

# Xi's abrasive rhetoric, sport's best shots and romance in Peckham

**In his closing speech at China's annual parliamentary meeting on Monday, Xi Jinping**, the country's most powerful leader in generations, had an ominous message for his people and for those listening beyond its borders. "After a century of struggle, our national humiliation has been erased ... the Chinese nation's great revival is on an irreversible path," he warned.

The abrasive tone of much of the rhetoric coming out of Beijing last week may have dashed the hopes of those in the west who had hoped for a softening of mood between Beijing and Washington. But the fact remains that China still needs to maintain nuanced relationships with much of the world if it is to achieve its goals. Senior China correspondent Amy Hawkins looks at the geopolitical relationships Beijing must navigate, as well as Xi's own rising ambitions as a player on the global stage.

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**From the buzzer to the finish line, the finest sports photography** reveals human achievement and emotion at the extremes. In a feature special this week, Simon Hattenstone talks to award-winning Guardian sports photographer Tom Jenkins about capturing the perfect picture - followed by 20 of the most iconic sports pictures ever taken and the stories behind them.

**The pictures that framed sport** [Page 34](#) →

**Whether it's Notting Hill, New York or Montmartre**, the rose-tinted glow of a romcom can have profound effects on a neighbourhood. As the latest such movie, Rye Lane, showcases the south London suburb of Peckham, Steve Rose asks if it's a cause for celebration or a warning sign.

**The romcom effect** [Page 51](#) →



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"In the coming period, the risks and challenges we're facing will only become more and more numerous and grim," warned China's leader Xi Jinping, claiming the US and its allies were trying to "encircle, suppress and contain" the country. After years of isolation, is Beijing now seeking to dominate the world stage?

*Illustration: Guardian Design*



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