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Shinzo Abe has not put a foot wrong in his debut as Japan's new leader



KOICHI KAWOSHIDA—GETTY IMAGES

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COVER: *Illustration by Viktor Koen for TIME*

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DAVID HARTUNG FOR TIME

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No longer content to be the world's workshop, Asia wants to be its laboratory, too. Thanks to generous government funding, an expanding talent pool and a lack of legal constraints on controversial research, the region is undergoing a scientific revolution that threatens to end Western dominance of innovation

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▼ Honda's hydrogen-powered FCX sedan, set for release in 2009, is part of the company's effort to ease the world's addiction to gasoline



HONDA MOTOR CO.—REUTERS

YURI KOZREV FOR TIME



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▲ U.S. forces are running out of options in their efforts to halt Iraq's cycle of insurgency and sectarian violence

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