

Qatar's highly political football, the challenge of 8bn people - and is Donald Trump's grip loosening?

Ordinarily a football World Cup would be a moment for celebration, a time to savour sport's power to unite nations and a glorious distraction from the problems of the day. Not this time: the 2022 tournament has been mired in controversy since it was awarded to Qatar 12 years ago. The small but ultra-wealthy Middle Eastern state thought that hosting the world's most-watched sporting event would showcase it as a major player on the global stage. But instead Qatar has come in for severe criticism on a number of fronts, in particular for its treatment of migrant workers, anti LGBTQ+ laws, and restrictions on freedom of speech.

In a special report, Patrick Wintour asks whether Qatar has lost at geopolitical football before the action has even begun. The cartoonist David Squires brilliantly brings to life the plight of a migrant worker turned whistleblower and, in the final reckoning, sports writer Jonathan Liew tries to salvage some actual football from the diplomatic wreckage.

On that theme, further back in the features section there's a reminder of what the game should be about as we meet some of the young people who will be cheering on their teams from afar.

The big story [Page 10](#) →
Home and away [Page 40](#) →

Another dubious global milestone was reached this week as the world's population passed 8 billion, according to UN estimates. In a the first of a series of dispatches from the frontline of population growth, Hannah Ellis-Petersen reports from India, which next year will overtake China as the planet's most populous nation, on what the shift means for the world.

Spotlight [Page 17](#) →

The US midterm elections saw the Democrats fare better than expected, retaining control of the Senate despite looking likely to lose control of the House by a small margin to the Republicans. The more consequential outcome may be for Donald Trump: Chris McGreal and David Smith ask if the former president's grip on the GOP is weakening, and if his rival Ron DeSantis's time may be coming.

Spotlight [Page 30](#) →

If your settlement is at existential risk from climate change, is the answer to move it? Guardian Australia's Pacific editor Kate Lyons visits Fiji's vulnerable Pacific islands, where communities have started to do just that - discovering that it is not nearly as simple as it sounds.

How to move a country [Page 34](#) →



On the cover
"There has been a lot of criticism surrounding several issues since Qatar was awarded the World Cup," says illustrator Barry Downard of his artwork for this week's cover. "A deflated football in the desert seemed like a perfect metaphor to capture the controversy."

Illustration: Barry Downard

4-16	GLOBAL REPORT <i>Headlines from the last seven days</i> Qatar A World Cup of woe
17-33	SPOTLIGHT <i>In-depth reporting and analysis</i> 17 India Population pressures on north and south 20 Ukraine Kherson, reunited 22 UK Hunger bites in schools 24 Technology AI's creative future 28 Colombia Peace is no panacea for former fighters 30 US Is Trump's star fading? 33 Global Anti-nuclear campaigners reassemble
34-44	FEATURES <i>Long reads, interviews and essays</i> 34 Fiji: how to move a country to climate safety <i>By Kate Lyons</i> 40 Footballing family ties <i>By Chris Broughton</i>
45-50	OPINION 45 Tania Branigan We understand less than ever about North Korea 47 Golriz Ghahraman Iran's anguished diaspora 48 Bill McGuire The Paris climate target of 1.5C is now out of reach
51-59	CULTURE <i>TV, film, music, theatre, art, architecture & more</i> 51 Books Nobel peace laureate Maria Ressa on truth and politics 55 Music Glam metal sparkles again 57 Books Bob Dylan's songbook
60-61	LIFESTYLE 60 Ask Annalisa My friend is being abused



The Guardian Weekly
Founded in Manchester, England
4 July 1919

Vol 207 | Issue N°21

This magazine is printed on paper that has been produced by UPM mills in Scotland and Finland. It has a low carbon footprint, and has been sourced from sustainably managed forests

Guardian Weekly is an edited selection of some of the best journalism found in the Guardian and Observer newspapers in the UK and the Guardian's digital editions in the UK, US and Australia. The weekly magazine has an international focus and three editions: global, Australia and North America. The Guardian was founded in 1821, and Guardian Weekly in 1919. We exist to hold power to account in the name of the public interest, to uphold liberal and progressive values, to fight for the common good, and to build hope. Our values, as laid out by editor CP Scott in 1921, are honesty, integrity, courage, fairness, and a sense of duty to the reader and the community. The Guardian is wholly owned by the Scott Trust, a body whose purpose is "to secure the financial and editorial independence of the Guardian in perpetuity". We have no proprietor or shareholders, and any profit made is re-invested in journalism.

Join the community Twitter: @guardianweekly | facebook.com/guardianweekly | Instagram: @guardian