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Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda reshuffled his cabinet on August 1. The new cabinet was officially formed on August 2 after an investiture ceremony at the Imperial Palace. This was the first cabinet reshuffle since the establishment of the Fukuda government in September last year, and was of a major scale with the replacement of 13 out of 17 members. With veterans who attach importance to fiscal discipline appointed to economic posts such as the Minister of Finance and the Minister of State for Economic and Fiscal Policy, the com-



FUKUDA RESHUFFLES CABINET

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position of the new cabinet demonstrates the priority that the Fukuda administration gives to measures which counter rising prices and promote growth.

Upon the formation of the reshuffled cabinet, the Prime Minister said in a press conference: “We will pay close attention to the everyday lives of the people, and we will listen to their voices expressing anxiety and pain. This is a ‘cabinet that brings about peace of mind’, a cabinet that attaches importance to carrying out policies that make people to feel life is improving.” He indicated that the cabinet will

make every effort to counter rising prices and to allay fears concerning pensions and medical care.

On the diplomatic front, the Prime Minister said that the government will continue actively to combat global warming and other global problems, and that as a peace-fostering nation Japan will promote international cooperation in the areas of peacekeeping operations and counter-terrorism.

ABOVE: Prime Minister Fukuda (front row, center) and the members of his new cabinet.