June 4 Around the World: A Letter from Lima and a Hong Kong Perspective

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In this third offering in our series, we limit ourselves to one short post, from a Friend of the Blog who recently moved from Shanghai to Peru, and a brief description of and link to what one of China Beat’s longtime contributors, Angilee Shah, has been up to lately: a podcast series on “Global Lives,” the most recent of which offers a perspective on Tiananmen from the former Crown Colony turned PRC SAR. For additional reading on June 4 from a perspective that takes you into a different part of the world, check out this piece on France’s special connection to the Tiananmen protesters back in 1989 (when the country was celebrating the 200th anniversary of its Revolution). Anyone intrigued to learn more about the long history of Chinese migration to Lima, alluded to in the post, should turn to Adam McKeown’s important book comparing and contrasting the histories of Chinese communities in Hawaii, Chicago, and Peru. And for some stunning images of and a report about the large rallies commemorating June 4th held in Hong Kong last week, go here.

Tom Pellman, Lima
Peru’s leading newspaper El Comercio printed a brief dispatch from its Beijing correspondent Patricia Castro describing this year’s measures by Beijing to pre-empt protests on Tiananmen. Castro’s piece mentions the government’s banning this year of then-student leader Wu’er Kaixi (exiled to Taiwan after 1989) from re-entering the mainland ahead of the anniversary. Other dissidents and activists in Beijing were also forced to leave the capital, the newspaper reports.

Aside from minor coverage in El Comercio, Peru.com, from Peru’s blogosphere, adds a report on Beijing’s efforts to censor popular websites like hotmail and twitter in addition to controlling the capital’s main square. Interestingly, in a city with more than one hundred years of Chinese immigration and tens of thousands of Chinese immigrants living in Lima, there has been less attention paid to the Tiananmen anniversary than might be expected.

Angilee Shah (introducing her latest podcast, taken from her blog):
It’s June 4th today. 20 years ago, in Tiananmen Square in Beijing a huge protest movement was violently suppressed. The numbers are disputed, but hundreds, if not thousands were killed in clashes with the military…the event had a big impact on Anka Lee. He was just a kid then, but he remembers the day well. He was born in Hong Kong and was nine years old that summer in 1989. He talks about his memories and the city where he was born in this episode of Global Lives.

Tom Pellman is a freelance writer and former journalist for China Economic Review. He currently follows China-Latin America affairs at DoubleHandshake.com.

Angilee Shah is a freelance writer and past contributor to China Beat.
Tags: Tiananmen