

## LOKMANYA TILAK'S VISIONARY THOUGHTS TOWARDS NATIONALISM AND NATION BUILDING

Dr. Deepak Tilak

*Vice-Chancellor , Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth , Pune*

Dr. Geetali Tilak

*Pro Vice-Chancellor , Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth , Pune*

### **Abstract**

*The researcher has investigated Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar's thought about nationalism and strong and modern India. Tilak being a visionary, studied every minute details about nationalism. He tried to find ancient foundation of nationalism, in the history of India and planned a pathway for Indian Liberation Movement. He found out a way to unite India and gathered people together, educated them with India's problems, created self realization and spirit of nationalism and guided and led them to action. In December 1917, Lokmanya Tilak roared, "Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it". His words represented and supported by the whole Nation.*

*The Researcher has reviewed the congress agenda prepared by Lokmanya Tilak in 1919. The agenda itself speaks about Federal Democratic India and its pathway towards progress of the Nation. The research found out various problems in Nation Building.*

**Keywords:** *Lokmanya Tilak, Nationalism, Nation Building, India, Modern India, Democracy, Visionary.*

### **Introduction:**

There are certain factors which create nation. They can be geographical boundaries, language, religion, history of one kingdom, one culture, etc. But two main factors required to build a nation are the Spirit of Nationalism and Common Interest or common will where all the citizens can prosper along with the nation.

India was never been one country. It was ruled by various kings. Even if some emperors conquered other Kingdom, they never ruled it. The loser used to pay the tax and accept the superiority. Even in the Mahabharat, Maharaja Pandu's kingdom was superior but the other kingdom existed. In India, we find various religions, languages, cultures, scripts, casts, kingdoms, arts, music, etc. In short, there is a lot of diversity. British Emperor brought India under one rule, one law, one official language, one administration, one currency, one education, one taxation, etc. The Britishers treated all the citizens in India equally, even though, they were divided in various factors mentioned above. The Britishers, by using their power, brought the divided India together. But on the other hand, as per the colonial policy, they levied army and other expenses through heavy taxation from on Indian citizens, exported raw material to England and imported the furnished goods to India. All these policies transferred Indian wealth to England. All the cottage industries were ruined.

In short, on one hand, various kingdoms in India were brought together in spite of diversity and on the other hand all the citizens of India were pushed to poverty. This created the common urge to conquer poverty which became the common cause for creating a nation or will to be a nation.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Freedom or Swaraj was a nightmare.

Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the great Patriot, Speaker of Swarajya and Nationalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century thought about India as an independent nation. He found a few lacunas in the formation of nation like diversity of religion, language, lack of nationalism and self realization and lack of awareness of common interest to be a nation.

Lokmanya Tilak, through Kesari and Mahratha News papers, created awareness among common man, brought them together, educated them and prepared them for action. Lokmanya Tilak was the Visionary Leader. While planning the Freedom Movement on solid footings of free democratic nation. He introduced fourfold program, i.e. swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott and National education.

This research is confined to find out main foundation structure planned by Lokmanya Tilak which guided India to be a secular democratic independent nation.

### **Statement of the problem:**

“A Study of foundation plan designed by the Visionary Lokmanya Bal gangadhar Tilak to build India as an independent, democratic and modern Nation”.

### **Objectives:**

1. To understand Lokmanya Tilak’s thoughts on various basic issues regarding nationalism and nation building.
2. To study the policy agenda prepared for Congress Party by Lokmanya Tilak in the year 1919.

### **Methods used in the present research:**

To understand Lokmanya Tilak’s views about Nationalism and Independent India. Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak is known as an Architect, Visionary and Spokesman of Nationalism in India. If we go through the history of India, India was never ruled by one king before the British rule. India was full of diversity. There were various kingdoms, religions, languages, regions, scripts, etc. There was no such reason or cause like back history, one language-one religion, and limitation of the boundary, which could create the nationalism within its citizens. (Dr.Deepak J.Tilak, 2019) The Researcher has studied various literatures available on Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Similarly the Researcher studied various articles and short notes written by Tilak in his newspapers Kesari and Marhatta. All the writings of Lokmanya Tilak are available in “Samagra Tilak”. Many researchers have analysed Tilak’s views from various angles like Nationalism, Swaraj, Political, Cultural, Social and Economical point of view.

The present research mainly focuses on the draft prepared by Lokmanya Tilak in the year 1919 for Congress Party which helped the Congress to decide their policy after death of Lokmanya Tilak. Though this is a Congress agenda, one can find the visionary thought of Lokmanya Tilak for independent, united, federal, democratic, secular nation.

### **Need and importance of research :**

The Researcher has studied a large number of books published on Lokmanya B.G.Tilak , along with articles on Lokmanya Tilak and has found that very less importance is given by the Researchers to the said policy agenda prepared by Lokmanya Tilak. The research will help to understand his visionary views about the solid foundation of our nation.

1. To understand our federal structure.
2. To understand self reliant economy.

3. To understand secular policy
4. To understand diversity to unity.
5. To understand education policy and progress.
6. Development of agriculture
7. Gender equality.
8. Import Export Policy
9. Reorganization of old Gram sabha administration.

### **Our Findings:**

The Researcher has collected various references and has verified its authenticity. The Researcher has edited and found the following from Lokmanya Tilak's thoughts about our nation.

- A) Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak is held in high esteem as a Visionary of Nationalism and the Architect of Modern India. Tilak studied minute details of diversity in the nation. After 1857 War of Independence, East India Company erased the self respect, self confidence in the people. The citizens were divided in various groups and struggled due to exploitation, poverty, famine, epidemics and illiteracy.

Tilak while planning freedom struggle, firstly found it necessary to bring the people together, educate them and create spirit of nationalism amongst them.

According to Tilak, "It is the spirit of nationality that makes the whole nation one". – Ref. Tilak Sukti Sangraha published by Kesari Maharatta Trust 1926.

Through Ganesh Festival and Shivjayanti Tilak brought all the people together. According to Tilak, festivals like Shivjayanti serves as a manure to the seeds of enthusiasm and spirit of nationality. These festivals prove and incentive to the legitimate ambition of the people with a great historic past. "They serve to impart courage as an appreciation of heroes securing their salvation against odds can give. There can not be a Nation without spirit of Nationalism" – Lokmanya B.G.Tilak.

Lokmanya Tilak created a will and spirit of nationalism and Swaraj amongst people in India. He drew a roadmap for the progress of the nation. Tilak's fourfold program is Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education which helped the movement to march towards modern democratic strong independent India. Tilak in his life, discussed various subjects like national education, national economics, farming, indigenous industry, democracy, taxation, adoption of modern techniques, rich heritage, law, import-export, mother tongue, etc. for the progress of nation. Because of the economic exploitation, poverty, famine, epidemics and illiteracy all the people in India wanted their progress. After bringing the masses together Lokmanya Tilak educated them and created an urge to be a Nation for common demand or interest for progress.

- B) In 1919, Lokmanya Tilak prepared the National agenda for Congress Party which gave the detailed policy plan for independent India.

All India Agenda:

1. Roulate Act, Arms Act, Press Act should be abolished. These acts are against the birthrights. In criminal and political court cases, Jury with Indian origin should be appointed. Political prisoner should be treated separately. Arm Act, Press Act were against human birth right to defend or express. The Britishers treated political prisoners as criminals. Political agitations, lectures, writings are not criminal acts. So Tilak asked for a separate law and treatment.

2. Farmers and Labourers should get justified payments. Minimum wages should be fixed. Separate labour laws should be passed to bring harmony between the industry and the labour. There was no Minimum Wage Act. The land-owners or Industrialists used to exploit the labour. On 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1919, Tilak re-presented the “Hind Mazur Sangh” before British Commission and demanded three basic provisions :
  - 8 hr. working
  - Weekly paid holiday.
  - Paid leaves on local festivals.
3. In order to control prices of eatables, the tax policy should be launched on import and export. Tilak, throughout his life criticized British taxation policy which supported imports and restricted production of indigenous goods, for the progress of the nation.
4. The Government should plan a policy to support indigenous industry. Tilak wanted taxation policy to support progress of the nation.
5. Indian railway should be nationalized. There should be uniformity in the charges. Railway in India, was planned to support Army movement and to carry raw material to England. The rates of railways for the Britishers and for the Indians were different. Tilak wanted rationalization.
6. Expenses on army should be minimized. There should be rationalized in taxation policy.
7. Indian Army should work under the India Government. The Army should be divided in three groups like : Army, Naval and Air and should get trained accordingly. All the officer posts should be filled in with Indian citizens without considering their castes and religion. In the Indian Army, all the supervisory and administrative officers were British with the heavy salary. Tilak wanted Indian people to be appointed as this can restrict transfer of wealth outside the country and Army expenses could be reduced.
8. There should be open examinations for administrative posts in bureaucracy. Tilak wanted that a fair chance should be given to all the Indians in the process of administration employment.
9. In order to create unity in India, there should be one official Indian language. The Britishers forced English as an official language. Such a foreign language affects Indian culture and society. So he demanded that there should be one official Indian language.
10. States or Provinces boarder should be fixed considering language. As mentioned earlier, India has many languages. Language helps citizens in particular region to communicate with each other and to exchange thoughts. Language also helps to develop cultural and social ties. That is why Lokmanya Tilak wanted to divide administrative regions, considering language.

**Provincial (State) Agenda:**

1. Provincial liberty should be implemented as soon as possible. Tilak wanted unity in diversity. The provincial requirements were different for everyone. If the States get liberty to decide their policy for progress, all the parts of India, can make their own progress.
2. Agriculture taxed should be decided as per quality of land. There cannot be uniform policy for agricultural taxation. It should vary as per fertility, irrigation, etc.
3. Administration of reserved and protected forests should be handed over to the local Government. Local citizens partially depend on forests. Adivasi’s livelihood depends on the forests. So the management of forests should rest with the local self governments.

4. Vethbigari in agriculture labour should be stopped. There is a tradition of compulsory agriculture labour, vethbigari which extracts their right to progress. Tilak opposed this tradition.
5. Every province should try to impart the education as far as possible in their mother tongue. Every person can easily learn in his mother tongue. In order to increase literacy, Tilak strongly supported school education in mother tongue which can help them to support the culture and tradition.
6. All the boys and girls should get free and compulsory education for which Municipal Corporation and Local Govt. bodies should be allotted additional funds. Literacy rate in India was very low during 20<sup>th</sup> Century. People were unaware of their progress. Not only Tilak but all the national leaders wanted to increase literacy. Tilak suggested free and compulsory education.
7. The Local Govt. system should be re-established and should be given the authority of justice and administration. Traditionally India has local or Gram Governance system which helped citizens to solve their problems at local level itself. After British Government such system was stopped. Tilak demanded to regenerate the system. Mahatma Gandhi developed the same idea further and recently during Rajiv Gandhi's period, the Central Govt. passed an Act regarding Local Self Government.
8. Liquor should be banned which make the poor, poorer and unhealthy.
9. There should not be gender discrimination and the people should be educated to vote. Even today, we discuss gender discrimination. Tilak in the beginning of nineteenth Century asked the Congress to adopt gender sensitization in agenda and supported women to take part in democracy.
10. There should be a separate Health Minister who should look after health of all the citizens. Health amenities, awareness were the major issues in India. Tilak demanded special attention to it.
11. Various schemes and policies should be drafted and implemented for agriculture techniques, canals, co-operative movement, indigenous industry, mechanized technology, education, health, hospitals, health education, etc. Lokmanya Tilak forecasted strong and modern India. He wanted to blend traditional and modern sciences. He wanted to incorporate modern technology in all the fields for the development of the nation. Lokmanya Tilak's visionary thoughts helped India to transform as a developing country.

The Researcher has found that all these policies drafted by Lokmanya Tilak are architectural plan for the independent modern nation.

### **Conclusion:**

This research has helped to understand the Lokmanya Tilak's thought process about foundation of our Nation. Tilak, as a Visionary, planned a roadmap for development of modern India. The Researcher has achieved its objectives.

The findings support the statement, i.e. to understand the foundation plan of Visionary Lokmanya B.G. Tilak to build India as independent nation.

1. To understand various basic issues regarding nationalism and nation building.
2. To study the policy agenda prepared by Lokmanya Tilak for the Congress Party in 1919.

### **Recommendation for future research:**

1. Study of national education policy.
2. Study of boycott in comparison of indigenous industrial development.
3. Need of Nishkam Karmayog in current scenario.

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