

UPSC & STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · [UJIYARI.COM](https://ujiyari.com)**DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS**

Bal Gangadhar Tilak: The Making of Lokmanya

23 July 2026

HISTORY & CULTURE**GS1**

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[in linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)**ALSO FROM THE CREATOR****BharatNotes**Free UPSC notes, MCQs, PYQ analysis. **100% Free.**bharatnotes.com →**ADVERTISE****Advertise with Ujiyari**

Reach thousands of UPSC aspirants daily.

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)

Bal Gangadhar Tilak: The Making of Lokmanya

23 July 2026 · 3 min read ·

✓ Every fact web-verified against primary sources

marks the birth anniversary of **Bal Gangadhar Tilak**, born in **1856**, the nationalist leader revered as **Lokmanya** (“accepted by the people”). His clarion call, “**Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it**,” became one of the defining slogans of India’s freedom struggle. The date is also the birth anniversary of the revolutionary **Chandrashekhar Azad** (born **1906**).

WHO WAS TILAK

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was a scholar, journalist, mathematician and one of the earliest architects of **mass nationalism** in India. At a time when the Indian National Congress was dominated by cautious petitioning, Tilak insisted that freedom was a **right to be claimed**, not a favour to be requested. This assertive stance earned him the title **Lokmanya** and made him the towering leader of western India’s national movement.

The Assertive Trio: Lal-Bal-Pal

Tilak formed part of the militant nationalist trio popularly called **Lal-Bal-Pal**:

- **Lal**: Lala Lajpat Rai (Punjab)
- **Bal**: Bal Gangadhar Tilak (Maharashtra)
- **Pal**: Bipin Chandra Pal (Bengal)

Together they championed **Swadeshi**, **boycott** and **self-rule**, especially during the anti-Partition of Bengal agitation, and gave the movement a pan-Indian, assertive voice.

TILAK’S INSTRUMENTS OF MOBILISATION

Tilak understood that a mass movement needed **mass communication and cultural symbols** to reach ordinary people.

INSTRUMENT	CONTRIBUTION
Kesari (Marathi)	Newspaper used to rouse national sentiment among the common people
Mahratta (English)	Newspaper aimed at educated and English-reading audiences
Ganesh Utsav	Turned a private festival into a public platform for political awakening
Shivaji Utsav	Invoked Maratha pride and heroism to inspire resistance
Gita Rahasya	His philosophical work interpreting the Bhagavad Gita as a call to action (Karma Yoga)

Through his newspapers **Kesari** and **Mahratta**, Tilak used the **press** as a weapon, for which he faced **sedition** trials and imprisonment. By popularising the **Ganesh Utsav** and **Shivaji Utsav**, he converted cultural and religious festivals into vehicles of **political mobilisation**.

The Moderate-Extremist Divide

The Congress split at the **Surat Session of 1907** into **Moderates** and **Extremists**. Tilak led the **Extremist (Garam Dal)** wing, which favoured assertive methods over the Moderates' constitutional petitioning. This ideological divide shaped the direction of the freedom struggle in the early twentieth century.

THE HOME RULE MOVEMENT (1916)

In **1916**, Tilak launched the **Home Rule Movement** to demand **self-government** within the British Empire, running his league in parallel with the one founded by **Annie Besant**. The movement:

- Built a network of local branches and spread political consciousness beyond the elite.
- Kept nationalist momentum alive during the First World War years.
- Prepared the ground for the wider mass movements that followed under Mahatma Gandhi.

Tilak famously combined this with the **Lucknow Pact (1916)**, which brought the Moderates and Extremists back together and forged Congress-Muslim League unity.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 1: The Indian freedom struggle; the moderate and extremist phases; role of the press and cultural symbols in mass mobilisation; important personalities of modern Indian history.

Prelims pointers:

- Tilak's slogan: "**Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it.**"
- Newspapers: **Kesari (Marathi)** and **Mahratta (English)**.

- Part of the **Lal-Bal-Pal** trio; leader of the **Extremist (Garam Dal)** wing after the **1907 Surat Split**.
- Launched the **Home Rule Movement (1916)** with **Annie Besant**; authored the **Gita Rahasya**.
- **July 23** is also the birth anniversary of revolutionary **Chandrashekhar Azad** (born 1906).

★ FACTS CORNER, KNOWLEDGE PEDIA

Lokmanya: Means “accepted or revered by the people.”

Ganesh Utsav and Shivaji Utsav: Popularised by Tilak in the 1890s as public festivals to build unity and political consciousness.

Surat Split (1907): Congress divided into Moderates and Extremists; reunited at the Lucknow Session (1916).

Home Rule Leagues (1916): Tilak’s league (Maharashtra, Karnataka, Central Provinces, Berar) and Annie Besant’s league (rest of India).

Gita Rahasya: Written by Tilak during imprisonment in Mandalay (Burma); interprets the Gita’s message as Karma Yoga, a philosophy of action.

Chandrashekhar Azad: Reorganised the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) into the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA); also born on July 23.

Sources: National Portal of India, NCERT Modern India, Press Information Bureau (PIB) commemorative notes, July 2026.

Source: Bal Gangadhar Tilak: The Making of Lokmanya — Ujiyari.com | Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

RELATED EDITORIALS

INDIAN EXPRESS

[Patriarchitecture: The Women Written Out of How India Builds](#)

14 Jul

THE HINDU

[Bringing the Gods Home: Antiquities, Treaties and Soft Power](#)

12 Jul

INDIAN EXPRESS

[A Temple the Jungle Swallowed: What Prambanan Teaches About Heritage](#)

11 Jul

THE HINDU

[The Taj and the Docket: When Litigation Besieges a Monument](#)

9 Jul

RELATED KEY TERMS

KEY TERM

[Bodh Gaya Temple Management Committee \(BTMC\)](#)

The eight-member statutory body created under the Bodh Gaya Temple...

KEY TERM

[Bombay Reorganisation Act, 1960](#)

The central legislation enacted under Article 3 that bifurcated the...

KEY TERM

[Classical Languages of India](#)

Six Indian languages designated 'Classical' by the Government of India...

KEY TERM

[Eighth Schedule](#)

The constitutional list of India's 22 officially recognised languages,...



CURATED & WRITTEN BY

Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[in linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)[Read Full Article on Ujiyari →](#)<https://ujiyari.com/daily/2026/07/23/bal-gangadhar-tilak-anniversary-2026/>

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

BharatNotes

Free UPSC study platform — subject-wise notes across all 4 GS papers, Prelims MCQs, Mains answer frameworks, PYQ analysis & progress tracking. **100% Free • No Login Required.**

[Start Preparing → bharatnotes.com](#)

📌 OPPORTUNITY

Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach **thousands of serious UPSC & State PCS aspirants** daily through our PDFs, website, and social channels.

Ideal for: Coaching institutes • EdTech platforms • Book publishers • Exam prep apps

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)

Write to us for rates & media kit

Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs · ujiyari.com · bharatnotes.com