

## **New Aso Cabinet Inaugurated: Shionoya Named MEXT Minister and Nikai Reappointed as METI Minister**

On September 24, the Japanese National Diet named newly-elected Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) President Taro Aso as the Prime Minister, succeeding Yasuo Fukuda, who had resigned his post. On the same day, the first Aso Cabinet was formulated.



Ryu Shionoya ( Left : a House of Representative member who had previously served as the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary in the Fukuda Cabinet) was appointed to lead the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Meanwhile, Minister Toshihiro Nikai of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Environment Minister Tetsuo Saito, and State Minister Seiko Noda for Science and Technology, each of whom recently took their posts in an August cabinet reshuffle, were reappointed. As the minister of state for Disaster

Management and Okinawa & North Territories, Minister Tsutomu Sato is also responsible for nuclear safety.

At a press conference after the inauguration, Prime Minister Aso said that he expected the reappointed METI Minister Nikai to take the lead in coming up with a strategy for industrial growth, resource diplomacy, and issues involving small and medium-sized enterprises.

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