

Johnson's failings, Russian sabre rattling and future vaccines

A little over two years ago, Boris Johnson was the toast of Britain's Conservative party, having delivered a thumping general election victory on the back of a grinding mantra to "get Brexit done". Now, damaging revelations about an illicit lockdown Christmas party at Downing Street last year - on the back of a series of other scandals - have pushed the prime minister close to the point where he may be ousted by his own MPs. Toby Helm, Michael Savage and Jamie Grierson ask how it all came to this.

The big story [Page 10](#) →

A massive buildup of troops on Russia's side of its border with Ukraine has raised fears that Vladimir Putin may be about to launch an invasion. Why is Russia's president on the brink of war, and what can the west do to stop it? In Ukraine, Luke Harding finds resignation, while in Moscow, Andrew Roth hears why Kremlinologists fear the worst.

Spotlight [Page 15](#) →

Anxious governments around the world were still assessing the likely impact of the fast-spreading Omicron Covid variant this week. On a note of optimism, we look at the next generation of vaccines that scientists hope will prove more resilient to virus mutations.

Spotlight [Page 18](#) →

The Guardian Weekly will take a short break over Christmas. Your next edition is out on 31 December and will include year-end reflections and a big look ahead to 2022. To top up your reading list until then, check out our bumper roundup of this year's best books, from page 51.

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4-14 GLOBAL REPORT
Headlines from the last seven days

10 UK Chaos catches up with Boris Johnson

15-33 SPOTLIGHT
In-depth reporting and analysis

15 Ukraine On the frontline as Russian troops mass

18 Covid-19 Adapting the jobs to take on Omicron

22 Kuwait Pollution problems 30 years after the war

24 Environment Indonesia's coral reef cheer

30 Science Curiosity about cat behaviour

32 US Mike Pence eyes 2024 White House bid

33 Charity appeal On the climate crisis frontline

34-44 FEATURES
Long reads, interviews and essays

34 Escape from Afghanistan and the Taliban

By Akhtar Mohammad Makoi

40 The word on Sesame Street's political purpose
By Steve Rose

45-50 OPINION
45 Timothy Garton Ash
Olaf Scholz's challenges from the east

47 Ariel Dorfman
Chile faces a stark choice

48 Francois Balloux
Omicron's double-edged threat to society

51-61 CULTURE
Books of the year
Guardian literary critics and editors make their pick of the best of 2021 in fiction, science, graphic novels, music, politics, food and more

62-63 DIVERSIONS
Chess and crosswords

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On the cover

This week's edition features two regional covers: in the UK, the focus is on Boris Johnson's troubles, while in the rest of the world, we weigh up Vladimir Putin's threat of war with Ukraine. *Illustration: Pete Reynolds; Guardian Design/Christophe Gowans/Getty*

