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# Tiananmen Square

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Tiananmen Square is a large city square in the centre of Beijing, China, named after the Tiananmen ("Gate of Heavenly Peace") located to its north, separating it from the Forbidden City. The square contains the Monument to the People's Heroes, the Great Hall of the People, the National Museum of China, and the Mausoleum of Mao Zedong Mao Zedong proclaimed the founding of the People's Republic of China in the square on October 1, 1949; the anniversary of this event is still observed there.[1] Tiananmen Square is within the top ten largest city squares in the world  $(440,500 \text{ m}^2 - 880 \times 500 \text{ m} \text{ or } 109 \text{ acres} - 960 \times 550 \text{ m})$ yd). [citation needed] It has great cultural significance as it was the site of several important events in Chinese history.

Outside China, the square is best known in recent memory as the focal point of the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, a prodemocracy movement which ended on 4 June 1989 with the declaration of martial law in Beijing by the government and the shooting of several hundred, or possibly thousands, of civilians by soldiers.[2][3]

# Tiananmen Square men Square as seen from the Monument to the People's Heroes in 1988 **Traditional Chinese**

'abkai elhe obure duka

Manchu name

Simplified Chinese

Romanization

Transcriptions [show]

Coordinates: 39°54′12″N 116°23′30″E

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# History [edit]

The Tiananmen ("Gate of Heavenly Peace"), a gate in the wall of the Imperial City, was built in 1415 during the Ming dynasty. In the 17th century, fighting between Li Zicheng's rebel forces and the forces of the Manchu-led Qing dynasty caused heavy damage to, or even destroyed, the gate. Tiananmen Square was designed and built in 1651, and has since been enlarged by four times its original size in the 1950s.<sup>[4][5]</sup>

Near the centre of the square stood the "Great Ming Gate", the southern gate to the Imperial City, renamed "Great Qing Gate" during the Qing dynasty, and "Gate of China" during the Republican era. Unlike the other gates in Beijing, such as the Tiananmen and the Zhengyangmen, this was a purely ceremonial gateway, with three arches but no ramparts, similar in style to the ceremonial gateways found in the Ming tombs. This gate had a special status as the "Gate of the Nation", as can be seen from its



Tiananmen Square in the early 20th century, viewed from Zhengyangmen Gate (Qianmen Gate) with the Gate of China, later removed in 1954, in the place of the present-day Mao Zedong Mausoleum. The "corridor of a thousand steps" is visible behind the Gate of China, and Tiananmen Gate is in the distance.

successive names. It normally remained closed, except when the Emperor passed through. Commoner traffic was diverted to side gates at the western and eastern ends of the square, respectively. Because of this diversion in traffic, a busy marketplace, called "Chess Grid Streets", was developed in the big, fenced square to the south of this gate.

In 1860, during the Second Opium War, when British and French troops invaded Beijing, they pitched camp near the gate and briefly considered burning down the gate and the entire Forbidden City. They decided ultimately to spare the Forbidden City and instead burn down the Old Summer Palace. The Xianfeng Emperor eventually agreed to let the foreign powers barrack troops - and later establish diplomatic missions - in the area, hence there was the Legation Quarter immediately to the east of the square. When the forces of the Eight-Nation Alliance besieged Beijing during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, they badly damaged the office complexes and

# Magyar

Bahasa Melayu **Nederlands** ППП Norsk bokmål

Polski Português Русский Simple English Slovenčina Slovenščina Suomi Svenska Tagalog 

Türkçe Українська Tiếng Việt Winaray

ПП

burnt down several ministries. After the Boxer Rebellion ended, the area became a space for the foreign powers to assemble their military forces.

In 1954, the Gate of China was demolished, allowing for the enlargement of the square. In November 1958, a major expansion of Tiananmen Square started, which was completed after only 11 months, in August 1959. This followed the vision of Mao Zedong to make the square the largest and most spectacular in the world, and intended to hold over 500,000 people. In that process, a large number of residential buildings and other structures have been demolished. [6] On its southern edge, the Monument to the People's Heroes has been erected. Concomitantly, as part of the Ten Great Buildings constructed between 1958-59 to commemorate the ten-year anniversary of the People's Republic of China, the Great Hall of the People and the Revolutionary History Museum (now the National Museum of China) were erected on the western and eastern sides of the square. [6]



Square. (1967-09-20)

The year after Mao's death in 1976, amausoleum was built near the site of the former Gate of China, on the main north-south axis of the square. In connection with this project, the square was further increased in size to become fully rectangular and being able to accommodate 600,000 persons.<sup>[6]</sup>

The urban context of the square was altered in the 1990s with the construction of National Grand Theatre in its vicinity and the expansion of the National Museum.<sup>[6]</sup>

#### Panorama [edit]



Panorama image map of Tiananmen Square from the north atop Tiananmen's gate tower, showing the Square beyond Chang'an Avenue, with the Monument to the People's Heroes and Mao Zedong Mausoleum at background center, the National Museum of China to the left and Great Hall of the People to the right. (mouse over for labels)

#### Configuration [edit]

Used as a massive meeting place since its creation, its flatness is contrasted by the 38-metre (125 ft) high Monument to the People's Heroes, and the Mausoleum of Mao Zedong. [4] The square lies between two ancient, massive gates: the Tian'anmen to the north and the Zhengyangmen (better known as Qianmen) to the south. Along the west side of the square is the Great Hall of the People. Along the east side is the National Museum of China (dedicated to Chinese history predating 1919). Chang'an Avenue, which is used for parades, lies between the Tian'anmen and the square. Trees line the east and west edges of the Square, but the square itself is open, with neither trees nor benches. The square is lit with large lamp posts which are fitted with video cameras. It is heavily monitored by uniformed and plain-clothes police officers.



The Tian'anmen Square in Beijing

#### Events [edit]

Tiananmen Square has been the site of a number of political events and student protests.

Perhaps the most notable events are protests during the May Fourth Movement in 1919, the proclamation of the People's Republic of China by Mao Zedong on October 1, 1949, the Tiananmen Square protests in 1976 after the death of Zhou Enlai, and the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, which resulted in military suppression and the deaths of hundreds, if not thousands, of civilian protestors.<sup>[7]</sup> One of the most famous images that appears during these protests was when a man stood in front of a line of moving tanks and refused to move, which was captured on Chang'an Avenue near the square.

Other notable events include annual mass military displays on each anniversary of the 1949 proclamation until 1October 1959; the 1984 military parade for the 35th anniversary of the People's Republic of China which

coincided with the ascendancy of Deng Xiaoping; military displays and parades on the 50th anniversary of the People's Republic of China in 1999; the Tiananmen Square self-immolation incident in 2001; military displays and parades on the 60th anniversary of the People's Republic of China in 2009, and an incident in 2013 involving a vehicle that plowed into pedestrians

#### Access [edit]

The square, located in the center of the city, is readily accessible by public transport. Line 1 of the Beijing Subway has stops at Tiananmen West and Tiananmen East, respectively, to the northwest and northeast of the square on Chang'an Avenue. Line 2's Qianmen Station is directly south of the square.

City bus routes 1, 5, 10, 22, 52, 59, 82, 90, 99, 120, 126, 203, 205, 210 and 728 stop north of the Square. Buses 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 17, 20, 22, 44, 48, 53, 54, 59, 66, 67, 72, 82, 110, 120, 126, 301, 337, 608, 673, 726, 729, 901, 90,  $\square$ 2,  $\square$ 4 and  $\square$ 7 stop to the south of the Square.



Security cameras at Tiananmen Square

The square is normally open to the public, but remains under heavy security.

Before entry, visitors and their belongings are searched, a common practice at many Chinese tourist sites, although the square is somewhat unique in that domestic visitors often have their identification documents checked and the purpose of their visit questioned. Both plain-clothes and uniformed police officers patrol the area. There are numerous fire extinguishers placed in the area to put out flames should a protester attempts self-immolation.

## Gallery [edit]



Tiananmen gate to the north of Tiananmen Square



National Museum of China on the east side of the Square



The Great Hall of the People on the west side of the Square



Zhengyangmen Gate Tower marking the south end of Tiananmen Square



Monument to the People's Heroes and the Mausoleum of Mao Zedong occupy the center of the Square



Monument to the People's Heroes



Mausoleum of Mao Zedong



Monument in front of Mao's Mausoleum on Tiananmen Square



Iconic image of the Tiananmen Square from the May Fourth movement of 1919



Students attending the founding ceremony of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949.



A temporary monument in Tiananmen Square marking the 90th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party in 2011



National mourning on May 19, 2008 for the victims of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake



Students gather for a demonstration in Tiananmen Square, ca. 1917-1919.

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# External links [edit]





**National** 

Tiananmen Square

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