

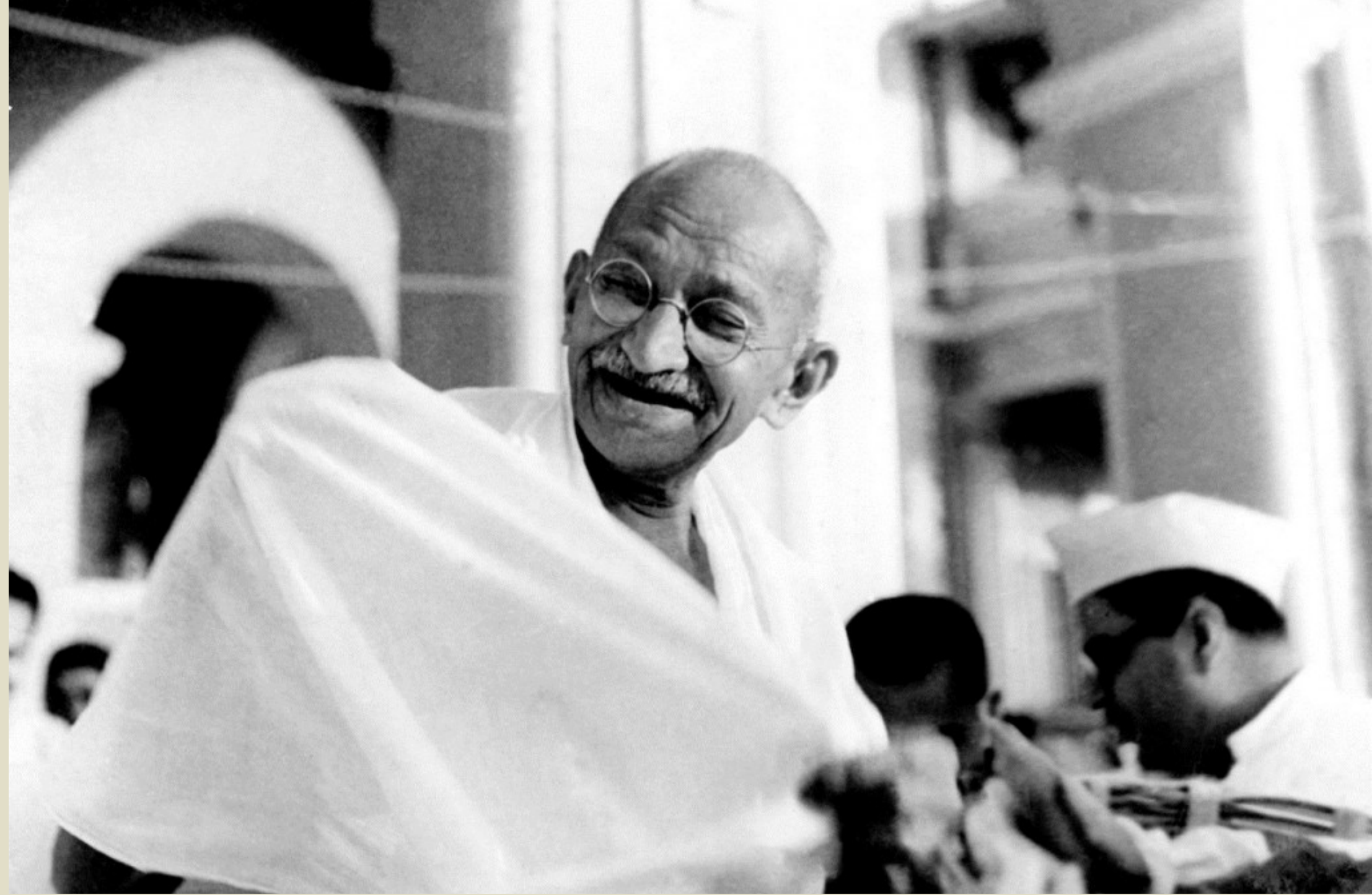
Community Voice

# Celebrate A Day Of Nonviolence On Wednesday

The Gandhi International Institute for Peace calls for world peace in troubled times.

By Raj Kumar

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### About the Author



#### Raj Kumar

Dr. Raj Kumar practices Hinduism, and serves as advisory board members in Interfaith Alliance of Hawaii and All Believers Network. He is the author of numerous books. He is also the founder and President of the Gandhi International Institute for Peace.



The Gandhi International Institute of Peace, which was founded on Sept. 11, 2001, seeks to raise awareness about nonviolence in Hawaii. One of the major goals of this Peace Institute is to promote world peace.

Peace is not the absence of war. Peace is an internal experience; without inner peace there is no peace in the external world. When we cultivate peace within ourselves, within families and society, it becomes the first step toward a wider embrace of nonviolence in the world.

Gandhi practiced and preached nonviolence (*Ahimsa*) to his followers. He led a nonviolent movement known as *Satyagraha* (insistence on truth) through vast civil disobedience and he succeeded in removing the British Empire from India in August 1947.

Since 2006, [Gandhi International Institute of Peace](#) has organized an annual peace event, building bridges with various organizations and churches to support and encourage youth to practice nonviolence in Hawaii.

In 2007, the United Nations designated Oct. 2 — Gandhi’s birthdate — as Day of Nonviolence.

A beautiful statue of Mahatma Gandhi is located under a banyan tree near the entrance of Honolulu Zoo in Waikiki. Gandhi’s statue is a symbol of peace, nonviolence, equality, justice and freedom. It reminds us that peace is possible even in the midst of turmoil.



The Gandhi statue in Waikiki is near the Honolulu Zoo. (Flickr.com)

Over the years, there have been several significant developments regarding the Mahatma Gandhi Day celebration in Hawaii.

In April 2013, Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, visited Hawaii and shared teachings of Gandhi with teachers, students, political leaders, social leaders and interfaith leaders.

The following year, a bill was introduced by former Sens. Suzanne Chun-Oakland and Brian Taniguchi in the Hawaii Legislature. Senate Bill 332 was passed unanimously by the Senate and House, and signed into law as Act 5 by Gov. David Ige on April 9, 2015, which made Hawaii the first state to proclaim Oct. 2 as “Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi Day.”

GIIP has participated in various peace events organized by Honpa Hongwanji Mission, Pacific Justice and Reconciliation Center, the Interfaith Alliances of Hawaii, Spark Matsunaga Peace Institute and Conflict Resolution at UH, Iolani School, Families of Peace and most recently, Buddha Peace Festival.

The GIIP will celebrate its 19th annual event to commemorate what will be the 155th birthday of Mahatma Gandhi on Wednesday from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. outside of Honolulu Zoo in Waikiki.

The event is free to the public. The event will include a Hawaiian blessing, an Indian spiritual invocation and speeches by prominent community leaders about world peace. There will also be cultural dances and peace music by the Royal Hawaiian Band.

Mahatma Gandhi said, “Nonviolence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of our being.”

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