

# Memorial program celebrates nonviolence, Gandhi's birthday

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The annual International Day of Nonviolence and birthday celebration of Mohandas Gandhi, pioneer of the strategy of nonviolent civil disobedience and leader of Indian independence, will be held at 5 p.m. Wednesday at the Gandhi statue at Kapiolani Park, adjacent to the Honolulu Zoo entrance.

The memorial day was established in 2007 by the United Nations and is organized locally by Raj Kumar, founder and president of the Gandhi International Institute for Peace.

Gandhi, who led his country to independence after centuries of British rule, is considered the "father of the nation" in India, where his Oct. 2 birthday is a national holiday. Though he was assassinated in 1948, Gandhi's method of peaceful protest inspired later movements for civil rights and freedom around the world, according to a news release.

"In 2011 our Hawaii event was graced by the presence of Mahatma Gandhi's grand-



**Lyla Berg:**  
*The former state representative will be the keynote speaker*

son, Arun Gandhi, who continues in his revered grandfather's footsteps as an advocate for world peace," Kumar said.

Former state Rep. Lyla Berg will be the keynote speaker at the event, to be attended by interfaith leaders in the community. The Royal Hawaiian Band will perform the anthems of Hawaii, India and the U.S., in addition to "Let There Be Peace on Earth."

Entertainment will include hula, taiko drumming by students of the Pacific Buddhist Academy, and

dancing by Willow Chang Alleon and Valerie Payton and their ensembles. Activities include healing through crystal bowls, flute playing and Vipassana meditation.

The program will be broadcast at 5 p.m. on Channel 49 on "Pathways to Paradise" and Web-streamed live at [www.olelo.org](http://www.olelo.org) (click on the FOCUS live button).

According to a statement by Kumar: "Presently, the world is suffering from a climate change, global recession, global terrorism and the civil unrest in Syria, where ... innocent civilians were killed recently by the chemical weapons. This was a heinous crime against humanity.

"It is time to bring Gandhi's teachings back to the modern world and remind each other that we are brothers and sisters and we all have a purpose. ... One of the main goals of human life is to help others and not hurt or destroy others. We cannot talk about peace when we disrespect or bully others, use passive violence in our neighborhood, at work, school or in the community."