

1	<p><b>Australian wildfires burning for months are threatening the survival of inhabiting animals</b></p> <p>Between September 2019 to May 2020, severe wildfires occurred in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and other places in Australia. Record-setting high temperatures, persistent droughts and gales have together resulted in catastrophic fires. More than 30 people were killed, 6 people were missing, 12 million hectares of land were burnt, and 1 billion inhabiting animals died. Among them, the ecological impact is the most severe, and some endangered species such as koalas are also on the verge of extinction.</p>
2	<p><b>Jimmy Lai and the senior officers of Next Digital Media Limited arrested under the Hong Kong National Security Law</b></p> <p>Seven senior officers including founder Jimmy Lai of Next Media Limited were arrested in mid-August, including Lai's two sons. They are suspected of violating the "Hong Kong National Security Law" of colluding with foreign countries or foreign forces to undermine the national security, inciting and conspiracy to commit fraud. The senior superintendent of the National Security Department and more than 200 police officers entered the Next Media Building for multiple hours of search and removed multiple boxes containing exhibits.</p>
3	<p><b>The Chief Executive invokes the Emergency Law to postpone the Legislative Council Election for one year</b></p> <p>In light of the severity of the Covid-19 pandemic, in order to reduce the risk of mutual infection due to mass gatherings, the Chief Executive Carrie Lam announced on 31 July that the "Emergency Law" would be invoked to postpone the Legislative Council Elections until 5 September 2021. This year's "vacuum" is passed by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress to extend the term of office of all current members for at least one year, that is, the current members will continue to serve. The Chief Executive also stated that she would endeavour to deal with the election arrangements next year and there would be no need to postpone the election even if the epidemic continues next year.</p>
4	<p><b>Wildfires in California are out of control. Hundreds of thousands of residents are forced to leave</b></p> <p>In August this year, thunderstorms sparked dozens of fires in California, USA. Affected by gales and high temperature, wildfires lasted for many months and even spread to the neighbouring Oregon and Washington states. Mountain fires destroyed large tracts of forest homes and some historical buildings. At least 31 people were killed. Many counties in California entered a state of emergency; power supplies were cut off, and hundreds of thousands of residents were forced to evacuate. President Trump declared it a major natural disaster in California in mid-August and provided assistance for fighting the fire.</p>
5	<p><b>Trump contracted COVID-19, arousing concerns for his health</b></p> <p>COVID-19 is raging in the United States. About 10 million Americans have been infected and about a death toll of 200,000 people has been resulted due to the pandemic The U.S. President Trump announced on the social networking platform Twitter in early October that he and his wife Melania were confirmed to be tested positive and they had to be quarantined and receive antibody drug cocktail. During the treatment period, his condition had sparked many speculations and attracted much attention from the public. Subsequently, he returned to the White House to work after being tested negative for several days in mid-October.</p>

6	<p><b>Five major demands raised in the strikes by medical workers at the early stage of the outbreak of COVID-19</b></p> <p>As a new cluster of local cases of COVID-19 began to emerge in early January, the “Hospital Authority Employees Alliance” gathered around the headquarters of the Hospital Authority for five consecutive days in February to strike, urging the authorities to respond to the five major demands to ensure work safety, including prohibiting any commuters from the Mainland, urging all Hong Kong citizens to wear masks, etc. Although the number of medical workers exceeded 7,000 at one time, the majority of the medical workers voted to express their objection of the extension of the strike.</p>
7	<p><b>The U.S. media announces Biden's victory while Trump denies defeat</b></p> <p>The U.S. Presidential Election was held on 3 November. Due to the raging coronavirus pandemic such that in order to avoid crowds, many voters voted by mail for the U.S. Presidential Election. The competition between the two candidates running for the Presidential Election was fierce in the swing states. As the states successively completed the counting of votes, the candidate Joe Biden, a democrat, was considered by the mainstream American media to have won. The other candidate Trump, a Republican, refused to admit defeat, claiming that the mailing of votes caused widespread fraud and he intended to take legal action.</p>
8	<p><b>The Hong Kong Government promotes the Universal Community Testing Program, more than 1.78 million people have taken part</b></p> <p>The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region launched the "Universal Community Testing Program". It is planned to be carried out in early September and it lasts for 14 days. It is expected to help identify invisible patients who have contracted COVID-19 in the community as early as possible and cut the community transmission chain. The Government has set up more than 100 community testing centres in various districts with the support of a team of medical experts dispatched by the Chinese government. The entire project cost HK\$ 530 million, and a total of about 1.78 million samples were tested, of which 32 were newly confirmed cases.</p>
9	<p><b>To Prevent the CCP threat, the U.S. bans TikTok and WeChat</b></p> <p>The United States Department of Commerce announced in mid-September that it would ban downloading and using Chinese applications such as WeChat and TikTok in U.S. The application platform does not allow any data updates, and WeChat does not allow any transactions or payments in U.S. However, the Department of Commerce did not prohibit U.S. companies from using WeChat to conduct business outside the country and the company owners from conducting transactions in the United States. The analysis pointed out that this act mainly aimed at countering China's malicious collection of personal data of U.S. citizens, so the prohibition was only limited to the territory, but it would not punish people for using TikTok or WeChat in the United States.</p>

10	<p><b>The Hong Kong National Security Law has come into effect. Many countries have expressed concerns.</b></p> <p>On 30 June, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress passed the bill on “The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region” by unanimous votes and included it in Annex III of the Basic Law. The Hong Kong government gazetted it and it became Hong Kong law at 11p.m. on the same day. The law penalizes the crime of secession, subversion of state power, terrorist activities, and the crime of colluding with foreign countries or foreign forces to undermine national security, and the maximum penalty is life imprisonment. After the regulations had come into effect, many political parties announced their dissolution and ceasing of operations immediately. Many countries in Europe and the U.S. have expressed concerns.</p>
11	<p><b>The question of the HKDSE history examination concerning Japan's invasion to China has stirred up controversies. The question is cancelled by the HKEAA.</b></p> <p>In the HKDSE History Examination this year, there are questions that require candidates to comment on whether they agree to the statement “Japan had more advantages than disadvantages to China during 1900 – 1945”. The Secretary for Education Kevin Yeung Yun-hung pointed out that the information quoted in this question is one-sided and misleading, and candidates may reach biased conclusions and hurt the feelings and dignity of the people who suffered during the Japanese invasion of China. He asked the Examination Authority to cancel the relevant test questions. Eventually, the Examination Authority held a special meeting and decided to cancel the questions. The scores for the relevant questions will be approximated based on the candidates' performance on other topics in the test paper.</p>
12	<p><b>The COVID-19 pandemic rages, death toll exceeds 1 million</b></p> <p>At the end of December 2019, a patient with mysterious Covid-19 symptoms appeared in Wuhan. The expert team confirmed that the pathogen was a new type of coronavirus. In mid-January, after successive confirmed cases in Beijing, Shanghai and other places, there were many infections and deaths across the country, and Hong Kong recorded its first confirmed case in the same month. The epidemic quickly spread to more than 100 countries and regions around the world, the number of confirmed cases soared, and many governments implemented bans to control the pandemic. The World Health Organization declared it a "global pandemic" on March 11. There are now more than 50 million confirmed cases and more than 1 million deaths worldwide.</p>
13	<p><b>Classes suspended and HKDSE postponed, online teaching kicked off to replace face-to-face classes</b></p> <p>In order to halt the spread of the coronavirus, all the schools in Hong Kong began to suspend classes in early February and only resumed classes at the end of May. Due to the outbreak of the third wave of the pandemic in early July, schools also started summer vacation early, and in the new school year, face-to-face classes would resume in late September in two phases on half-day basis. While the face-to-face classes have not yet resumed, the school switched to teaching online to assist students to learn at home. In response to the pandemic, the commencement of HKDSE was postponed and the Chinese and English oral examinations were cancelled. The HKEAA has also changed the commencement of the HKDSE next year to the end of April and streamlined the assessment requirements for various subjects.</p>

14	<p><b>Tokyo Olympic Games delayed, causing a blow to Japan's economy</b></p> <p>Due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, Canada, Australia and the British Olympic Association stated in March that they would not send teams to participate in the Tokyo Olympic Games. Under the pressure from all parties, the International Olympic Committee and the Japanese government announced that the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, originally scheduled to commence on 24 July will be postponed to the summer of 2021, but the name "Tokyo 2020" is still retained. As the Japanese government, company sponsors and the local tourism industry have already rendered investment because of the Olympic Games, the postponement is a direct blow to the Japanese economy.</p>
15	<p><b>After 6 months of leave, Daniel Han Kuo-yu ousted from Kaohsiung Mayor</b></p> <p>On 6 June, Kaohsiung approved the removal of <b>Daniel Han Kuo-yu</b>, who had taken office for only one and a half years. The recall motion received 939,090 votes, nearly 370,000 more than the number of votes required to pass the recall motion. Han asked for leave to run for the 2020 Presidency for approximately 6 months, arousing discontent among the voters. He has become the first public official and mayor of Taiwan to be removed. Han was discharged from his post as mayor on 12 June, and he will not be able to run for the post of Kaohsiung mayor for four years. Han expressed his regret for his outstanding work, and condemned the DPP for bribing the media and the netizens for defamation.</p>
16	<p><b>Massive blasts rip through Beirut, more than 100 people are killed and 4,000 people injured</b></p> <p>In the port warehouses near central Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, a massive explosion occurred in early August. The news where more than 135 people killed, more than 4,000 injured, 300,000 homeless, and more than 100 missing has shocked the world. The General Directorate of Administration stated that the explosion may have been caused by the confiscated 2,700 tons of highly explosive material like ammonium nitrate, which was reported to have been stored for 6 years without any safety measures. The big explosion and the raging coronavirus pandemic caused the country to fall into an economic and governance crisis and triggered the largest wave of local anti-government demonstrations in a decade.</p>
17	<p><b>Shinzo Abe resigns due to illness, Yoshihide Suga takes over as Prime Minister of Japan</b></p> <p>Shinzo Abe, the Prime Minister of Japan, who has been in office for the longest time in Japanese history, announced at the end of August that he would resign as Prime Minister due to the deterioration of ulcerative colitis. The Liberal Democratic Party held the presidential election in mid-September. Yoshihide Suga, the Chief Cabinet Secretary and whose position is second to the former Prime Minister, won the votes from a total of 288 members of the Diet by a landslide of 73% of the votes. He has become the 99th Prime Minister of Japan. Suga is unlikely to stray far from the path of Abenomics.</p>

18	<p><b>Border clashes between India and China resulting in the first casualty in 45 years</b></p> <p>There are long-term territorial disputes along the China-India border. Beginning in early May, the two armies had a confrontation in the disputed area Ladakh. In June, bloody clashes broke out in the Galwan Valley, causing 20 deaths and 76 injuries on the Indian side. The Chinese side had casualties but it did not disclose the figures. It was the first conflict that resulted in casualties among soldiers since the war in 1962. The two sides subsequently accused each other for the cross-border operations which triggered conflicts, and the tension rose. After several rounds of diplomatic talks and talks on military commander-levels, China and India agreed to cooperate to ease tensions, but the confrontation has not ended.</p>
19	<p><b>A grim winter for the tourism industry. There were massive layoffs in Cathay Pacific</b></p> <p>The COVID pandemic has raged the world, and travelling restrictions are in place. Hong Kong's tourism, hotel and airline industries plummeted downwards. In September, there were only 9,000 visitors visiting Hong Kong, a decrease of 99.7% from the same period last year. Cathay Pacific axed about 8,500 jobs in October and about 5,300 employees were laid off in Hong Kong, which was the largest layoff in Hong Kong's history. The 35-year-old Cathay Dragon Airways ceased operations today. Although Hong Kong and Singapore would launch the "Air Travel Bubble" in November, the industry is still worried about a wave of large-scale closures and layoffs.</p>
20	<p><b>Tsai Ing-wen re-elected as the President of Taiwan. She has got the highest number of votes in history</b></p> <p>Taiwan's Presidential Election was held on 11 January. Tsai Ing-wen, the candidate of the Democratic Progressive Party who was running for the election as the current President, has won more than 8.17 million votes, defeating the Kuomintang candidate Han Kuo-yu and James Soong, the candidate of People First Party. She has set a record for the highest number of votes for Taiwan's elected President. In her victory speech, she called on PRC to respect the choices of the Taiwanese and put forth the concepts of "peace, reciprocity, democracy, and dialogues", emphasizing that they are the key to a healthy cross-strait interaction.</p>
21	<p><b>An African American man died after a police officer knelt on his neck, triggering the "Black Lives Matter" Movement</b></p> <p>George Floyd, an African-American man from Minnesota, USA, was arrested in May for allegedly using counterfeit banknotes. During his arrest, he was restrained by the white police. The incident spread through social media. The issue of racial discrimination triggered demonstrations in more than 100 cities across the country. There, some cities experienced riots and more than 20 cities imposed curfews on the residents. People all over the world took to the streets and the phrase "Black Lives Matter" had become the slogan of the African-American equality movement and anti-racial discrimination campaign.</p>
22	<p><b>Chadwick Boseman: Black Panther star dies of cancer at 43</b></p> <p>Chadwick Boseman, the actor who played T'Challa, a superhero in the "Black Panther" movie, died of colon cancer at his residence in Los Angeles in August at the age of 43. He was diagnosed with stage III colon cancer as early as 2016. "Black Panther" is the first superhero movie to be nominated for Best Picture, but its sequel in the series "Avengers: Endgame" has become Chadwick Boseman's last.</p>

23	<p><b>Chan Tong-kai fails to surrender to Taiwan. Hong Kong and Taiwan have disputes over the form of surrender</b></p> <p>Chan Tong-kai killed his girlfriend Amber Poon in Taiwan and fled back to Hong Kong. On 19 October, he was released from prison over money-laundering and promised to surrender himself to Taiwan. However, he has not left Hong Kong for Taiwan after a year and is still living in the police-arranged safe house. The governments of the two places also disputed over issues such as the form of Chan Tong-kai's form of surrender. Taiwan claimed that Chan was a wanted criminal and could not enter the country freely. It has established a single window liaison point for Chan to apply for a visa. The Hong Kong government stated that there is no mutual legal assistance arrangement between the two places and it will not provide Taiwan with any evidence, saying that Chan has regained his freedom and any other actions will lack legal basis. Poon's mother once wrote an open letter to urge Chan to fulfil his promise.</p>
24	<p><b>The rights of the 12 Hong Kong fugitives involved in the crime of illegal border crossing have raised public concern</b></p> <p>China Coast Guard seized a speedboat which was suspected of illegally crossing the border in the southeast waters of Hong Kong in August. According to the reports, there were 12 Hong Kong youths on board who were planning to flee to Taiwan and had participated in the "anti-extradition" movement. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China alleged that they were suspected of illegally crossing the border of the country, and the Public Security Bureau has taken criminal detention and compulsory measures in accordance with the law. The public is concerned about the human rights of the 12 Hong Kong people, including whether the arrest is reasonable and whether they can be tried fairly.</p>
25	<p><b>U.S. announced its withdrawal from WHO. Biden vows to reverse Trump's decision if he wins</b></p> <p>U.S. President Trump announced his withdrawal from the World Health Organization in early July and it would take effect on 6 July next year. Trump accused the WHO of improperly handling of the coronavirus and failing to hold China accountable for the pandemic, and "misleading the world" on that issue. Therefore, U.S. decided to terminate its relationship with the WHO, cut the funding permanently, and shift the funds to other health organizations. Joe Biden, who is a candidate running for the presidential election, said on Twitter on the same day that if he was successfully elected, Trump's decision would be reversed and U.S. would rejoin the WHO.</p>

26	<p><b>N.B.A. star Kobe Bryant dies in California helicopter crash</b></p> <p>The legendary American N.B.A star Kobe Bryant died in California helicopter crash at the end of January when he was flying in a private helicopter. He was 41 years old. All nine people aboard the plane were killed, including Bryant's 13-year-old daughter. Local reports stated that poor weather conditions at the time of the accident caused the helicopter to crash in the mountains. Kobe Bryant has spent 20 years with the Los Angeles Lakers and helped the team win 5 N.B.A championships. He retired in 2016. The news of his death shocked the world. His ex-opponents, teammates and the celebrities from all walks of life offered condolences via social media platforms.</p>
27	<p><b>Wuhan is on lockdown for 76 days as coronavirus rages</b></p> <p>In order to curb the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, Wuhan was closed at 10 a.m. on 23 January, and the city's buses, subways, ferries, and long-distance passenger transports were suspended from service. Without special reasons, citizens were not allowed to leave Wuhan. WHO said that such a large-scale lockdown for a city of 11 million people is "unprecedented" in the history of public health. On 8 April, the situation in Hubei Province was under control, and Wuhan announced the lifting of the 76-day lockdown and the restoration of the external transportation services.</p>
28	<p><b>Primary school teacher permanently stripped of registration for purportedly spreading the message of "Hong Kong Independence"</b></p> <p>In late September, the Education Bureau stripped the registration of a teacher at Alliance Primary School in Kowloon Tong on the grounds of "professional misconduct" for the first time, alleging that the teacher was suspected of "deliberately disseminating pro-independence messages" in lesson plans, teaching materials and worksheets of primary 5 students' Life Science Classes. Such content includes "Hong Kong independence" and "freedom of speech." The Chief Executive Carrie Lam later emphasized that "Hong Kong independence" and awareness of illegality are not allowed to spread in schools. The teacher formally appealed in October.</p>
29	<p><b>The U.S. Treasury Department sanctioned 11 Chinese and Hong Kong Officials in response to the Hong Kong National Security Law</b></p> <p>The U.S. Treasury Department announced in August that in response to Hong Kong's implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law on 11 July, Chinese and Hong Kong officials were sanctioned, including Chief Executive Carrie Lam, and Luo Huining, Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and National Security Affairs Advisor. The U.S. Treasury Department emphasized that U.S. would stand on the side of Hong Kong people in pursuit of democracy and freedom. The Hong Kong government issued a statement in response, stating that it expresses strong dissatisfaction with the U.S. sanctions and complaints against the Hong Kong National Security Law.</p>



**Thailand's movement continues. Protesters raised three major demands.**

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Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit, the leader of the Future Forward Party, was accused of breaking the law. The Constitutional Court ruled in February to dissolve the political party, and demonstrations broke out in many schools across the country. Subsequently, classes were suspended due to the coronavirus. Since June, due to the kidnapping of democrats by unknown persons and the people's discontent with the government's anti-epidemic measures regarding the prevention of the overseas imported cases, a series of demonstrations were triggered and three major demands were raised, including the dissolution of the Congress, no suppression of political dissidents, and amendment of the military's constitution. The Thai government declared a state of emergency in October, banning large-scale gatherings.

The above shortlisted news is sorted randomly, and the news is as of 31 October 2020. The election results will be announced in early January 2021.