

China's struggles, the search for survivors and desert megacities

Much of the world's attention towards China of late has focused on its geopolitical ambitions, but a picture is emerging from within that could have equally profound consequences. From squeezed middle classes to a manufacturing jobs drought - compounded by a property industry crisis - China's economy is slowing down. Amy Hawkins looks under the lid of the world's second-biggest economy and asks, are we reaching peak China?

The big story *Page 10* →

Desperate searches for survivors continued in Morocco's Atlas mountains following last Friday's 6.8-magnitude earthquake. Peter Beaumont reports from remote villages devastated by the country's deadliest quake in six decades.

Spotlight *Page 15* →

First there were the bewildering DNA test results, then the long-forgotten fertility blog. Jenny Kleeman tells the remarkable tale of a discovery that would change the lives of two American families for ever.

Also in Features is Elif Batuman's entertaining account of what happened when she asked the AI chatbot ChatGPT for assistance with a quote from Proust, leading her down a digital rabbit-hole she never could have foreseen.

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In our Opinion pages, Nesrine Malik writes on the new desert megacities concreting over the Middle East's past, while Marina Hyde questions whether Elon Musk is the tech deity the world really needs. And, as the UK's science community celebrates rejoining the Horizon EU research programme, Simon Jenkins says the move offers hope for repairing more of the self-inflicted damage of Brexit.

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On the cover
Often depicted as an angry dragon, China's current circumstances called for a more melancholic take this week. A Covid-battered economy - tainted by slowing demand and a deepening property crisis - coupled with an ageing population, have left many analysts wondering if China's economic rise is stalling.
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