

## Congress And Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak

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### Abstract

British civil servant Allan Octavian Hume established the Indian National Congress party in 1885. His fundamental aim was to bring educated people together with the help of common platform to influence policymaking. Banaras Congress created the split between national congress into two groups. At the time of Calcutta Congress, Tilak elaborated the concept of "passive resistance". Surat Congress was considered as the turning point in Tilak's life and other players involved in the freedom movement.

### Keywords

Congress party, Indian National Congress, Lokmanya Tilak, Surat Congress, Banaras Congress, Moderates

### Introduction

We observed that, National congress was the cause behind the spread of the Swadeshi movement across India. Lokmanya Tilak was a person who wanted the countrymen to work selflessly, diligently by upholding national interest. He identified the fundamental necessities and refused the Congress presidency and made his will to visit England to collect support for his struggle at home. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 92.

Here, while performing the study, we observed that during 1916, Tilak reunited the congress. Also, we obtained more information about Tilak and congress, we observed that he was a person who always motivated the people. Apart from this, Lokmanya drafted a manifesto for the Congress and it was considered as the reflection of his idea for a free India. Also, it was considered as the political will of Lokmanya Tilak. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 92. We observed that the Congress was given a tool for struggle and opposition. Also, it has given the new ways to the future generation.

### Objectives

- i. To understand the aim of Lokmanya Tilak behind the establishment of Congress
- ii. To understand the concept of Lokmanya Tilak for the formation of The Banaras Congress
- iii. To understand the motto of Lokmanya Tilak behind the formation of the Calcutta Congress
- iv. To understand Lokmanya Tilak's contribution in the Surat Congress

### BACKGROUND OF CONGRESS AND LOKMANYA BAL GANGADHAR TILAK:

Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was honest and had a prejudiced approach towards injustice. Lokmanya Tilak was in close alliance with Indian National Congress and its leaders. He was the most-eminent revolutionary of the time. We observed that, in 1905 to 1907, during the Swadeshi movement the congress was split into the Moderates and the Extremists.

At the time of partition of Bengal, Tilak encouraged the Swadeshi and boycott movement. Along with Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal formed the triumvirate and were named as Lal Bal Pal. Three of them tried to change the political discourse of the Indian independence movement. Here the researcher has observed that after the Surat's annual session of the Congress party, Lokmanya Tilak earned the new fame as one of the most prominent Indian nationalists.

In the present study, the researcher has observed that, in Calcutta congress, Tilak wanted to form a genuine federal system for free India. According to Lokmanya Tilak, only genuine system has capability to safeguard India's freedom. After joining the Indian National Congress, Lokmanya Tilak started vocalizing his resistance to the conservative prospects of the party on self-rule. Along with this, we found that Tilak maintained to stand against the prominent Congress leader.

Through the present research, the researcher has observed and studied various incidences of Lokmanya Tilak's life that happened during the time of pre-independence. As proof, the researcher has collected different information about the life of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Also, we performed this study to understand the Lokmanya Tilak and National Congress party.

### **Method Used In The Present Research**

We made this study to achieve clear keen-sightedness on the different activities by the National Congress during the pre-independence. To fulfill the purpose, the researcher has studied diverse literature available on Lokmanya Tilak and National Congress. Also, we have collected detailed information from books, papers, and other online platforms. We have used obtained data for the understanding of work done by the Lokmanya Tilak, revolutionaries, and moderates for the cause of the nation.

### **Need And Importance Of Research**

The researcher has made this study to understand the work done by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Indian National Congress party to the cause of the nation. Here, the researcher has studied and analysed a lot of literature. To obtain the detailed understanding of the congress and Tilak, we have referred information from historical writings, books, and research papers.

Also, we made this study to understand the impact of various congress gathering on the common man and Lokmanya Tilak. Apart from the literature, we have followed the survey method of data collection. Here, we made interactive sessions with people who have a deep understanding of Congress and Lokmanya Tilak. For this purpose, the researcher has selected the individuals from Tilak's family.

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### **Implementation Of Research Methodology**

For the research purpose, the researcher has referred to primary and secondary data collection methods. Also, the researcher has collected the information that was available in published and unpublished form. Also, we have obtained thorough guidance from the research guide. All the data obtained from either online or offline sources were pre-tested by using specific parameters and analytical methods.

To make the proper understanding of Lokmanya Tilak's work for Congress, we have selected the survey method. It was one of the useful ways of data collection and has helped the researcher in obtaining defined and precise data. We maintained the scope of the study short. Data was collected from the chosen candidates.

### **Our Findings**

Here we have obtained in detail knowledge and understanding about national congress and Lokmanya Tilak. We have processed the information further for the research purpose. All the collected data were edited, organized, and interpreted. We have gained an understanding of various facts as below.

### **Formation of National Congress**

The Indian National Congress party was established on December 28, 1885. It was founded under the leadership of British civil servant Allan Octavian Hume. This party was not formed to obtain freedom from British rule. But it aimed to bring a group of educated people together on a common platform to influence policymaking. Inamdar N. R., "Political Thought and Leadership of Lokmanya Tilak", 119. Also, the congress party was composed of and led by the educated, well-to-do people and constitutional methods. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 127.

When Lord Curzon declared the Bengal partition, and it was without giving any prior announcement. The separation was done under the religious lines under the guise of "administrative convenience". We found that the total incidence was described as "the crowning folly of Lord Curzon" by The Statesman. The Statesman was an English newspaper from Calcutta. Based on this scenario, the annual national Congresses between 1905 and 1908 took place. It caused very significant changes in Congress and the future actions of the people. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 131.

### **Lokmanya Tilak The Banaras Congress**

We found that The Banaras Congress was an essential stage in the political carrier of the Tilak. The Lord Curzon's act of partitioning Bengal was so ghastly, and the entire nation was united together against it. Tilak took this event as an opportunity to galvanize the people behind one unified cause. On August 15, 1905, Tilak wrote an article as "The crisis arrives," and it was published in 'Kesari'. Bengal Partition was the first scathing indictment of the malicious actions of the British, and it forced the people to act and act now. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 127.

Lokmanya Tilak attended the Banaras Congress conference along with his followers. He came there to convince the Congress to give up passing ineffective resolutions and become more militant in its approach. He was backed by popular support for his programme. We found that everyone was gathered for the conference was looking forward to Tilak's arrival. While performing this study, we found that on this occasion, Tilak delivered a slogan as, "Militancy, not mendicancy." Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 127.

G. K. Gokhale was the president of the Banaras Congress, and he sensed the condition. He understood the fact that the Indian people needed to determine how their provinces should be ruled. Furthermore, his presidential address went down well with the delegates and Tilak. Gokhale and the moderates fought shy when Lokmanya Tilak wanted to pass a firm decision in support of the anti-partition agitation. Again, when Tilak wanted to decide and discuss the boycott, Swadeshi, and national education, he faced differences. In the end, Lokmanya Tilak affected a compromise, and the language of the resolution was made mild without negotiating the goals and principles that the nationalists stood for. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 127.

This is how the Banaras Congress brought out the differences between the younger delegates and the older leadership. The representatives from Bengal and Madras wanted action and not mere words. By taking this as an opportunity, Tilak put forward his concept of passive resistance. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 127.

### **Lokmanya Tilak and The Calcutta Congress**

Further, we found that, in the intervening period of Calcutta Congress, Tilak's popularity was increased order day by day. Lokmanya Tilak consolidated the new movement to elaborate on the idea of "passive resistance". Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 128. He established himself as a national leader, and his name

went beyond Maharashtra. Based on the circumstances, it was clear that for the next Congress, Tilak would be put forward as the president.

Therefore, the moderates were quite alarmed, and they suggested 81-year old Dadabhai Naoroji as the candidature. They gave the reason that he would temper the enthusiasm and militancy of the younger faction. To the dismay of the moderates, Lokmanya Tilak immediately favoured the candidacy. On this occasion, Dadabhai Naoroji announced that Goal of the Congress should be Swarajya. Inamdar N. R., "Political Thought and Leadership of Lokmanya Tilak", 279. Further he declared that it was the only remedy for India's several ills. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 128.

While performing this study of The Calcutta Congress, we found that it was India's one of the most significant political gatherings of that time. Every pandal were filled by 1,800 delegates and 10,000 spectators every single day. Here, Tilak catered one lecture, and it became famous as "Tenets of a New Party". In his speech, he clearly discussed the differences between the Moderates and the Extremists. While performing this study, we found some of the observations made by Lokmanya Tilak.

Here the researcher has given one of the observations of the Tilak in which he stated that "We are not armed and there is no necessity for arms either we have a stronger weapon, a political weapon, in the boycott. What the New Party wants you to do is to realize that your future rests entirely in your hands." Further, he discussed and explained that "even if people did not have the power of active resistance, they could practice abstinence and self-denial." As a result of this, Lokmanya Tilak won over a vast majority of those present and with them, the people they represented. This is how Tilak established the 2nd era of Indian politics. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 128.

### **Lokmanya Tilak and The Surat Congress**

While performing the study of Lokmanya Tilak and National Congress, we found various interesting facts. We observed that the Surat Congress was the turning point for Lokmanya Tilak and some of the other players involved in the freedom movement. Here, we found one of the statements made by Lokmanya Tilak on the eve of the Surat session. While going through his speech, we observed that he does not want to split the Congress. His motto was to see the Congress that is moving with the times. Further, we found that he supported the movement of swadeshi and boycott, and for this, he made a sentence as, "Do not cowards, when you profess to be Swadeshi you must boycott foreign goods; without boycott, Swadeshi cannot be practiced." Inamdar N. R., "Political Thought and Leadership of Lokmanya Tilak", 289.

Initially, the event was planned to perform in Nagpur, which was the capital of the Central Provinces and Berar (CP&Berar). According to the custom, the president of Congress was selected from the region where the meet was being held. Lokmanya Tilak was to have been the president of the Congress. Several leaders sabotaged Nagpur Congress, and Gujarat took this opportunity to keep it at Surat.

Through the above incidence, it was a clear divergence of views among the moderates and the radicals in the Congress on the means to be adopted for attaining Swaraj. The revolutionaries wanted to use force and any possible method to cause a breakdown in the administration nationwide. But according to moderates, arousing the people using constitutional and legal way was more effective. Lokmanya Tilak thought that one could attain Swaraj by any means, but armed insurrection at this time was doomed to failure.

It was the time when the British government was looking for a chance to deal a blow to Congress. By observing the situation, Tilak felt that the revolutionaries should be convinced that this was not the right time and be brought back to the moderate path. With this background, there was an issue arises regarding the president of the Congress. Tilak wanted Lala Lajpat Rai to become the president as he had recently been released from prison and had high visibility. If he were to become president, a clear message would be sent to the British.

Lokmanya Tilak wanted to propose an amendment was utterly ignored and deprived of any opportunity to speak despite requests and reminders to the chair. He was the last person to accept injustice, walked on to the stage. As he reached, pandemonium broke out in the pandal; heated words were exchanged among the delegates as were blown with fists and sticks. Finally, the police had to intervene to restore law and order. During this situation, Tilak stood firmly on the stage along with his several supporters. All the proceedings of that day had to be adjourned.

Several people attempted to establish compromise and to keep the party intact. Shri Aurobindo Ghosh and his followers wanted to instigate the British into reprisals, and they wanted to use public outcry as a unifying force. Also, they planned to intensify the armed struggle to make it impossible for the British to administer the country. But Tilak knows that this plan of Aurobindo would not work as the British have well-trained and armed soldiers, and with the help of them, they would crush the armed struggle ruthlessly. Through all incidences, Tilak observed several ideological differences between the Moderates and the Nationalists. Those differences were unbridgeable, and hence, reluctantly, he parted ways with the Congress.

### **Press act and Lokmanya Tilak**

In July 1908, Lokmanya Tilak was sentenced to jail in Mandalay for six years. It was a time for congress to shrank in size. Meanwhile, the Press Act was passed by the government. The act was done to control the press and brought a few political reforms and crushed the revolutionary movement.

After release from Mandalay, Tilak planned several programmes. Here the researcher has provided the list of them for your reference. Dr. Tilak D.J., Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 129.

- 1) A compromise with Congress
- 2) Re-organisation of the National Party
- 3) Home Rule movement

We observed that the government tried to restrict Tilak's activities. Tilak officially re-entered into the congress in January 1916. Within one-year, Tilak succeeded in establishing complete control over the congress and changed the entire scenario at the national level.

### **Conclusion**

1. Tilak mooted the idea of passive resistance after the Banaras Congress
2. Four-fold programme was passed in the Calcutta Congress

### **Recommendations**

Here the researcher has concluded the paper with recommendations for future research.

1. Further research to be performed to understand the role of Allan Octavian Hume in National Congress.
2. Understanding the fundamentals behind Bengal partition and its impact on general public was the less discussed topic and opens the space for further study.
3. Further research to be made to understand the various malicious actions performed by British to suppress congress in India.
4. Obtaining clarification on less known facts about Dadabhai Naoroji and G.K.Gokhale creates the scope for further research.

## References

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