

2021 – vaccines and variants battle for supremacy



JAN 1 The rollout of life-saving coronavirus vaccines gathers pace, even as global cases continue to surge

6 Supporters of **Donald Trump** storm the U.S. Capitol in an effort to disrupt Congress certifying **Joe Biden's** election victory



20 **Joe Biden** is inaugurated as the 46th U.S. President

FEB 1 Myanmar's military seizes power, detaining civilian leader **Aung San Suu Kyi** and other senior figures

2 The jailing of opposition politician **Alexei Navalny** sparks mass protests across Russia



17 A huge winter storm in the southern U.S. leaves millions without power and kills over 100 people in Texas alone

MAR 23 The container ship **Ever Given** runs aground in the Suez Canal, blocking one of the world's busiest trade routes for six days

APR 19 NASA's helicopter **Ingenuity** makes the first powered flight on Mars

20 A former Minneapolis police officer is convicted and jailed for the murder of **George Floyd**, an unarmed black man, in 2020

26 The devastating **Delta** variant of coronavirus in India overwhelms hospitals and crematoriums amid widespread shortages of oxygen

MAY 10 Violence erupts between Israelis and Palestinians over plans to evict some Palestinian families from East Jerusalem

14 China's **Tianwen-1** lander-rover successfully lands on Mars

23 Dissident Belarusian journalist **Roman Protasevich** is arrested after his Ryanair flight from Greece to Lithuania is forced to divert to Minsk

JUN 16 China launches the first three astronauts to the space station it is building in low earth orbit



19 Covid-19 deaths in Brazil top 500,000, the second-highest total in the world



24 The partial collapse of a 12-story condominium in Florida kills 98 people

29 A rare "heat dome" over western Canada and the U.S. sees temperatures hit 49.6°C in Lytton, British Columbia



JUL 1 China marks 100 years of the Communist Party

7 President **Jovenel Moïse** of Haiti is assassinated at his home



11/20 Billionaires' space race – **Richard Branson** and **Jeff Bezos** fly to space aboard their respective space vehicles

15 Catastrophic flooding in Europe leaves over 200 people dead, with parts of western Germany and Belgium worst affected

23 The delayed Tokyo Olympics finally get underway

AUG 8 More than 140 wildfires erupt across Greece in the worst heatwave in decades



15 Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, falls to the Taliban in a stunningly swift takeover

29 In the U.S., **Hurricane Ida** causes catastrophic flooding from the Gulf Coast to the northeast



31 The last U.S. forces withdraw from Afghanistan following a mass evacuation by allied forces of over 123,000 people

SEP 15 A U.S.-UK-Australia security pact angers France, which loses a \$90bn submarine contract

19 The ongoing eruption of the **Cumbre Vieja** volcano begins on the Spanish island of La Palma

24 Huawei executive **Meng Wanzhou** returns to China after being detained in Canada on a U.S. warrant since 2018

24 The **Dixie Fire**, which burned nearly 1 million acres in Northern California, is mostly contained

OCT 3 The **Pandora Papers** reveal how for years world leaders and other wealthy people hid property investments and other assets

5 A whistleblower tells U.S. Congress that Facebook harms young users by prioritising company profits over safety



21 Actor **Alec Baldwin** fires a prop gun on a film set, fatally injuring the cinematographer, **Halyn Hutchins**

NOV 8 Thousands of migrants try to enter the EU via the border with Belarus, as President **Alexander Lukashenko** hits back at sanctions



13 The **COP26** summit in Glasgow agrees a deal to mitigate climate change, but not by enough to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C

22 Austria is the first country to reimpose a full lockdown as record coronavirus cases sweep across Europe

24 **Magdalena Andersson** becomes Sweden's first female prime minister



30 Barbados becomes a republic, removing **Queen Elizabeth II** as head of state

DEC 1 **Omicron**, a new coronavirus variant first detected in South Africa, begins spreading rapidly

6 **Aung San Suu Kyi** is jailed for inciting dissent, a first of several expected verdicts



8 **Angela Merkel** formally steps down as Chancellor of Germany after 16 years in power. She is succeeded by **Olaf Scholz**