

Backgrounder of the Tiananmen Massacre — For Justice and Conscience —

1. Introduction



Source: 64memo.com

The year 2009 marks the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen Massacre, also known as the *June Fourth Massacre*. On 3 and 4 June 1989, the Chinese government slaughtered its own people with tanks and guns, crushing the hope for democratic reform.

Responding to the people's call for justice, the government keeps reiterating that "history has a conclusion". Yet, history does not speak, people do; history must be based on facts, it must not be distorted to serve the political interest of the government. Economic development in China may win flattering comments in the international community, but it can never whitewash the red hands of the regime.

To date, it is still unknown how many were killed in the Tiananmen Massacre; who should be held responsible; dissidents who were involved in the 1989 Pro-democracy Movement are still in exile and cannot return to China; some others who spoke up against the Massacre are behind bars or being persecuted; victims' families could not mourn their deceased relatives publicly and freely;

some outspoken "Tiananmen Mothers" are frequently subjected to harassment and surveillance... These reveal that even the Chinese government has not forgotten the Massacre, thus, how can we forget?

ACPP is issuing this background paper to pay homage to the deceased victims of the massacre, as well as those who are struggling and suffering in China for the betterment of the country.

2. Background of the Pro-democracy Movement in 1989

Since economic reform was adopted in 1978, without political reform and the safeguard of rule of law, only those in power can benefit from it. In the late 1980s, corruption and inflation were rampant. Among the political leaders in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), General Secretary Hu Yaobang was known as one of the "clean" political leaders and favoured a faster pace of political change. However, he was forced to step down in 1987 for his "bourgeois" tendencies. Two years later, he died from a heart attack on 15 April. His death then sparked off a mass movement against corruption and a call for democratic reform in Beijing. People gathered in Tiananmen Square to commemorate Hu and raise seven demands, including reversing the verdict

on Hu Yaobang, publicizing the assets of high ranking government officials; lifting restrictions on demonstrations; and allowing press freedom. The movement was first initiated by university students and then supported by various groups, such as workers, citizens and journalists, government officials, even transforming into a national movement. The students at that time tried to open a dialogue with the government but failed. In order to move the government, students went on a timeless hunger strike to appeal to the government to respond to them. In the *Manifesto of Hunger Strike*, the students cried out:

“In these bright and beautiful days of May, we are beginning a hunger strike. In this moment of most beautiful and happy youth, we must firmly leave all of life’s happiness behind us. We do this ever so unwillingly, ever so unhappily!

Yet [we must do so], for our country is in a most critical state. Prices are soaring, profiteering by officials run rampant, power politics hangs high, and the bureaucracy is corrupt. It is a time when large numbers of patriotic, upstanding Chinese willing to devote themselves to the betterment of their motherland [instead] live in exile overseas, and when social order and public security deteriorate day by day. At this life-death-moment of the nation’s fate, all countrymen of conscience, please listen to us!

This country is our country,
These people are our people,
This government is our government,
If we do not cry out, who will?
If we do not act, who will?”

Full text of the Manifesto of Hunger Strike: http://www.alliance.org.hk/64/6420/?page_id=526

Within the government, there were leaders sympathetic to the students, such as the General Secretary Zhao Ziyang. He visited the students and apologized. He sincerely asked students to stop the hunger strike to preserve lives. Swiftly, Zhao was removed from his position, leaving the hard-liners in power. After six weeks of protest, the government declared the Pro-democracy Movement to be a riot and mobilized troops to quell the movement. People never anticipated the government would use tanks and guns to kill people. At that time, protestors believed that the government might suppress them with tear gas, water cannons, or rubber bullets. Until now, it is unknown how many were killed and wounded. The Chinese Red Cross estimates that around 2,600 people died in the crackdown¹, in contrast with the government’s figure of 300 soldiers and “rioters”. The government also covered up the truth of the Massacre both by propaganda and draconian laws aimed at preventing people from speaking up.

Please also see the appendix for the chronology of the pro-democracy movement.

3. Tiananmen Mothers

Many family members lost their loved ones in the Massacre. They could not accept that their beloved had been killed and died as “rioters”. In the aftermath of the Massacre, a few victims’ families contacted each other to document the deaths in the Massacre, in order to expose the lies of the government and demand an investigation and accountability. The group was formally named as “Tiananmen Mothers” in 2000. It is comprised of family members of the victims and those who were wounded and disabled in the Massacre. The guiding slogan of the group is:

*Speak the truth;
Never forget;
Seek justice; and
Call on conscience.*

¹ Niki Law, “Need to Know”, *South China Morning Post*, 4 June 2006, EDT3.

In May 1995, the group sent an open letter to the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Consultative Conference for the first time, to demand an effective investigation into the Tiananmen Massacre and to publish the report. Twenty-seven victim members signed. Since then, more and more supporters have joined the petition. There were 128 members who signed in 2009.

The "Tiananmen Mothers" bravely stood up to fight for justice for their loved ones, as well as to prevent the recurrence of such a tragedy. They stated that the only way to do so was to end the impunity of the government. Without rectifying the crimes of the past, China cannot proceed to real development. The "Tiananmen Mothers" members are not professional activists, but their way of struggle is through truth, love and persistence.



Source: 64memo.com

Demands of the "Tiananmen Mothers"²

- The right to mourn peacefully and in public;
- The right to accept humanitarian aid from organizations and individuals inside and outside China;
- No more persecution of Tiananmen victims, including those injured in the massacre and the families of the dead;
- The release of all people still suffering in prison for their role in the 1989 pro-democracy movement; and
- A full, public accounting for the Tiananmen Massacre, ending the impunity for the perpetrators of this crime.

Harassment to the "Tiananmen Mothers"

There are lots of difficulties in searching for the victims' families, especially because of great pressure from the government. Now, many members of the "Tiananmen Mothers" are aged over 70 or even 80. Their greatest aspiration is to seek justice for their beloved children and families. Regrettably, 20 members have died before this justice can be witnessed.

In the process of seeking justice, the "Tiananmen Mothers" were also targeted by the government and became victims of various human rights violations. Some members are frequently under surveillance and harassment. These are some examples:

² "Tiananmen Mothers" website (<http://www.tiananmenmother.org/TiananmenMother/tmother01.htm>).

- Jiang Peikun, Ding Zilin's husband who is 72 years old, suffered a heart attack and stroke after arguing with a group of police who visited his home in October 2008;³
- During the Beijing Olympic Games, some members were forced to leave Beijing or were put under surveillance;⁴
- In 2004, at the Tiananmen Massacre's 15th anniversary, three members of the "Tiananmen Mothers", Ding Zilin, Zhang Xianling and Huang Jinping, were arbitrarily detained for a few days by the Chinese government on 28 March. It is believed that the detention was linked to their video recording of testimonies sent to the UN Commission on Human Rights;⁵
- Many victims' families lost their breadwinners in the Massacre, and the wounded victims are denied the right to social security. They are living in extreme poverty.
- Mourning deceased family members is an important Chinese traditional activity. However, family members of the victims cannot freely mourn their beloved in public on some "sensitive days", such as Ching Ming Festival and 4th June.

Testimonies

Ding Zilin is one of the founders of the "Tiananmen Mothers". Since the early 90s, she and a few victims' families started searching out other family members of the victims to document the deaths in the Massacre in order to demand justice from the government. In the past 20 years, the group has documented 188 deaths and over 70 who were disabled in the Massacre.⁶ In these testimonies which were written in blood and tears, they revealed the atrocities of the Chinese government, the army's indiscriminate killing of the protesters and bystanders; wounded victims were denied the right to medical treatment; internationally banned explosive bullets were used; family members of victims were forced to cover up the truth on how their beloved ones died; ongoing harassment to the victim families; how lives of the victim families were destroyed since then...

The following are just a few examples of the grievances and sufferings of the victim families, which Ding Zilin provided to the Human Rights in China.

Excerpt of testimonies of the "Tiananmen Mothers" (cited from website of Human Rights in China)

Testimony of Ding Zilin, mother of Jiang Jielian

January 31, 1999

Jiang Jielian, male, born in Beijing on June 2, 1972, had just passed his 17th birthday when he died.

Jiang became deeply involved in the student movement when it first started in April 1989 after the death of Hu Yaobang. He often went to the People's University and Beijing University after class to read the big-character posters and listen to speeches.[...]

[...] At dusk on June 3, the Central TV Station broadcast an "Urgent Warning," telling citizens not to leave their homes or they would be responsible for the consequences, which could be serious. Jiang was very uneasy at home, worried for the safety of the college students in the Square. He insisted on going there. I tried in vain for two hours to persuade him not to go. Finally, he struggled out of my arms, ran into the bathroom, locked the door from the inside and climbed out of the window. (We lived on the ground floor.) He never came back

[...] The troops shot indiscriminately at the crowd. Many people fell and there was a lot of blood. [...] A bullet grazed his classmate's arm, while Jiang Jielian was shot from behind, the bullet running aslant through his heart. His classmate heard him say softly, "I think I've been hit by a bullet." Then he squatted down and passed out.

³公安登門衝突累丁子霖丈夫險喪命, *Apple Daily*, 13 Jan 2009, A19 (Chinese).

⁴ Information from the Tiananmen Mothers Campaign.

⁵“丁子霖被扣, 臨近六四北京先壓制”, *Apple Daily*, 30 March 2004, A24 (Chinese).

⁶ Website of the Tiananmen Mothers (<http://www.tiananmenmother.org/TiananmenMother/tmother01.htm>)

[...] June 6, his parents, relatives, friends, teachers and classmates—over 20 people in all—held a simple memorial service at the hospital. We put the red headband, of which he had been very proud, around his thick, jet black hair—it was a symbol of the cause for which he gave his life's-blood. There were no wreaths or mourning music during the service, only sobs and his parents' wails of grief. [...]

On front of the box where the ashes are kept, his father carved the following inscription for our beloved son:

*In these short 17 years
You lived like a real man
Your humanitarian nobility and integrity
Will be kept in the undying memory of history.
Your forever loving Father and Mother.*

Full text: Testimony of Ding Zilin, mother of Jiang Jieliang, Human Rights in China (<http://www.hrichina.org/public/contents/article?revision%5fid=3100&item%5fid=3099>)

Testimony of Kuang Diqing, father of Kuang Min

January 31, 1999

Kuang Min, male, born on November 3, 1962, killed at age 27; he was a full-time technician of the production technology department of the Beijing Fork Lift Main Factory.

[...] My daughter-in-law told me that during the last ten days of May 1989, tens of thousands of people would go out on the streets every day to support the student movement, and after work my son and his wife would hang out in Muxudi with the local residents, on some days only briefly, on other days for a longer time. On the night of June 3, the people were dispersed, pursued and killed by the PLA martial law troops that had entered the city. My son died in the nearby Water Conservancy Hospital. [...]

[...] When I went to the cremation area at Babaoshan Cemetery on June 9 to get information, I saw soldiers standing on guard. They told me that I had to follow a certain procedure, that I had to write an explanation of the circumstances of my son's death. If I wrote down that he had been shot, they could not complete the cremation procedure. There was also someone who said that the bodies of some of those who had been killed had been wrapped and passed off as victims of a car accident before they could be cremated. I refused to do it that way. Heaven knows, these butchers killed my son, and they expect me to cover their tracks? If they didn't want to cremate him, I was prepared to leave his body in the mortuary forever!

[...] A lonely 70-year-old man like me, old and poor, suffering from a lung condition, my life hanging on a thread—I am at a complete loss: who will support me in the future? For those despotic dictators nothing is sacred!

Full text: Testimony of Kuang Diqing, father of Kuang Min, Human Rights in China (<http://www.hrichina.org/public/contents/article?revision%5fid=3544&item%5fid=3543>)

Testimony of Liu Tianai, widow of Xiao Bo

January 31, 1999

Xiao Bo, male, born in June 1962, was a native of Longshan County, Hunan Province. He was accepted into Beijing University in 1978 and received a master's degree in 1985. He stayed on there to teach in the chemistry department.

Xiao died of a gunshot wound to the chest. The bullet severed his aorta, causing him to lose a lot of blood. Fuxing Hospital had not made preparations to provide emergency care for gunshot victims, so there wasn't enough blood for transfusions. The hospital had only prepared large quantities of eyedrops and gauze, thinking that, at worst, the troops would use tear gas to disperse the crowds. A significant number of victims died in the same way that Xiao did, because there was not enough blood. A nurse at the hospital said that before he was shot, he had helped bring another victim to that very hospital for emergency treatment. The nurse said that she was very impressed by Xiao Bo, and never thought that he would be shot himself and be brought back to the hospital on a stretcher. [...]

Xiao Bo's death struck me like a thunderbolt from nowhere. I had given birth to twins just 70 days earlier. In my state of sorrow and shock, I stopped lactating and soon after found out that my older child had developed a mild brain disorder. I searched everywhere for effective treatment, to little avail and great expense. I've suffered much hardship due to Xiao's death in the so-called "turmoil." The relevant offices at Beijing University ignored my requests to use one of their empty campus apartments while I sought medical care for my child. They also warned me not to take my children for walks in the campus grounds. If anyone asked, I was not to say that Xiao Bo was the father of my children. [...]

Testimony of Liu Tianai, widow of Xiao Bo, Human Rights in China
(<http://www.hrichina.org/public/contents/article?revision%5fid=1840&item%5fid=1839>)

For more testimonies of the "Tiananmen Mothers", please go to the website of Human Rights in China at <http://www.hrichina.org/public/contents/category?cid=8299&lang=iso%2d8859%2d1>.

Testimonies (video tape in Mandarin with English subtitles) are also available at "Tiananmen Mothers" website: <http://tmc-hk.org/articles.php?do=viewart&id=5&cat=6>

4. Persecution and the Exile of Political Dissidents

On top of the deaths and disappearances, some people's whereabouts were still unknown after they were arrested by the Chinese government. The government has never published a list of the people or the number who were sentenced for their involvement in the 1989 pro-democracy movement. According to the Information Center for Human Rights and Democracy, around 15,000 people were sentenced for their involvement in the 1989 movement, and until 2008, there were 130 persons still behind bars.⁷ Some other people were held in prison for speaking up for the pro-democracy movement. Apparently, the Tiananmen Massacre is more than a historical incident, it is an ongoing struggle, as well as a persecution. Mr. Shi Tao is one of the recent victims. In 2004, Shi, a journalist, was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for sending an email that summarized a Chinese Central Propaganda Department communiqué on how journalists should handle the 15th anniversary of the pro-democracy movement.⁸

In 2009, there were already signs of the government's plan to step up persecution to the dissidents linked to the 1989 democracy movement:

Mr. Zhang Shijun, a former soldier who was ordered to suppress the student movement, was detained by a security officer after he expressed his regret in an interview on 17 March 2009. He sent an open letter to President Hu Jintao requesting vindication of the "June Fourth verdict" and published it on the internet. On 18 March, he was called by local police in Shangdong province and told not to have contact with foreign media. Zhang was sentenced to three years re-education through hard labour in 1992 due to his request for early discharge from the army.⁹

The home of Mr. Jiang Qisheng, who was one of the student leaders in 1989 and deputy chairman of the Independent Chinese PEN Centre, was raided by 15 officers from the Beijing Public Security Bureau on 31 March 2009. He was told that the authority had gathered evidence from intercepted phone calls and correspondence, as they knew he would write articles on the Massacre. He was interrogated for several hours but released in the afternoon on the same day. His laptop, two computers, books, manuscripts and bank cards were confiscated by the Bureau.¹⁰

⁷ "八九判刑 130 人仍坐監", *Ming Pao*, 5 June 2008, A22 (Chinese).

⁸ China: Thousands of Amnesty supporters demand release of Tiananmen activists, Amnesty International, 3 June 2008. (<http://www.amnesty.org/en/for-media/press-releases/china-thousands-amnesty-supporters-demand-release-tiananmen-activists-20>)

⁹ "Penitent June 4 soldier detained", *South China Morning Post*, 21 March 2009, EDT5.

¹⁰ Vivian Wu, "Dissident detained over Tiananmen article", *South China Morning Post*, 1 April 2009, EDT4.

A Shandong professor, Sun Wenguang, 75, was seriously assaulted by unidentified men for mourning the former CCP Secretary General Zhao Zhiyang on the Ching Ming Festival on 4 April. Nevertheless, he insisted that violence would not deter him from commemorating Zhao and other victims of the Massacre. Before he headed to the Jinan's Martyrs' Park to mourn for Zhao, around 20 police officers tried to bar him from going there. When he reached the park, five thugs attacked him. He was diagnosed in hospital as having three broken ribs.¹¹

Moreover, the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China estimates that there have been about 500 political dissidents being denied the right to go home in the past 20 years since the 1989.¹² "Indiscriminately", political prisoners who are over 80 years old are not allowed to return to China, like Liu Binyan and Ge Yang. They both passed away with deep regrets in 2005 and 2009 respectively.

5. Response of the Chinese Government

The Chinese government's response on the Tiananmen Massacre has shifted from denial to rationalization. Just after the massacre, the central government demonized the pro-democracy movement as a riot and claimed those who were killed were rioters. Later, different government leaders and officials have shamefully stressed that stability in the country and economic government was far more important. Does it imply that the economic progress can justify such a crime?

Date	Government Official	Response
6 June 1989	Zhang Gong, spokesman of the army	Nobody was killed in the Tiananmen Square, and there was nobody crushed by tanks in the Square. ¹³
6 June 1989	Yuan Mu, spokesperson of the State Council	During the "clearing" of Tiananmen Square, 5,000 soldiers were injured, and 2,000 civilians and "rebels" were also injured, 300 soldiers and "law-breaking criminals" died, including 23 university students. ¹⁴
16 June 1989	Yuan Mu	(Yuan was interviewed by the US news station ABC) The news films shot by ABC depicting troops entering the Square killing civilians and students were actually created by "advance technology" with the aim of twisting the facts. ¹⁵
1993	Deng Xiaoping, Chairman of Central Military Commission of CCP in 1989	Political turmoil between spring and summer in 1989.
2004	Wen Jiabao, Premier	(Response to a journalist's question on pro-democracy movement in 1989.) "At that time the party central committee closely rallied the party and all of the Chinese people together, adhered to party policies since the third plenary session of the 11th party committee and successfully stabilized the situation of reform and opening-up and the path of building socialism with Chinese characteristics", he said, referring to the decision that the mainland should shun

¹¹ "Beating won't deter me, says elderly activist", *South China Morning Post*, 7 April 2009, EDT6.

¹² 施嘉雯, "「我們要回家」流亡 20 年 思鄉情未斷", *Ming Pao*, 30 January 2009, A01 (Chinese).

¹³ "多少人死傷? 多少人被捕? 多少人失蹤? 美國國務院促北京奧運前交代六四", *Apple Daily*, 3 Jun 07, A01 (Chinese).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ "History Written in Blood", The Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, <http://www.alliance.org.hk/english/historyblood.htm>.

		class struggle for economic reforms. “Fifteen years on, it is obvious that China's opening-up and reform policy and the socialist modernization cause have made great achievements.” “One of the most important reasons ... was that we upheld the unity within the party and social and political stability.” ¹⁶
2008	Qin Gang, spokesperson of the Foreign Ministry	Regarding the political incident that took place at the end of the 1980s, there is already a clear conclusion. ¹⁷
2009	Zhao Qizheng, spokesperson of the Chinese People's Consultative Conference	(Response to a journalist from the Voice of America in a press conference of the CPCC asking if the authority received the open letter issued by the “Tiananmen Mothers”) Government has the verdict on “June Fourth”, the crackdown, already and the stability of the country was the foremost priority.

6. Why Should We Care?



Source: 64memo.com

Since the 1990s, China's economic and political clout in the world has been increasing. Especially at this time of financial crisis, the economic success of China can buy the silence of foreign governments, even its own people, on her human rights record. As such, it is necessary for people to tell China that economic interest cannot justify crime, domestically or internationally.

Dissidents in China, including the “Tiananmen Mothers”, have been persistently demanding truth and justice, and they have paid the cost. As we are living in freedom, we have a moral responsibility to walk with them on the journey.

¹⁶, Shi Jiangtao, “Tiananmen crackdown justified, says Wen”, *South China Morning Post*, 15 March 2004, EDT05.

¹⁷ Choi Chi-yuk, “Tiananmen kin will drop political claims in return for financial aid”, *South China Morning Post*, 4 June 2008, ETD05.

As the cause of the 1989 Pro-democracy Movement campaigned against corruption and for political reform, the vindication of the “June Fourth verdict” will have a significant impact on democratization in China. This will also be a remarkable step towards ending impunity for human rights violations of the government.

ACPP takes this opportunity to show its heartfelt respect to the participants in the pro-democracy movement, for using their lives to promote social and political change in China. They have scarified, but their spirit has inspired many people to work for justice. We also honor the courageous people who have not forgotten and continue to speak up for the Tiananmen Massacre.

The following are some suggestions to commemorate the Tiananmen Massacre:

Online condolence book for the victims of the Tiananmen Massacre:

<http://www.alliance.org.hk/sign64/gbook.php?a=sign>

Online petition demanding the Tiananmen Mothers’ right to mourn publicly and freely:

<http://www.gopetition.com/online/14294.html>

Send support messages to the “Tiananmen Mothers” on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/-Tiananmen-Mothers/52119319766?ref=fb>

ACPP is going to issue an urgent appeal for ending impunity for the Tiananmen Massacre, please watch out for the upcoming *UA*.

7. Solidarity Actions in Hong Kong

Church

In 1989, in response to the pro-democracy movement in China, the Union of Hong Kong Catholic Organizations in Support of the Patriotic and Democratic Movement in China (Union) was formed. The Union, comprised of several Catholic organizations, of which the Justice and Peace Commission of the Hong Kong Catholic Diocese and the Hong Kong Federation of Catholic Students play a leading role, has, until now, been calling for justice for the victims of the Tiananmen Massacre. To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Massacre, a series of programmes is planned, including seminars, prayer meetings, photo exhibitions, educational workshops for youth, school workshops, a book fair, a fast, a film screening and circulating publications.

These activities are more than just a commemoration, they are part of the campaign to demand justice for the victims who were killed or wounded in the Massacre. The Union believes that China will not have genuine development if the crimes of the past are not rectified.

Civil Society

Hong Kong appears to be the only place in the Chinese territories which can openly commemorate the Massacre.¹⁸ Many non-governmental organizations, media outlets, schools, and individuals mark the anniversary through various activities, such as protests, seminars, school talks, cultural performances, media campaigns, community radio programmes, documentary screenings and petitions. However, the most remarkable event will be the candlelight vigil on 4th June.

Candlelight Vigil: The Hong Kong Alliance in Support of the Patriotic Democratic Movements of China has been holding the “June Fourth Candlelight Vigil” for the past 19 years. Every 4th June, tens of thousands of candles light up for the victims of the Massacre in Victoria Park in Hong Kong.

To pay homage to the deceased victims of the Massacre, the Tiananmen Mothers Campaign urges people to dress in black on 4th June whether they attend the candlelight vigil or not to show that we never forget the black day.

¹⁸ Macau is also allowed to organize activities on the Tiananmen Massacre, but in a much smaller scale.

8. Online resources

Website

Human Rights in China: June 4th Crackdown

<http://www.hrchina.org/public/contents/article?revision%5fid=50731&item%5fid=11004>

Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China

http://www.alliance.org.hk/64/6420/?page_id=424

Virtual Museum of China '89

<http://museums.cnd.org/China89/890415.html>

Tiananmen Mothers (Chinese)

<http://www.tiananmenmother.org>

Tiananmen Mothers Campaign (Chinese)

<http://www.tmc-hk.org>

Videos

Please note that some of the videos include some horrible scenes.

Testimonies of the Tiananmen Mothers (Mandarin, English subtitle)

<http://tmc-hk.org/articles.php?do=viewart&id=5&cat=6>

The Tank Man (produced by Frontline)

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/tankman/view>

BBC News, June 4, 1989, Tiananmen Massacre (YouTube)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJBnHMPHGRY>

Music Video: Blood is on the Square (by Philip Morgan) (YouTube)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4PJVLTrjt0>

Colour of the Blood (Mandarin) (YouTube)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHusFlwVljU>



Source: Bruce and Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China

Appendix: Chronology of the Pro-democracy Movement in 1989¹⁹

15 April	Death of Hu Yaobang, Party General Secretary 1981-1987, who was accused of being too liberal with intellectuals and students and of promoting "bourgeois liberalization". He was forced to step down in 1987. Hu was replaced by Zhao Ziyang.
22 April	Chinese government held an official ceremony to commemorate the former CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang. Over 100,000 students gathered at Tiananmen Square under surveillance of 10,000 military police. The students demanded a dialogue and knelt to submit a petition to the government, but were ignored.
26 April	The editorial of the "People's Daily", mouthpiece of the Central government, designated the Student Movement as "riot".
4 May	On the day of the 70th anniversary of the May 4th Movement, over 100,000 students marched to Tiananmen Square. Several hundred media workers also participated. The cause of the Student Movement restructured to the demand of freedom of press, crackdown on corruption and political reform.
13 May	A few days before former leader of the USSR Gorbachev's visit to China, students stepped up their action in the hunger strike to protest against the non-responsive attitude of the government. Over 3,000 students took part in it. Moved by the determination of the students, and angered by the non-responsiveness of the government, over a million people turned out to support the cause of the students.
14 May	A meeting was held between the government and students, but was ended with hostility.
15 May	The Chinese Communist Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang declared that the student movement was patriotic and asked the students to end their hunger strike.
19 May	Zhao Ziyang and Li Peng, Premier, came to the Square. Zhao, with tears in his eyes, expressed regrets to students, "We have come, but it's too late, we are sorry!" Students terminated the hunger strike after Zhao's visit.
20 May	Li Peng claimed that Beijing became an anarchy. He declared the student movement a riot and imposed martial law. Outraged by Li Peng's decision, 200,000 students in the Square announced they would continue the hunger strike to protest.
21 May	As troops were entering into Beijing, a million citizens used their bodies to block the army.
26 May	Zhao Ziyang is formally ousted from power.
28 May	In Hong Kong, 1.5 million turned out on the Day of World Chinese March in support the Pro-democracy Movement in Beijing.
29 May	Statue of Goddess of Democracy, created by students of the Central Arts Institute, was erected in Tiananmen Square.
2 June	The Tiananmen Square Democratic University was formed. "Four Gentlemen" Hou Dejian, Liu Xiaobo, Zhao Duo and Gao Xin started their 72-hour hunger-strike.
2-3 June	Army was entering into Beijing and heading to the Tiananmen Square and the area around it
3 June	From 10:00p.m., hundreds of tanks, armored vehicles and troops converged from every angle on central Beijing and Tiananmen Square. The troops fired on the people indiscriminately and deliberately, and armored vehicles and tanks drove blindly into crowds.

¹⁹ The Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, <http://www.alliance.org.hk/english/historyblood.htm>

	Knowing the army was entering in the city, people in Beijing bravely used their bodies to block the advance of the troops to protect students in the Square.
4 June	<p>At 2:00am, troops surrounded the whole Square. students and civilians had retreated to the area around the Monument to the People's Heroes. Hou Dejian and student representatives tried to negotiate with the army to let the students withdraw from the Square.</p> <p>At 4:00am, all lights in the Square were turned off and the crackdown began. Troops marched into the Square and surrounded the Monument. With electric batons and rifles, many students were injured or killed. Armored vehicles and tanks drove into the Square and smashed into the crowd. Even in the day time, troops continued to fire at civilians, killing and injuring many.</p>
5 June	Troops were still stationed around the Square. The civilians, however, still shouted anti-army, anti-government slogans on the streets. A Beijing citizen, Wang Weiling, stood in front of a line of tanks to block their advance.
6 June	Spokesman of the State Council, Yuan Mu, stated in a press conference for local and international media that during the incident of "clearing" the Square, 5,000 soldiers were injured, and 2,000 civilians and "rebels" were also injured; 300 "law-breaking criminals" were killed, 23 university students were also killed.
13 June	21 student leaders and 23 intellectuals were on the wanted list of the Ministry of National Security and Ministry of Public Security.
16 June	Yuan Mu was interviewed by ABC News and said that the news clips shot by ABC depicting troops entering the Square killing civilians and students were actually created by "advanced technology" with the aim of twisting the facts.

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