COVID keeps mutating into
scary new threats.
How worried should we be?

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80 years of innovative electrical contacts

Chugai Electric Industrial's founder set out to make light switches safer and the company has grown into a pioneer of electrical contacts, using Japanese craftsmanship to create unique solutions across a wide range of industries.



"The soul of *monozukuri* is Japanese culture itself, and we must be strong, brave and proud to preserve it."

Yuichiro Tanaka,
President,
Chugai Electric Industrial Co., Ltd.

As Chugai Electric Industrial celebrates its 80th anniversary, the electrical contacts company retains its key principles that its founder set in 1941, which are based around a dedication to Japanese *monozukuri* and innovation. These principles are rooted in the unique Japanese culture of understanding others' goals and placing these objectives above one's own aims.

As Chugai Electric Industrial's president, Yuichiro Tanaka, explains: "This way of life enables the people to work collaboratively which is the essence of Japanese *monozukuri* in its pursuit for production and engineering excellence, which in turn is the driving force for innovation."

The company's impressive R&D has seen it develop its own patented materials and processes in the US and Japan, from Neosilcon in 1973 to more recently developing a manufacturing NBT-process to produce special bimetallic, trimetallic and mushroom contacts.

This forward-thinking mindset enables Chugai Electric Industrial to not only provide the highest-quality products for its clients, but also find ways to make these products cheaper. By way of example, the aforementioned NBT-process allows Chugai Electric Industrial's customers to save as much as 30% of the purchase price on contacts.

And as silver constitutes more than 85% of the total price of the company's electrical contacts, the company has developed a new process to reduce the total volume of silver in the products, and this reduction in costs has been passed on to its customers.

Mr. Tanaka provides more details: "From the conventional plating process, we developed our very own *Chugai Plating* to address the needs for cost reduction. Other companies similar to ours cannot do this. We can meet the demands of our customers because of our unique technology."

With 30% of revenue invested in R&D, Chugai Electric Industrial is playing a strong role in the growing CASE (Connected, Autonomous, Shared, Electric)



vehicle industry, with its products suitable for use in electric cars as well as traditional combustion engine models.

Its high-quality products and customer-centricity have seen the company expand globally, with factories in Malaysia and Taiwan, and Mr. Tanaka reveals the company is seeking to use Japan's unique insights to help penetrate the European market further: "The European market is interesting for us because here in Japan our electricity system is quite energy efficient and hence our products are very economical, and Europe is showing interest in how to adopt this system."

Chugai Electric Industrial's innovative products are not just a result of its commitment to R&D, but also its close working relationship with its customers and a true understanding of their needs. The company keeps a constant eye on the latest developments in the electronic devices industry in order to develop new products and materials for

changing needs and demands – one of the strengths of Japanese SMEs, whose niche expertise enables them to strive for perfection in their fields.

"Before we deliver our materials to our customers, we listen to them first because it is very important that our materials satisfy their demands. We have a long history together with major Japanese manufacturers, our R&D strategy is to co-create with these companies," Mr. Tanaka explains.

The principles of *monozukuri* are the driving force behind Chugai Electric Industrial's success, and as Mr. Tanaka sets out in his mantra: "Do not be afraid of making mistakes or failures and be open to new ideas. Be honest with your customers because it builds trust."



<https://e-chugai.co.jp/english/>