

# Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak's life in Prison

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## **ABSTRACT**

Here in the present study, the researcher has observed that Tilak lived a simple living by maintaining high thinking ability. He served the prison several times. But with the kind and good behaviour he earned early release for several times. Further, the researcher has obtained information regarding the conditions in prison. Based on an interview, the researcher has received a judgemental understanding about the various facilities given for the prisoner, whether the conditions were suitable for the prisoner or not. Also, I understood the minor things or events in imprisonment.

## **Keywords**

Imprisonment, Rand, British government, lifestyle, diet, Lokmanya Tilak, interview, interviewer

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Lokmanya Tilak preferred and lived an ordinary life inside and outside the prison. He always appeared in simple attire. We have obtained one of the popular statements made by Lokmanya Tilak for simple living. It was as "whatever you wear, whichever your language is, one should remember that inner soul or sentiments all the same". Ghose B.A., (1922), "Bal Gangadhar Tilak,

HIS WRITINGS AND SPEECHES”, Standard Press, Madras, 36.

While performing this study, we have tried to focus on various aspects of Tilak’s life as a prisoner. Here we obtained some of the elements of his personality. Lokmanya Tilak was a man known for his strength and confidence, but at the same time, his heart was gentle and kind. Dr. Tilak D.J. & Dr. Tilak G., (2019), “Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary”, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 23.

Further, we observed that Tilak used to eat whatever served to him. We obtained the statement made by Lokmanya Tilak regarding food habits. He says, “I eat to live.” Bhagwat A. K., & Pradhan G. P., (2011) “Lokmanya Tilak – Biography,” JAICO Publishing House, Mumbai. Based on this statement, we concluded that Lokmanya Tilak dedicated and devoted his time in performing things for the nation.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

To understand the Judgements of Tilak for prosecution

To understand the life of Tilak during Prison

To understand the condition of Prison

To understand the relation of Tilak with others while staying in prison

To understand Tilak's reaction for criticism

### **BACKGROUND OF KEY DISCUSSIONS WITH LOKMANYA BAL GANGADHAR TILAK:**

Based on the obtained data, the researcher has described that, in 1897, there occurred an epidemic of the bubonic plague in major cities of Maharashtra. At that time, this disease was new to India. There was no control measure in the form of medicine, so doctors were helpless to control it. The disease spread tremendously across the country, and many citizens died due to the bubonic plague. Further, based on the data published, it was clear that in Pune, at least one member from every family died due to this disease.

To control the spread of plague and crisis, the British government appointed Mr. Rand, an Army Officer. He was on special duty, but ruthlessly he adopted actions that were against humanity. Through Army troops, he performed cruel accomplishments like quarantine, disinfection, etc. At that time, whenever they were on patrol, these army troops behaved indiscriminately and in an inhumane manner. Further, while going through available data, the researcher has studied various incidences of the time. We found that there were incidents of destruction of places of worship in homes. Also, the researcher has obtained data on several cases of molestation of women. On June 22, Damodar and BalkrushnaChaphekar killed the British officers Rand and Ayerst.

During the same period, Lokmanya Tilak wrote against Mr. Rand's behaviour. Based on this article, the British government observed Lokmanya Tilak as a suspect. They performed police verification, but they could not find any clue for Tilak. So Tilak was prosecuted for his writings against the bureaucracy. He was sentenced for 18 months' imprisonment on charges of sedition.

#### **METHOD USED IN THE PRESENT RESEARCH:**

To understand the more insights on Lokmanya Tilak and his life in prison, the researcher has studied available literature. The researcher has obtained the information from books, papers, and other online platforms. Further, the researcher has taken the support of the research guide. All the data available in the form of published or unpublished form was collected for the study purpose. Also, the researcher performed a cross-verification of the obtained information by using the survey method. For the survey purpose, we have selected members and conducted interviews also.

#### **NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH:**

The scope of the present study was limited, and the entire research was descriptive and historical. For research purposes, we obtained data by using the primary and secondary data available on Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak's life in prison. Further, we have referred information from scientific journals, newspapers, books, magazines, and reports, etc. Based on the entire researcher, the researcher wanted to understand the information on the following points.

To understand the Judgements of Tilak for prosecution

To understand the life of Tilak during Prison

To understand the health and diet of Tilak during Prison

To understand the relation of Tilak with others while staying in prison

To understand Tilak's reaction for criticism

#### **IMPLEMENTATION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

Based on the primary and secondary data, we have completed the aim of the research. Also, we have taken the guidance of the research guide. Based on the obtained data from various sources, we have performed the testing and verification of the data. For data collection, the researcher has a preferred survey method. To obtain a proper understanding of Lokmanya Tilak's life during prison, the researcher has kept the scope limited. All the study was completed by using the survey method.

#### **OUR FINDINGS:**

For the study purpose, the researcher has selected Key Discussions with

Lokmanya Tilak as a topic of research. We have collected the information based on the interview taken after Tilak's release from imprisonment in 1898. "Sudharak" a newspaper printed that interview. Based on this case, the conversation was conducted with Lokmanya Tilak. To understand more information about Lokmanya Tilak, the interviewer has listed down multiple questions. Here we have performed an in-depth analysis of every question and answer. Through this interview, the interviewer has tried to shed light on Tilak's personality, his life during prison, and the facilities he received during jail.

### **Judgments of Tilak for Prosecution**

We observed that when the interviewer asked Lokmanya Tilak about his anticipation about the prosecution, then he wrote Tilak's opinion for the same. Dr. Tilak D.J. &Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 154. Lokmanya Tilak answered that the prosecution of someone was expected to Tilak. By considering the increased popularity of Tilak and the occasion of the murder of Mr. Rand, it was confirmed that the British government wanted to vent their anger on Tilak. As a result, they sent Lokmanya Tilak on trial for sedation. Tilak wrote an article during the 'Kesari' against the shameful performance of the government and Mr. Rand, and it was the reason behind this prosecution. His primary motto behind this act was to reveal the inept and callous way of controlling the situation. Also, Tilak wanted to make people aware of resentment against the administrator. Dr. Tilak D.J. &Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 73.

### **Lokmanya Tilak's Reaction for Criticism**

Here the researcher has obtained one question based on an interview the interviewer has asked Tilak that "The 'Times of India' has published that you came to Mumbai to prosecute them for their defamatory news regarding your criticism." The question was related to critics done by the newspaper and the British government on Tilak. Also, we obtained information about Tilak's answer to that question. After performing a thorough study and analysis of Tilak's interview, we observed that Tilak has answered in simple words. Tilak says, "It's true that I wanted to sue the 'Times'. But I went to Mumbai for various reasons. My visit to Mumbai was planned to print one book on the plague. I visited two printing units, also." Dr. Tilak D.J. &Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 154.

To understand and obtain clarification on Tilak's answer, the researcher has studied several other references. We observed that Lokmanya Tilak was a

reformer, but the Times of India wrongly reported Krida Bhavan's incident that happened on February 25, 1891. Regarding this issue, Tilak wanted to sue the 'Times,' and he had some of the other work, and hence he went to Mumbai.

#### Tasks Performed by Tilak During Prison

Here the researcher has performed thorough research about Lokmanya Tilak and his life in prison. For data collection, the researcher has used various data sources. Here at this point, we analyzed data to understand more about Lokmanya Tilak's life during prison. We have obtained data based on Tilak's interview printed in "Sudharak". The interviewer had asked various questions to Tilak. We have used Tilak's answers to those questions as the source of information.

We observed that the interviewer had asked Lokmanya Tilak that "What type of work did you do in prison?". Through this question, the interviewer wanted to understand Lokmanya Tilak's working in prison. As an answer to that question, Tilak made a statement and stated, "In Mumbai jail, I was assigned to prepare and process coconut shell for rope. Afterward, when I was transferred to Pune, I was assigned to paint the woollen thread. Last month, I was assigned to cut wool for carpets." Dr. Tilak D.J. & Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 155.

The researcher has studied Lokmanya Tilak's answer printed in an interview and concluded that Tilak was a person who kept himself busy in doing specific tasks. We observed that in prison, Tilak sited quiet and performed various tasks. Through this answer, the researcher has obtained knowledge that in prison, there are specific tasks allotted to the prisoner.

About the above answer given by Lokmanya Tilak, the researcher has observed another question in the interview. Here we found that the interviewer asked Tilak about methods used for wool painting in prison. Here we have given the question for your reference, and it was stated as, "Have you found some method for wool painting in the prison?". Tilak answered based on the real conditions such as, "It's wrong. I studied some books on wool painting and prepared notes. But I have not evolved any new method." Here in the present study, to attain the objectives of the study, the researcher has performed a detailed analysis of Tilak's answer. Further, it was concluded that During prison, Lokmanya Tilak had performed various tasks allotted to the prisoner, but he was not involved in the development of any kind of method.

#### Lokmanya Tilak and Facilities in Prison

For the present study, the researcher has followed the information available in various sources. Here to understand Lokmanya Tilak's life in prison, we have used the interview published in "Sudharak". For the interview purpose,

the interviewer had asked various questions to Tilak. Tilak gives all the answers we have used them as the source of information.

Here in the present research, the researcher has studied one of the questions to Tilak, and it was stated as, “Do you get some newspapers in prison?”. To answer this question, Lokmanya Tilak made a statement where he says, “Yes, I could get ‘Kesari’ and ‘Maharatta’ or some other newspapers, but they used to cut, i.e., censor, a significant part.” Dr. Tilak D.J. & Dr. Tilak G., (2019), “Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary”, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 155.

The researcher has analyzed Tilak’s answer and came to know that although Tilak was in prison, he gained information about the outside world using the newspaper. Tilak used to read ‘Kesari’ and ‘Maharatta’ in prison. But they remove the majority or censored part from the newspaper. Further to understand more about Lokmanya Tilak’s stay in prison, the researcher has gone through various data sources. Here the researcher has found another question that was related to staying in prison. The question was described as, “Is it hard to stay in prison?”. Through this question, it was observed that the interviewer wanted to understand more information about Tilak’s stay in prison. Tilak answered this question as, “One cannot speak, act, rest according to one’s own will, without permission of the Superintendent. There are observers who give wrong reports also. Then prisoners face hardships like being beaten by the hunter or being put in a dark room. They also cut marks for early release.”

We have performed a detailed analysis of Tilak’s answer and came to know that, at the time of Tilak’s prison, there was no provision to act according to one’s will. It was necessary to take permission from the superintendent before performing any act. If anyone works against the superintendent’s order, then the prisoner has to face hardships, and there were fewer chances of early release. Also, Tilak’s answer provides clarification about the strict rules in prison.

### **Atmosphere in prison**

For the present study, the researcher has followed various literature and obtained keen insights on Lokmanya Tilak’s life. For this purpose, the researcher has gone through the literature available on Tilak’s interview. As proof of this, we found one question asked by the interviewer to Tilak, as the question was, “What about cleanliness in prison?”. Through this question, the researcher has observed that the interviewer wanted to know about the atmosphere in prison. Tilak answered this question in words as, “Offices are clean. But prisoners do not get enough water for a bath. They get a chance to bathe

after 10 to 15 days. Prisoners can wash their clothes after three months. Prisoners get small piece of soap or 3 Ritha's in a week." Dr. Tilak D.J. &Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 156.

Based on the obtained data, we observed that Tilak believed in a clean environment, and according to him, such an environment supports physical and mental relaxation. Dr. Tilak D.J. &Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 14. So we have studied the above question asked by the interviewer and understood that no good hygienic conditions were maintained in prison.

Further, to understand more atmospheric conditions in jail, the researcher studied the more data available on Lokmanya Tilak. After studying data available in the form of Tilak's interview, we received some of the important knowledge about Tilak and his life as a prisoner. We obtained one of the questions asked by the interviewer to Tilak and was as, "What about ticks and mosquitoes?". Further, the researcher has studied the answer provided by Tilak. In his response Tilak says, "In Mumbai, the barracks are full of ticks and bed bugs. Everyone gets one or two-bed covers (ghodhadi). At night there is no light, so one cannot destroy the insects. So, everyone has to face the bites. During the plague in Mumbai, all the ghongadi's were washed in carbolic acid. That was the only incident of clearing the bed sheets. There is no cleanliness or hygienic atmosphere in jail." Dr. Tilak D.J. &Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 156. After studying both of the above questions, it was clear that there were hardly a few cleaning related incidences.

### **Tilak's Arrangement in Prison**

To obtain more information about Lokmanya Tilak's life, we have studied various resources and collected information regarding Tilak's life as a prisoner. To receive more information, the researcher has gone through one of the interviews. The interview was published in "Sudharak", a newspaper. Here, we observed the question asked by the interviewer to Tilak and was stated as, "Tell about your arrangement." Through this question, the interviewer might be wanted to understand Lokmanya Tilak's living arrangements in prison. To answer this question, Lokmanya Tilak made a statement as "I was kept in the other part of the jail. I was allowed to read books for three hours at night. I studied the 'Rugved' in the jail from which I think Aryans were originated somewhere near the North Pole, and they traveled towards the south. But I will have to study more before I reach a conclusion." Dr. Tilak D.J. &Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth,

Pune, 156. From this answer, the researcher had concluded that When Tilak was in prison, he preferred to spend time reading and studying the literature.

### **Tilak's Views on Imprisonment**

To understand the motive of the present research, the researcher has obtained data from various sources. Also referred to information available in the literature. While performing this study, the researcher has gone through one of Tilak's interview. We performed end to end analysis about Lokmanya Tilak's life during prison. Here the researcher has given questions asked by the interviewer to Tilak. It was stated as, "It is said that you had heated discussions with Mr. Newgent, which affected your imprisonment." After going through this question, we obtained the clear understanding that Tilak used to discuss things with his collaboratives or associates, even in prison.

In further studies, we came across the answer given by Tilak and was stated as "It is true that I met Mr. Newgent. I tried to avoid him. But he came searching for me. He asked about my health and period of imprisonment. I told him six to seven months more. But I may get some concession for good behaviour. He asked me if I felt ashamed doing a labourer's hard job. I told him; it is better than processing coconut shells. He saluted me and went away." Dr. Tilak D.J. & Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 155. We have analyzed the answer given by Tilak and come to know that Tilak was a great thinker. Also, we understood his behavior helped him in reducing early release from the prison. Also, Tilak earned respect from Mr. Newgent for great thoughts.

### **Lokmanya Tilak's Health Conditions and Diet in Prison**

While performing this study, the researcher has obtained various knowledge points about Lokmanya Tilak. Here we come to know that Tilak was conscious about his diet and health. But when he was sent to prison, several changes happened in his routine. Tilak become weak. Here to understand the reason behind Tilak's weakness and diet during imprisonment, the researcher has made this study. We obtained this information in one of the interviews conducted with Lokmanya Tilak.

Here we observed the question asked by the interviewer to Tilak and was stated as, "You have become weak." Further, we have obtained Tilak's answer to this question, where he says, "My weight was 135 pounds, and it has reduced to 112 pounds. But I will take rest and recover soon. I do not eat onion or garlic. So, the only food I could eat was bhakri with water. When I lost weight, the Superintendent allowed me one-pound milk and 2.5 gm. ghee." Dr. Tilak D.J. & Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak

Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 155.

To understand the meaning of Tilak's answer, the researcher has performed further studies. We observed that the British officers tortured Tilak in jail. Through this, we observed that Tilak did not have any special likings for food, and he used to eat whatever was served. In prison, Tilak got the food which was prepared by using onion- garlic, which Tilak could not eat. "Eat to live" was the famous statement of Tilak, and based on this, Tilak soaked his bhakri in water and ate it. He followed the same routine for several days and hence lost body weight.

### **Lokmanya Tilak and Chaphekar's relation in Prison**

Lokmanya Tilak was a person who had earned huge popularity with his speaking ability and leadership qualities. He maintained the same behaviour during prison also. During prison serval, people came to meet him and to take his advice. Here to understand Tilak's relation with Chaphekar, the researcher has studied the interview. We observed various questions asked by the interviewer to Tilak. Here we have taken one of the questions for your reference. It was stated as, "It is said that Chaphekar asked for "Gita" from you." Dr. Tilak D.J. &Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune,155. Tilak answered this question in smooth words, as, "Yes, the Superintendent asked me whether I could spare a copy of the Gita for Chaphekar from my library in the Superintendent's room. Afterward, I got my copy of "Gita" back. I met Chaphekar in jail. He was with me for three hours. I wrote one application for him. But it was in the presence of the jail officer." Dr. Tilak D.J. &Dr. Tilak G., (2019), "Lokmanya B. G. Tilak The Visionary", Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, 155. Through this answer, we observed that Tilak met Chaphekar for few hours and in the jail itself. Further, Tilak wrote an application for him in the presence of the jailer.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Here in the present research, the researcher has performed an analysis of Lokmanya Tilak's interview. The researcher made this study to appreciate the simplicity and exclusive features of Tilak's personality. Also, through this study, we obtained information regarding various conditions in prison. Through the present study, we observed that Tilak was a person who has excellent likeliness for a clean and hygiene environment. For this, we have referred to the interview and used literature available on past incidences on Tilak's life. Tilak was very particular about wearing clean and neat dresses. But during prison due to certain strict circumstances, Tilak failed to follow this habit. Life principles followed by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak in prison

Tilak's reaction to various critics done by opponents  
Lokmanya Tilak faced weakness in prison  
Tilak suffered a lot during imprisonment  
Lokmanya Tilak spent his time in performing various activities that were helpful for the growth of nation

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Further the researcher can perform the study on other articles published in Sudhakar about Lokmanya Tilak.

Role of Kesari and other newspapers in releasing Lokmanya Tilak from prison can be the topic of next research.

The research can be performed to compare prison facilities between western countries and India.

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