

Everybody Must Have A Regular Income And It Ought To Be Equal To The Income Of A Government Employee

World Social Forum, Kathmandu, Nepal
15-19 February 2024



Lokavidya Jan Andolan
Vidya Ashram, Sarnath, Varanasi – 221007

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Booklet: Everybody Must Have A Regular Income and It Ought to be Equal to the Income of a Government Employee

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1. What is Lokavidya ?

1. Knowledge with the people in society is called **lokavidya**.
2. **Lokavidya** resides in society, outside colleges and universities.
3. Those who have not been to the university are not ignorant people. They earn their livelihood based on knowledge acquired in and from society. They are the **masters of lokavidya**.
4. Peasants, all kinds of artisans, adivasis, those who provide the services and do the repair work, the small pavement retailers, women, folk artists, all these people earn their livelihoods and govern their lives based on their own knowledge, lokavidya. All these people together constitute the **Lokavidya Samaj**.
5. People's way of thinking, manner of abstraction, methods of argumentation, social values, thoughts about and methods of organization, relations among themselves and with Nature, information they command, skills they possess and their darshan (philosophy), all put together constitute a world of knowledge, which may be called **lokavidyaloka (the world of lokavidya)**.
6. **Lokavidya resides in society**. It cannot be held in any book, caste, religion, library, university or computer. It stays alive only with the people who keep routinely refreshing and re-building it.
7. **Lokavidya is new everyday**. People constantly innovate by their own genius. They do it based on experimentation and experience. Their own needs and the needs of the society, often under compulsions arising from outside their controls, create the occasion for this.
8. **Lokavidya is the basis of people's strength**. It is on this basis that they not only earn their livelihood, but also distinguish truth from falsehood, resist oppression, develop new relations among themselves and with nature and through all this build a network of raw knowledge, values and sound arguments creating what may be called their world-view.
9. **Lokavidya does not separate mental and manual work** into two distinct compartments. All human activity is seen as taking place through a fusion of knowledge and labor.
10. **Elimination of the widespread social and economic inequality requires that lokavidya command as much respect in society as university knowledge does and also that it fetches incomes commensurable and equal to those earned based on university knowledge**.
11. **Lokavidya Jan Andolan is the knowledge movement of the Lokavidya Samaj**. Its goal is to achieve equal status for lokavidya and Lokavidya Samaj in the larger society.

2. Introduction

[The text below is written with the social-political-economic situation in India in mind. However, it is our belief that the logic of the text and arguments presented in support of the demands of equal knowledge status for lokavidya and for returns on lokavidya work is valid, just as the demands are, everywhere – particularly in countries in the “Global South”. It is also our conviction that future liberation struggles will need to squarely address the knowledge question.]

Who are the poor in society? Even a cursory look reveals that the poor households are those of peasants, artisans, adivasis and the small retailers on urban pavements or in the villages. The workers are of course poor. The family of the lowest paid government employee does not appear poor. Most of these people who are poor have not been to schools and colleges, but that does not mean that they have no knowledge. They possess lokavidya. The governments treat only those, who have had modern education, as knowledgeable, and make policies that ensure good regular incomes for them but impoverish lokavidya samaj households. This situation must change. **Governments must stop this discrimination and favoritism and must ensure that the lokavidya samaj too gets as much as do the government employees.** This is what we assert and argue for in this small booklet.

On the previous page we have laid down in a nutshell what we understand by lokavidya. If lokavidya samaj is to liberate itself from its present state of poverty and a total lack of initiative, it must stake the claim that lokavidya is genuine knowledge, inferior to none other. Lokavidya Jan Andolan does this. It is a movement to ensure for lokavidya the same knowledge status as is given to university knowledge. Sections 3, 4 and 5

argue for this. Section 6 details how different sections of lokavidya samaj can stake their claims of equality in the world of knowledge.

Farmers, artisans or other sections of lokavidya samaj, they all have their social organizations (panchayats). Small and distributed these panchayats and their leaders constantly resolve many problems of their communities. They bring new ideas to their people from the larger society, critically assess these new ideas together with them, and decide on what to accept and what not to accept. It is hoped that this booklet will help to dialogue with the chiefs, thinkers and leaders of struggles of lokavidya samaj, and to strengthen the claim for equality for lokavidya. Section 7 suggests how to make a beginning in this direction. We appeal to the leaders of lokavidya samaj to come forward and take initiative to start such dialogues within communities and between communities. We believe this knowledge movement belongs to them.

In the Section 8 entitled The New Ideologies of Change, there is discussion of the place of lokavidya in the global context of the emerging ideologies of change. Also given in the Section 9 is a chronological presentation of the development of the idea and work of lokavidya movement.

3. The Road to Wellbeing

If we desire the wellbeing of the people of this country then it is necessary that clear policies are formulated and implemented to ensure the following two conditions:

1. **Every adult man/woman has a stable regular income;**
2. **Lokavidya is not discriminated against the knowledge provided in colleges and universities.**

In this context the following may be paid attention.

- i A stable regular income which is commensurable and equal to the pay of a government employee, will ensure wellbeing for every household in all our villages, towns as well as in other urban settlements and the whole country will enjoy plenty and prosperity for all.
- ii Farmers know agriculture, artisans are masters of their crafts and arts, adivasis possess deep and intricate knowledge of forest and small shop-keepers are an expert managers of business done with small capital. But their knowledge is not recognized as 'knowledge'. The government policy recognizes the knowledge of the modern educated alone as knowledge and therefore, the basis for awarding a regular incomes. Are those who never went to school or college ignorant people? Do they have no right to get a regular income? Are they not the citizens of this country?
- iii Such double standards pervade all policies related to the question of stable regular incomes. Thus, for example, among the unemployed it is only the educated that are counted and plans for providing jobs only to them are laid out. Official policy ignores responsibilities of the governments towards the lokavidya samaj.
- iv The double standards of the government extend to the field of education too. All the facilities are extended to those who go to schools and colleges and they alone are seen as qualified for a 'pukka' and honorable job. On the other side are those people who are very large in numbers and who obtain their knowledge in and from society entirely based on their own enterprise and initiative. The governments spend nothing on them and do not see them as qualified for any regular income. The criteria of college education for a stable regular income are entirely false and discriminatory.
- v In the whole country the production done on the strength of lokavidya far exceeds production achieved on the basis of university knowledge and in matters of quality too lokavidya production is as good as any other. Then why is there a sea of difference between the incomes of a farmer and an agriculture professor, a weaver and a textile engineer, fisher-folk and water scientist, adivasi and forest officer, local health-care worker and a

doctor, master masons and civil engineers, small retailers and market managers and many other such pairs. The nation needs and has use of all types of knowledge and work done on the basis of any kind of knowledge must get a just return. **Peasants, artisans, adivasis, women, workers, small shop-keepers and the youth all must get stable regular incomes for the work they are already doing.**

vi No one is a sheer worker. Everybody has knowledge of some kind. All the workers who work on daily wages today come from a peasant, artisan, adivasi or a small shop-keeper background. Instead of enabling them to obtain regular incomes from the knowledge they possessed, the government policy uproots them and turns them into low wage workers with a propaganda that they have no knowledge of any kind. It is a gross insult to their knowledge and to their being.

vii Periodically Pay Commissions are constituted to rationalize (increase) the incomes of government employees and in contrast those who earn their livelihood based on lokavidya are left mercilessly to be devoured by the market hounds. The result simply is a constant steep increase in the difference between the incomes of the two. Today the average minimum income of a government employee is about Rs. 30,000/- per month (along with many facilities), whereas an ordinary artisan or farmer is able to earn barely 8 thousand rupees per month and that too with uncertainty all the time. Thus if we go by government policy, this country consists

of two types of citizens, one genuine and the other by courtesy! **If there are going to be daily wagers, then under today's conditions the government ought to feel responsible to ensure incomes not less than Rs. 1500/- per day.**

viii Most periods of human history have respected lokavidya as genuine knowledge and lokavidya samaj by and large had a standing in society inferior to none other. These periods witnessed a friendly relation between lokavidya and organized knowledge. Only some times there were periods when lokavidya did not receive the status and respect it deserved. This is just as, most of the time the society was organized through autonomous units and distributed power structures as opposed to the small periods of centralization of political and economic power. **So, lokavidya samaj must come forward to stake the claim that it is they who possess the continuity of the rich and grand tradition of this country and they alone have the capacity to take it forward.**

ix For over 100 years now those working for radical social change, for change in the system and for economic security for the people, have demanded land to the tiller, just wages for workers, market for small and tiny industry, price for agriculture produce and reservations for dalits, adivasis and backward classes. **Now in this period of privatization, liberalization and globalization, the correct and just demands of all the poor need to converge on the demand that every household must have a salary income which is similar to the**

one received by a government employee.

- x Therefore employment offices need to be opened in every village, township and urban settlement. This office will record the name and knowledge of every such person in the locality who wishes to have a stable regular income. A stable regular income based on

lokavidya will take a new message of liberation from the present debilitating conditions in the villages and artisanal settlements. Stable regular income to everybody means that all the knowledge and all the labor in the country gets engaged in work. There is no other quicker path of progress for the nation.

4. Staking the Claim of Regular Income

To stake the claim for regular incomes equal to those of government employees, we need to have a firm belief in the following two points:

1. **Unity of lokavidya samaj in demanding knowledge-status for lokavidya;**
2. **Necessity of equality and commensurability of returns on lokavidya work with wages of government employees.**

The following may help take these ideas to the people, and to the establishment.

- i. If lokavidya gets same returns as college education, why will the son of a farmer run away from farming and from the village? Why will an artisan's son leave his work, household and the community and run around for wage-work in alien lands? Why will women go to other's houses for work in conditions of severe indignity? To live on the basis of lokavidya is the birth right of humans. To take this away amounts to debilitating violence.
- ii. But this is what is happening today. More than three quarters of the people of this country live by lokavidya and suffer from uncertainty, inequality, utter poverty, and eventually forced displacement from work and habitat. It is these people who are compelled to sell their produce at very low prices in the market.
- iii. A life with dignity is a great challenge for lokavidya samaj. Government policies, administration and the market create multiple hurdles in securing primary resources of production, like electricity, water, raw material and finance. In addition, in complete violation of their rights as citizens, people of lokavidya samaj are displaced on the simplest pretext from their resources, environment, community and even the place where they live. This results in their alienation from their own knowledge. New technologies and urbanization - broadly speaking 'development' - disrupts their knowledge-based lives and pushes them further into subordination to completely alien systems. They are deprived of ordinary public facilities like education, healthcare, sanitation, and roads. Braving these imposed realities,

lokavidya samaj still lives by its own knowledge, although in a severely rundown state.

- iv. Policies of the government, that force these people to sell their produce cheap and buy materials of their need at high prices, are responsible in general for the poverty of lokavidya samaj. Among them are farmers, adivasis (tribals), artisans - that work with all kinds of materials such as jute, cotton, yarn, soil, glass, plastics, leather, metals, communities of specialized service providers - barbers, washer-men, fisher-folk, health workers, other service providers - who maintain machines, cars, electricity and water-supply services, houses/buildings etc., artists, small retailers - who run and manage businesses with small money, wage workers and, in equal numbers, women of these households - who not only partake in a big way in the productive activities of the family, but perform, independently, the tasks of managing the family, bringing-up of children, primary health-care and more at the household level, and the work of sewing, stitching, embroidery etc. **These people are the masters of lokavidya and constitute the lokavidya samaj.** Eighty percent of the entire population, these people continue to be fleeced in the market place to come back home with empty hands and empty pockets.
- v. The leaders of the country and the educated repeatedly tell them only what they already know as harsh reality – that without college education there are no

jobs with decent and secure income! In fact, now the perception is one of uncertainty even after acquiring a college degree through an education process, which becomes possible only by alienating productive resources like land. But more than 75 years have elapsed since Independence from the British in countries like India, and the governments still talk about education-for-all, while jobs for all is not a part even of the dreams they sell! Lokavidya samaj, with its storehouse of knowledge (lokavidya), constituting a great majority of people and contributing a huge share to the total production of the country, has been declared as ignorant and in need of education by the centers of capitalist enterprise, the universities and the State.

The only answer to this lie and subterfuge of the highest degree resides in an open public claim that lokavidya is respectable knowledge and deserves, by all consideration, a status equal to the university knowledge in every respect.

- vi. The leaders, the administrators and the educated think that farmers, artisans, adivasis and ordinary women at best possess some skills which they develop by repeatedly doing the same thing. They deny the truth - that the **lokavidya activity has its own principles, ways of understanding, its own logic and values.** They can be countered only by making, in various ways and on various platforms, a public claim that **lokavidya is knowledge inferior to none other.**

vii. So, for the lokavidya samaj what is the path to take? We think that there is no way other than claiming equal status for their knowledge. The first condition for this is that the lokavidya samaj needs to develop a self-belief in relation to knowledge. Then they must proceed to demand (i) their just share and control of the national resources,

(ii) a status in society as knowledgeable beings, and (iii) economic return on their knowledge equal to what the government pays its employees for their university knowledge. This will not only ensure internal strength of the lokavidya samaj but also propel the country onto a path of self-confidence, self-respect, and wellbeing for all.

Lokavidya Research Program

A Bahujan Knowledge Dialogue

Across the globe in many countries the so called extreme rightists have risen to political domination. Secular, progressive, democratic policies adopted by most countries, after their independence during mid-20th century, have taken a severe beating and find themselves discredited among the ordinary people. That they have not served and that the new (rightist) governance is not going to serve is the common understanding. Both work for development based on modern S & T. Modernity means discarding the values, practices, knowledge and philosophies of ordinary people terming them ignorant and uneducated.

Lokavidya movement, for over 30 years now, has sought an epistemological intervention in the given state of affairs from a knowledge standpoint of the ordinary people. Their knowledge, skills, methods of organization and management, their ways of thinking and values all together has been said to constitute lokavidya. Lokavidya has been seen as the foundation of the politico- economic imagination of the ordinary people. The present juncture in which the ideologies of the 20th century all find themselves discredited creates the great opportunity for ordinary people to come up with a new path for themselves and for humanity as a whole.

Who are these ordinary people? These are farmers, artisans, women, adivasis, small retailers, folk artists and service providers of all kinds. Ordinary people - the non-elite - are also known as bahujan samaj - a term that has made a place for itself in Indian polity.

Lokavidya Research Program is conceived as a research program of ordinary people, a kind of bahujan knowledge dialogue. The ways of such research and construction ought to be quite different from those of University R&D, which is completely dominated by Western and modern traditions of philosophy as well as Brahminical thought, and has place for neither the *darshan* (philosophy), nor the sensitivities of the Bahujan Samaj.

Vidya Ashram is starting a dialogue for building such a research program. The workshop in WSF 2024 in Kathmandu, Nepal is an effort in this direction. Demanding for lokavidya the same economic return and social respect as university knowledge has, is a major step towards creating a favourable dialoguing atmosphere.

The interested may contact us on vidyaashram@gmail.com

5. How will it Happen?

Whenever there is a dialogue on wellbeing for all and equality in remuneration in the organized and unorganized (lokavidya) sector, even the social activists and those with social concern ask all kinds of questions. Lokavidya Jan Andolan is in this campaign for a decade and a half now. There are two types of people that we meet. One type is those who do not like this claim at all and oppose it with all the argument at their command, even making fun of it. Then there

are those who like the idea of stable and regular income for all. These people support the campaign. But they have two main questions in their minds which they often raise. The first question is – why should the government arrange for, say, rupees 1500/- per day to a person who earns rupees 500/- per day in the market today? The other question is – such an arrangement will require a whole lot of money and from where will the governments bring so much money?

Answers to these questions may be given along the following line.

1. Our demand requires the governments to do something which is already their practice! Take any government department – administrative, educational, health related, industrial, public works, agricultural institutions – you will find that if an employee of such a department has to earn in the market, he will find it difficult to earn even one-fourth of what the government gives him. A carpenter, computer technician, or a mechanic in the electricity department gets a salary which is more than the average of rupees 1500/- per day. All these people will earn just about rupees 500/- per day in the market. This applies practically to all government employees. So, one can say that as it is the government is regularly bridging the gap between what the employees can earn in the market and the salaries fixed by the Pay Commissions for these employees. For over 150 years all the governments of this country have been bridging this gap. The Pay Commissions are specifically tasked precisely to do this. ***So, when we ask the government to bridge this gap for many others, we are not asking the government to do something new. We are only saying that the governments have no right to discriminate against persons who do the same work leaving one to the barbaric market and compensating the other to decently live with his family. The era which gave a special status to the government employee must draw to a close now.***
2. Government gives with a free hand to businessmen, contractors and its own employees. It gives them money, resources, infra structure, facilities, subsidies, services, opportunities, security and so many other things. And nobody asks from where the government brings so much money! ***This question is not asked because there is a consensus among the opinion makers, the higher educated, that this is how it ought to be, for it includes them too. We must understand that the government makes policies to stabilize the incomes and prosperity of these sections of society at the expense of the lokavidya samaj.*** For the latter they only make *schemes* like –free laptop, unemployment allowance, bicycle for schoolgirls, a small financial contribution towards

girls marriage, two rupees kilo rice, red-card, white-card, low-cost housing, latrines in the houses of poor, health-cards, mid-day meal, campaign for universal education and many more.

Large populations are kept in conditions of such abject poverty so that there is a rush even for marginal ameliorative programs. *We are arguing for a more fundamental view of society.* At least those with social concern need to understand that if policies are made to compensate for lokavidya work on the same criteria as determine remuneration of government employees, entire expenses on these schemes, and the attendant corruption will no longer be necessary. The question is not one of limited money available to the governments. It is that of our intention, point of view and politics.

3. It is of utmost importance that lokavidya samaj understands the basic strength and philosophy of such a demand and deepens its confidence in its own knowledge. Then only will it be able to make a comprehensive claim for equal status and value for its knowledge and for the samaj at large.

6. Lokavidya Samaj to Stake its Knowledge Claims

The practical meaning of lokavidya knowledge claim is that everybody must get work to do on the basis of what he/she knows and does and must be assured of regular returns on it equal to what government employees get. In this Section we will discuss how this claim may be advanced by different major segments of lokavidya samaj and we will also talk about youth that is engaged in work different from what generally his community does.

6.1 Agricultural Society

- i. **The knowledge of the farmer is not inferior to that of an agricultural scientist. If a teacher or a researcher in an agriculture college or institute gets about rupees one lakh every month then farmers should also have incomes in the same range. It is for the government to work out the modalities.**
- ii. Let a professor of agriculture engage in cultivation on a piece of land on which a farmer works. The professor is bound to fail. Shall we call the professor ignorant and as not having knowledge? No. Then if a farmer does not know how to read and write, how is it that we say that he does not have knowledge? And that he has no claim to getting as much as the professor does. Those who talk about agriculture are given one lakh a month and one who produces on the fields does not earn that amount even in one whole year. The doers have to make a claim vis-a-vis those who only talk.
- iii. The farmer goes through years of hard training and practice to acquire the knowledge he possesses. He acquires knowledge about innumerable things such as fertility of the soil, moisture, changes in weather, types of seeds, crop maintenance, water management, medicinal use of plants, storage etc. and that too in great detail with exactness and finesse. It takes longer to acquire such knowledge than the

number of years spent in college. Every farmer's house as well as field is a school, but the leaders of this country and the educated see him only as a physical worker on the field and not as a knowledge worker. **Farmers must make a claim that every aspect of their activity is knowledge activity and further that their household and the field are no less than a college or a university.**

- iv. As a result of the changing situation because of the government policies, market, weather conditions, seed and his own needs, he must incessantly carry out experiment and research. No government or any other agency covers the risk. He bears all the risk. This in turn is a heavy constraint on the experimenting itself. However such experimentation reinvigorates his knowledge and yet his knowledge is termed old, backward and dogmatically tradition bound. **Farmers need to claim that their knowledge is most contemporary, latest and living.**
- v. Farmer's knowledge grows in rhythm with Nature, it sees the Earth and the Nature as mother. In such thought, serving the mother holds the key to riches and progress. Before adopting any strategy, the farmer considers both the immediate and long term consequences and follows only that path which does not disturb the rhythm of his life with Nature. Exactly opposite is the way of thinking promoted by university knowledge where the kernel lies in aggressive control over nature and human society. This control legitimizes violence, and renders university knowledge became hand-in-glove partner of the unprecedented destruction of Nature and it is this violent phase which is called 'development'. **Claim will have to be**

made that in a period of such monumental crisis, lokavidya alone has the capacity to stop the destruction of Nature.

- vi. Farmer's knowledge is social. It is born in society and it grows in society. Everyone who wishes to earn his or her livelihood with such knowledge has the right to acquire such knowledge, use it, innovate and spread it. It is people's own knowledge. It is not at the mercy of the state or any other institution, it stays with the people and remains a source of their strength. It is not separable from human beings. **Therefore to live by lokavidya is the birth right of every human being, it cannot be taken away from them.** It is with such claim that radical opposition to globalization, market, urbanization, displacement, genetic seeds and other anti farmer policies can be shaped. Further this claim of a non-alienable birth right ignites the flame of a basic truth of life and places lokavidya at the center not only of the world of knowledge but also at the center of strategies to tame university knowledge.
- vii. There was a great farmers' movement in this country from mid 1970s which provided the context in which the idea of ultimate epistemic dignity for lokavidya was founded. The chief demands of this farmers' movement were related to prices for agricultural produce, electricity and credit. The kernel of the movement was thus in demands for the value of one's knowledge and labor and the demand for resources to effectively use one's knowledge and it is this that opened the gateway for lokavidya to make its knowledge claims. Lokavidya Jan Andolan (LJA) is asking for stable and

regular income of the government employment type for lokavidya work, that is for every farmer household. It is asking for equal distribution of national resources, namely, electricity, water, finance, education and healthcare. **And thus LJA is the present phase of this great farmers' movement.**

- viii. Farming is the largest single occupation in our country. Large sections of society possess great knowledge of agriculture and are engaged in farming – some grow food grains, some cultivate vegetables and others grow fruits and flowers. Many castes and followers of many religions are among them, adivasis, dalits, artisans, everybody is there. They all possess knowledge of agriculture. So, if lokavidya samaj makes up its mind it can surely proceed to abolish hierarchy in the world

of knowledge and therefore social and economic inequality. Farmers may take the lead to demand remuneration like the pay of a government employee for every lokavidya family.

- ix. **This is the path of self reliance for the villages.** Such self-reliance will open ever new possibilities of building new relations and develop new connectivity with whoever they wish across the world. Today's village is characterized by complete lack of resources. The chief resource in today's world is finance. One government salary type income for every household in a village turns the village resource-full in a radically new way, in such a distributed manner where there is no scope for corruption. This is the path of autonomy and self-reliance for a variety of societal units.

6.2 Artisans

- i. **The artisan's knowledge is not inferior to that of an engineer or a scientist who are trained in a university.** The artisan handles at will materials like iron, wood, soil, stone, glass, plastic, cotton, paper, metals etc. and makes a variety of things. He builds and maintains the modern machine, motor, computer, mobile and is responsible for the maintenance and steady supply of electricity, water, buildings, internet etc. So, the artisan too has a claim to get as much as an engineer or a scientist does. Only that such claims have not yet been made and the world of higher educated constantly engages in debates and opinion making which allows no space for making such claims publicly. So, in a sense, the artisan has to rise from its slumber and

tear apart the social milieu which wants to keep it in subordination perpetually.

- ii. Go to any village, township or localities in large cities. There you will find people who make all kinds of things, manage all kinds of processes and provide all kinds of services. They are all experts of what they do and constitute a reasonably large section of the Indian population. These people too, like their farmer brothers, obtain their knowledge and competence based on years of training and practice. These people have the knowledge of various properties of materials, the relationship they stand in with other materials, the processes that can be performed with them, where are these materials available and how to obtain them, how to purify them etc. They also know about various kinds of forces, their effects

on objects, their mathematics, social and economic forces, their market relationships etc. Weaver or a power mechanic, fisherman or motor mechanic, washer-man or mobile mechanic, carpenter or meson, all of them have knowledge and their work places including their houses are nothing less than a school or a laboratory. Every day they face a new problem and gear their knowledge up to solve it. Very often the managers of big industry and men from the university approach them for consultation but they are not ready to grant knowledge status to their activity. Therefore it is the artisans themselves who will have to stand up and make a claim that their knowledge is second to none and it entails that they too must get such returns on their work as is commensurate with the earnings of a scientist or an engineer.

- iii. Climate change, pollution, environmental crisis, unlimited ground water exploitation, deforestation on extensive scale underline the destruction of nature that has happened in last 200 years as a result of the development of big industry. Whatever are the paths for solution of these problems,

artisans will have a major role to play in them. When artisans start getting the just value of their knowledge, when their families start living respectable life and when they will be able to stand before scientists and engineers as equals, then we will have those conditions in which they can, based on their knowledge, logic and values, propose new and just technical regeneration of our society. One does not know how many Bharat Ratnas like C.V. Ramans, Homi Bhabhas and CNR Raos are hidden among them.

- iv. In the world of artisans there are people from all castes and religions, adivasis and dalits, everybody. Fisher-men, weavers, washer-men, dyers, barbers, potters, carpenters, blacksmiths, motorbike-computer-mobile repairers, mesons, electric and water mechanics, everybody will have to regenerate a new confidence in their own knowledge. It is based on such confidence only that public claims can be erected for such returns on their work which is not less than the earnings of a government employee.

6.3 Adivasis

- i. Not only in our country but in the whole world, there is a large population of adivasis. The modern world sees them as remnants of a remote past, however it is because of their knowledge that a large part of the world has kept alive its natural strengths. **It is on the basis of their knowledge alone that adivasis can increase their initiative and significant forms of activity and control to move towards a state of wellbeing.**
- ii. Adivasis are highly knowledgeable about the natural settings they live in. Their knowledge about water sources, possible land use patterns, forests and living beings by and large surpasses that of all others. This knowledge has its own paradigms and values and it is not inferior in any sense to modern knowledge, on the contrary, it is more in tune with both society and nature. The time has come for adivasis to make their knowledge claim.

- iii. Reservations have brought a small section of adivasis into government service, however almost all of them live by agriculture and artisanal activity. This way they are brothers of farmers and artisans and everybody knows that their knowledge grows and functions in tune with Mother Earth. **Granting such value and status to their knowledge as is given to any other respectable form of knowledge, may be expected to open new directions for the reconstruction of the world along a friendly nonviolent path.** Their right to equality may be best expressed in the demand for a stable regular income on the basis of their knowledge, income equal to that of government employee.
- iv. The opposition to British imperialism in our country started with adivasi struggles. Their knowledge has provided them the hard basis to stand up against injustice. **Today in many countries of the world the original inhabitants, adivasis are questioning 'development-knowledge' which is destroying nature. The knowledge claim in terms of equal return, strengthens this process. Organization of Gyan Panchayats is the way, which on the one hand recreates confidence in lokavidya and on the other opens a knowledge dialogue with state and the university. This will bring adivasis in the main stream of the determinations of the future of the people and the nation.**

6.4 Small Retailers

- i. **Those doing very small business activity on the pavement, on roads - the hawkers, vendors, temporary small shop keepers – are engaged essentially in management of very small capital and limited resources and that too under severely uncertain conditions. The knowledge of such management is not taught in business schools. Is their knowledge inferior in any fundamental sense to what is doled out in schools of management?**
- ii. These men and women take a variety of things to ordinary people. Administration, governments and the higher educated constantly combine to drive them away from what they do, but these people find ways to reach out to the last man with essential and daily needs.
- iii. Among them are people from all castes and religion. Among them are also those farmers, artisans and workers who have been displaced from their regular activity.
- iv. If the government policy does not constantly chase them from one place to another and dislocate their activity again and again, they can compete with the global retail companies and the fat-salaried managers. The governments today are implementing market policies that favor large businesses in the retail sector. The way to oppose this is to start with the knowledge claim of the small shop keeper. Claim will have to be made that their knowledge provides the basis for a distributed economic reorganization, which is both just and inclusive. They must make a claim that in place of the market that simply loots the lokavidya samaj, the market they would build will take wellbeing to every door step.
- v. Today there are two types of markets – one, which provides the means to loot the people

and the other, which are a facility to the ordinary people. It is this latter type in which the sellers and buyers both come from the lokavidya samaj. We may call it lokavidya-bazar. It is the lokavidya-bazar which can be developed into a major means to take wellbeing to every doorstep. Remember however that **the ultimate knowledge basis of the lokavidya-bazar lies in the knowledge of the small retailer.**

vi. Lokavidya-bazar has a great role to play in challenging the global system of exploitation. Since the knowledge basis of lokavidya-bazar is different, with it lies the possibility of reconstruction in which artisans and farmers will be in all

respects equal to the other citizens. To explore such possibilities the retail sector must demand that their income be as much and as regular as that of a government employee.

vii. Lokavidya-bazars are also the places where men and women of lokavidya samaj meet one another in the natural course of their lives. Farmers, artisans, adivasis, women, artists, service providers all come to this market and exchange with others their knowledge and the produce of such knowledge. The small retailers have a great role to play in making this claim stand that lokavidya-bazars provide the location for the unity of lokavidya samaj.

6.5 Women

i. All women are great masters of lokavidya. Almost all of them incorporate basic human sensitivities in their way of thinking and have the knowledge and capacity of upbringing children and maintenance of household in the given means. No civilization so far has denied this, rather all have acknowledged the value of such knowledge. The modern age has indeed tried its best to undervalue women's knowledge and rate it as rather unimportant. Some women have become professors, doctors, engineers, scientists, administrators etc. and this has provided the pretext to heap indignity on the knowledge of the majority of women. This situation can be met only by ordinary women standing up to stake a claim of their knowledge in the public domain.

ii. Women from the community of farmers, artisans, adivasis and small retailers handle a variety of aspects of the activity of their households and have a genuine claim to possession of such knowledge as that. Other

than this and other than their natural knowledge, they perform the tasks of consolidating, refining and taking to the next generation the knowledge of their communities. The government policies have resulted in closing down innumerable enterprises by farmer and artisan households and this has caused considerable narrowing down of the role of women's knowledge and skills. That **women are human being and that they have individual identities requires that they advance their knowledge claims, claims of lokavidya as genuine knowledge. Society at large must be made aware of the vastness and high value of the contribution of ordinary women's knowledge.**

iii. In addition to their daily familial responsibilities, these ordinary women generally have the knowledge of primary healthcare, food processing and making of clothes. The kitchen and the courtyard of every household are the factories, schools

and laboratories of such knowledge. In spite of this the governments are actively promoting large companies in the areas of primary health, food and clothes and depriving crores and crores of women from using their knowledge. **These areas of activity need to be reserved for women and for such work and services the women of this country must demand**

stable and regular remuneration equal to that of a government employee.

- iv. **If the social and economic security of women is not based in their knowledge, it will not be possible to publicly establish the value and environment of equal respect for women.**

6.6 Other Sections of Lokavidya Samaj

- i. **There is a large number of workers in the country.** In the villages and in the cities everywhere most of them work on daily wages. We must know that 'wage labor' is a category known only to the modern age. Processes were unleashed to disorganize the farmer societies and convert farmers and artisans into workers. First, people were made workers by displacing them from the knowledge-work they did, and then these workers were said to possess no knowledge at all. Under the all pervading influence of capitalist economic system, gradually organization of production in traditional industries and businesses also started getting based on wage labor. However small scale and household level organization of traditional type farming, industry and business inevitably bases itself on the knowledge of the peasant-workers and artisan-workers. The large majority of workers in the country belong to such categories. **It is desired that trade unions take initiative and stop using the word 'worker' for these populations and see them as knowledgeable segments of the society. Their struggle for wages must graduate into demanding the same wages as are given to government employees.**
- ii. **There are large numbers of young men and women, who have moved out of the traditional occupation of their families or communities, often under compulsion and also by choice.** These youngsters must get out of a mentality of being dependent on others and think in terms of proper wages for what they are actually doing. In whatever they are doing for their livelihood, they must be compensated at the same rate at which government employees are paid. **Whatever knowledge they have acquired must be respected and the government must stop discriminating between these young men and women and those who may have the university degrees.**
- iii. **There is a large community of health workers who have acquired their knowledge and skills out side the certificate-diploma-degree framework. They are there everywhere from urban localities, villages, to the most remote places, into deep forests too.** In many of these places the government health service has not reached. Or if it has, it is entirely dysfunctional. The private sectors in health services has grown in a big way, but mostly it is so expensive that ordinary people just cannot afford it and go there only in times of great emergency. Most people of this

country get their health services from the bare-foot doctors. These doctors have knowledge that relates to forms of naturopathy, ayurveda, unani, siddha etc. which command respect in society, but the governments are constantly engaged in insulting these doctors and framing rules to curb their practice. These health workers need to come together and claim that they have certain knowledge of health care which is time tested and the governments have been discriminating against them under the influence of the modern organization of medical knowledge and services heavily dominated by vested interest and grossly unjust to the people of this country. **The health policy must recognize their role, rationalize it and compensate for their services in the same measure as they do for the organized health sector.**

- iv. **Artists constitute a very sensitive and active lot.** These are masters of a variety of arts in society. These artists, mostly in small groups, perform on different

occasions, celebrations, festivals, melas, circuses, etc. Their performance involves entertainment and through that refreshing of certain values and philosophies of life. Often they focus on the widespread hypocrisy in society and attempt to shake the human consciousness. Singers, instrument players, story tellers, dancers, drama actors, writers, painters, cinema artists, all have their own groups. They are an important constituent of people's life and culture. The lokavidya artists often called loka-kalakars constitute the great majority. In today's market, they are looted left and right. Loka-kala that is people's art enjoys great appreciation in society, but institutions and governments pay no attention to the social and economic condition of such artists. **A public claim has to be staked by these artists and on behalf of these artists that they too need to earn as much as the government employee for a respectable life. It will go a long way in regenerating art in this country and enriching people's lives with active and creative forms.**

7. Gyan Panchayat (People's Knowledge Assembly)

There is no location today where discussions and dialogues take place on lokavidya, the knowledge with lokavidya samaj. Therefore, we experience a gap, a disability of sorts in establishing the lokavidya knowledge claim in the public domain. There need to be a locations where farmers, artisans, women, small retailers and adivasis - anybody from lokavidya samaj - feels free to present their knowledge point of view on any issue. These are the places, where lokavidya would command as much

respect as any other knowledge, where the opinions of a rikshaw puller, a university professor, a farmer, a scientist, a tea-stall owner, a political activist, an ordinary woman, a mullah, a pandit, a worker, a student, any artisan or managers of industry are all be treated with equal respect. These places would be called Gyan Panchayats (Knowledge Assemblies). There was a tea stall on the pavement in front of Vidya Ashram premises at Sarnath, called Chintan Dhaba (Thinker's Cafe) which functioned

like one such Gyan Panchayat for more than five years.

Gyan Panchayat is an important link in the Lokavidya Jan Andolan campaign. A simple hut standing on five pillars built by local materials is the place and symbol of Gyan Panchayat. The five pillars symbolize the five segments of lokavidya samaj, namely farmers, artisans, adivasis, small retailers and women. Such Gyan Panchayat is also a symbol of the unity of lokavidya samaj - a major objective of the knowledge dialogues under this roof. Lokavidya Samanvay Samuh, a part of LJA in Indore, has built this five pillar hut at every stop in their movement to popularize the idea of lokavidya and its strength and make it freely participatory.

These Gyan Panchayats talk about lokavidya being equal to university knowledge. Young and old, social activists and ordinary people, artisans, farmers, artists, wage workers, everybody collects here and they discuss the possible ways in which the idea of lokavidya being equal to university knowledge can be presented before the society and polity. These panchayats are held in the villages, urban settlements and remote

locations. Other than many such distributed Gyan Panchayats relatively larger Gyan Panchayats have been held in Varanasi, Singrauli, Darbhanga, Indore, Multai, Nagpur and Hyderabad.

These Gyan Panchayats also discuss specific issues that confront the people like the question of electricity supply, irrigation facility, raw material for weavers, wooden toy makers etc., continuous displacement of pavement retailers, price for agricultural produce, displacement of adivasis from their traditional habitat, women specific issues and many more. The characteristic feature of these Gyan Panchayats is that the solutions offered to problems discussed here are mainly the lokavidya solutions. People are fed up of the solutions from the so-called high experts and hold them responsible for the situation that has come to pass.

It is these panchayats that regulate the direction of Lokavidya Jan Andolan.

They are slowly being set in the larger context, so well expressed by the following –

- **It is the birth-right of all human beings to earn livelihood based on lokavidya. Government policies must stop alienating this right from them in the name of 'development'.**
- **People must get stable regular income, equal to that of government employee, for the work they are already doing to earn their livelihood.**

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8. The New Ideologies of Change

On the road to liberation of lokavidya samaj, a major step involves a mutually friendly and equal relationship between lokavidya and university knowledge.

Today the view that is taken of lokavidya by the universities is replicated in the governments. This is an insulting and subjugating view. Lokavidya samaj has to change this situation based on the strength of their knowledge and philosophy. This is the context of the new ideologies of change.

Generally farmers, artisans and adivasis listen to what their community leaders have to say, but neither the governments nor the institutions of modern education pay any attention to them. Lokavidya communities

solve their problems through their social panchayats, but the government establishments do not consult them while framing policies, even when these policies relate to them. The lokavidya ideology holds that lokavidya samaj is capable of solving its own problems and the problems of the nation, provided that their knowledge is treated as equal to any other respected knowledge and that they command control of required resources. Perhaps there are no such problems which require the services of experts from the university or require very large sums of money. **Perhaps many of these problems are in actual fact created by actions of experts and monopolized state control of resources.**

Rise of New Ideologies in the World

Twenty years ago governments of nations across the world came together to form a World Trade Organization (WTO) and in the wake of it, everywhere the policies of privatization, liberalization and globalization were adopted, resulting in the lokavidya samaj being subjected to ever new forms of exploitation and oppression. Farmers, adivasis, artisans, small retailers, women and all kinds of small service providers were rendered defenceless before the wolves and hyenas in the market. Ideologies of change

prevalent at that time failed to measure up to these new threats and ordinary people everywhere proved helpless before state and money power. Lokavidya samaj engaged in innumerable defensive struggles against the new onslaught. However, the activists of social and political change failed to come up with ways of thought, which could unify these struggles and bring hope among the people. The lokavidya ideology is a conscious effort to fulfill this need.

In recent years many countries have witnessed the rise of new philosophies rooted in their culture and in accordance with their needs.

- i. In distant West, in the countries Bolivia and Ecuador, their indigenous tribal (adivasi)

populations have come up with the philosophy of **Mother Earth** as the basis of

reconstruction of their nations. On such basis they have written their new constitutions and oppose imperialism in new ways. **This philosophy of the rights of nature and mother earth is very similar to our philosophy of five basic elements – earth, water, air, fire and space – in India, or even entire South Asia.**

ii. **Via-Campesina** is the name of an international organization and movement of farmers and agricultural workers. It has given the idea of '**food sovereignty**', in contrast to 'food-security' in the name of which governments across the poor world are giving contracts to the money bags to provide food to the poor. According to food-sovereignty the responsibility of policy and programs related to the food of the people ought to be with the rural society and for this they must have the command over local resources.

iii. Since the first decade of the twenty-first century the students of Europe, America and Canada have revolted against corporatization of university education. They want to see knowledge free of the present university. They talk about '**dead knowledge versus living knowledge**'. They say that the universities teach dead knowledge and that their campaign is for living knowledge – autonomous and self-organizing.

iv. **In India the lokavidya knowledge claim** is laying the basis of a new radical ideology of change. Today Lokavidya Jan Andolan is attempting to address the concerns of the poor and the exploited, which were addressed by Farmers' Movement and the Jal-Jangal-Zameen (Water-Forest-Land) Movement in the previous phase.

India : Gandhi and Kabir

In recent years across the Globe in many countries there has been a re-assertion of what has been called the extreme rightist forces, who are very aggressive and violent. It has happened in India too. The opposition to this requires a large unity of lokavidya samaj who were also the externed under the previous secular progressive governments. The new ideologies of change, mentioned above, are laying the basis for such unity.

In case of India, to be able to stand up against such regime and also the earlier establishments of Globalization and Liberalization, the leadership of the Lokavidya Samaj **will have to show the**

understanding of following both Gandhi and Kabir in the same step. Higher education has given birth to a new *brahminism*. This is also by birth. The children of lokavidya samaj do not reach the institutions of higher education and are systematically kept out of the world of modern knowledge. A system based on knowledge that is related with power and which is mastered only by a small section and that too by being born in that section, is what is *brahminism*. This group of people is full of conceit and sees itself as something special and different from the ordinary people because of this knowledge and sees

others' knowledge as low and despicable. Now it may not also be wrong to say that the community of the higher educated is endogamous and rarely socializes with people from outside the community. Hotels in which they put up, eateries they visit and the places of their entertainment are all separate from others. **This new-brahminism and the old-brahminism have entered into an elaborate and powerful agreement to suppress lokavidya and heap indignity on it.** Is not there a very friendly atmosphere between the leaders of

higher education and the princes and *zamindars*? One will not find any big difference now in the social values harbored by the two. The philosophy of change today will have to lay the theoretical basis to challenge the combined power of the two *brahminisms*. This is what *lokavidya darshan* attempts to do. **It is imperative that we bring Kabir and Gandhi together because both the new and the old brahminism has to be fought at the same time.**



**A Gyan Panchayat
Knowledge Assembly**

9. The Three Decades of Lokavidya

From around 1995 start the theoretical formulations and work in the name of lokavidya.

The first major public happening having lokavidya in its title was the **Lokavidya Mahadhiveshan, the Third Congress of Traditional Sciences and Technologies** of India, in Varanasi in 1998. This program organized for the dignity of lokavidya, witnessed gathering together of about 1500 persons for five days in one location, the Gandhian Institute of Studies, to discuss various subjects related to lokavidya and society. There were separate farmer, artisan and women conferences in which they forwarded their lokavidya knowledge claims.

In the years that followed this campaign for the dignity of lokavidya was organized from Varanasi around the publication of the Hindi journal **Lokavidya Samvad**. Then in August 2004 Vidya Ashram was founded in Sarnath, in Varanasi. The farmers' movement provided the context of lokavidya work from the beginning. The group of persons, who built this campaign including the founding of Vidya Ashram, were active since the late 1970s in the farmers' movement and were connected with the struggles and organizations of artisans, adivasis, women and pavement retailers. In the genesis of the lokavidya idea, particular mention may be made of **the women's organization in Varanasi during mid 1990s which argued for women's strength based on their knowledge (*nari-vidya*) and the connection of this knowledge with local market.**

Vidya Ashram was founded with the understanding that the new world of communication and connectivity shaping around the internet has produced a quake like situation in the world of knowledge, which has dethroned science from the absolute position that it had occupied at the apex. The unfolding period was identified as one in which forms of knowledge and locations of knowledge activity did not need to be legitimized by the science-criteria, which used to be the case in the Industrial Age up till 1990. In such a situation the lokavidya activist produced this understanding that a historical opportunity has arisen for lokavidya to make a public claim for a genuine knowledge status and achieve it again. Right from the beginning Vidya Ashram started advancing the lokavidya knowledge claim through organization of **Dialogues on Knowledge in Society** and with its publications. It is in this process that initiatives related to the **knowledge of Agaria, women's knowledge, local market campaign, lokavidya schools for children, dialogues in farmers and artisanal locations, knowledge liberation front, lokavidya samvad, lokavidya panchayat and new kinds of public hearings on knowledge laid the road to the formulation of Lokavidya Jan Andolan.**

The first international conference of Lokavidya Jan Andolan (LJA) was held between 12-14 Nov. 2011 at Vidya Ashram premises in Varanasi. After this, there were regional LJA Conferences in Darbhanga (Bihar, March-April 2012), Vijaywada

(Andhra Pradesh May 2012), Singrauli (Madhya Pradesh Sept. 2012) and Indore (Madhya Pradesh Jan 2013). The active workers had large meetings for deliberation in Sewagram (March 2012) and Mumbai (Feb. 2013). During this period this knowledge movement shaped its thought and programs mainly in the above mentioned regions with **Lokavidya Samanvay Samooh, Lokavidya Melmilap, Lokavidya Satsang, Lokavidya Tana-bana, Lokavidya Bhaichara Vidyalaya, Lokavidya Prapancham, Lokavidya Sadhikar Sanghatna, Lokavidya Ashram and Lokavidya Wiki. The blog www.lokavidyajananandolan.blogspot.com** covers almost all of this.

Then in January 2014 Lokavidya Jan Andolan had its conference in Multai, Madhya Pradesh. In this conference the debate focused on developing a knowledge standpoint in relation to people's struggles and it was proposed that it is only through lokavidya that a unity among such struggles and the broader unity in the lokavidya samaj is conceivable. **Social activists who had come from many parts of the country to participate in the conference resolved to announce a Multai Declaration which is given on the next page.** Then this declaration was taken to the people through Lokavidya Yatras to villages, townships and the cities. It was this declaration based on which peasant-artisan panchayats and gyan panchayats were organized in Varanasi and Indore regions. More than 100 activists coming from farmer, artisan and dalit organizations, Lokavidya Jan Andolan and other movements met **in Nagpur on 28-29 June 2014, deliberated on the Multai Declaration and unanimously**

agreed to start the movement for stable and regular income in every family, income which is equal to the income of a government employee.

Major initiatives ensued after 2014. Swaraj, conceived as the point of departure for a new political imagination, was made the focus of the dialogue. Dialogue on autonomy and people's initiative laid emphasis on distribution as the central structural idea. We needed fresh thinking on questions of governance as well as of fiscal and monetary policies suited to a distributed world of complex arrangements of autonomies, inter-dependency, and independent initiative.

The debate needs to be taken to new philosophical depths. A process and a platform for this was inaugurated around 2019 in the name of **Darshan Akhada (place of philosophical wrestling)** the world of philosophy, seeing it as a major step towards building a new political imagination. Just as lokavidya sees no distinction between manual and mental labour, its philosophy sees none between the material and the spiritual. In Varanasi, in addition to a Darshan Akhada on the banks of River Ganga, **Lokavidya Satsang** continued as a gathering of artists and ordinary people of the area devoting itself to recitation of lokavidya bhajanavali, composed through an adaptation of Kabir to a contemporary lokavidya spirit.

A **Varanasi Gyan Panchayat** was started along with Lokavidya Satsang. It publishes a periodical called '**Sur Sadhna**', a name stressing the idea that in order that we may conceive a better World it needs to be viewed from an art-end. Towards the end in 2022 a workshop was held in Vidya Ashram on

Samaj Srijan ke Kala Marg (The Art-path of Societal Reconstruction).

The huge farmers movement of 2020-21-22 which encircled Delhi, gave a new opportunity again to restate the lokavidya concern and point of view. Lokavidya Jan andolan gave the slogan of **Nyay, Tyag and Bhaichara** for the future of this country and the world. An edited book in Hindi was published to give this slogan a more concrete content.

Vidya Ashram has initiated a program called **Samajon ki Kahani Samajon ki**

Zubani. In this program ordinary people, members of the bahujan samaj, or lokavidya samaj speak out expressing their concerns, wishes and imagination of how things were, are and should be. In these dialogues we see concerns about indignity, inequality, injustice and the double standards that they face, the complete absence of respect for their knowledge and skills that they experience each day, and the total loss of initiative they feel taking the center stage. Vidya Ashram is in the process of developing a research program that actively looks for sources of strength of lokavidya samaj which enable it to reconstruct a better World.

9.1 Lokavidya Jan Andolan

Lokavidya Jan Andolan is a knowledge movement of those who earn their livelihoods and regulate their societies on the basis of their own knowledge, not obtained in a university. Farmers, adivasis, artisans, service providers and repairmen of various types, fisher-folk, construction workers, women, small retailers, artists and barefoot doctors include those who have either not been to the school or were compelled to drop out after a few years in school. They earn their knowledge based on their experiences, experimentation and the use of their own genius at worksites, in the community and in the family. Their knowledge is called lokavidya and all of them put together constitute the lokavidya samaj. The governments of this country and all the systems, resources and facilities of the nation are only for the educated. Governments do nothing for lokavidya samaj, but on the contrary, organize and facilitate their exploitation and displacement, in favor of the large businesses. Look around and you will find that everywhere groups from lokavidya

samaj are engaged in struggle to save their life and resources and the governments are suppressing them with violence through the police and the administration.

Lokavidya Jan Andolan has the goal of searching for paths that lead to the unity of the struggling people and their organizations.

In memory of the martyrs of 1998 farmers struggle in Multai, the conference met on that date 12th January to discuss about that strength of the farmers which can provide the basis to take the message of unity to lokavidya samaj. This strength is actually the strength of their knowledge, lokavidya, which is constantly falsified and suppressed by the government, the administration and the business interests. The educated collude freely in this falsification and suppression. The “development”, based on university education, that they talk of has already spelt disaster for lokavidya samaj.

9.2 LOKAVIDYA JAN ANDOLAN DECLARATION

LJA gives a call to lokavidya samaj to come forward and publicly stake the claim of their knowledge. Ways to our wellbeing are closed, if we do not do this. It is in our knowledge alone that the *mantra* of our unity and wellbeing lies. This knowledge claim has the following constituents –

- 1. To live by Lokavidya is the birth right of every human being.** Therefore displacement must stop completely and farmers, artisans and adivasis be paid just prices for their produce.
- 2. Hierarchy in the world of knowledge is completely unjust.** Lokavidya must have the same status as university knowledge. As a first step, the governments must ensure that those working by lokavidya earn a stable, regular income equal to the income of a government employee.
- 3. National resources be equally distributed.** The systems of electricity, water, education, healthcare and finance be the same for everybody.
- 4. Local systems ought to be in control of local society.** For this, surrounding natural resources be controlled by the villages and large capital be banned from entering local market and industry.
- 5. Let there be a media school in every village.** In these schools the local youth will be given lessons in articulation, dialogue, communication, connectivity etc. and taught how the social and political structure functions, for him to be able to stake the claims, in particular the knowledge claims, of lokavidya samaj.

Lokavidya Guru , Speak!

The knowledge of the farmer
Who tills the soil
The knowledge of the mother
Who moulds the child
Of the artisan
Who moulds the jug
And of the weaver
Who clothes the world.

Every being has knowledge
Every being is a knowledge bearer
Your knowledge runs the world;
Without a degree,
Without a declared major.

When will the world know your toil ?
When will your knowledge
Astound the academic?

Lokavidya Guru, Speak!
Speak to us your knowledge.
Your knowledge has paved mountains
Count not yourself unskilled, for
Your knowledge has fed the world
Count not yourself untrained, for
Your knowledge has birthed the world
Count not yourself unwise, and
Speak up for your knowledge.

10. Lokavidya, Ordinary Life and Emancipatory Politics

Struggles against the violation of ordinary life may be said to constitute the political in an emancipatory sense.

State, Science and Capital are the sources of violation of ordinary life in the contemporary world. So struggles against Science, against Capital and against the State constitute emancipatory activities. In common parlance they will be radical political activity. But there arises a strange situation thereby. That activity is thus called political activity which aims at uprooting the political society. Political society is the one which has emerged with the appearance of Science, Capital and the State. By now almost all language, at least the language of the public domain, is largely the language of this political society. So properly speaking emancipatory struggles are not political struggles and yet they are 'called political struggle' in common parlance.

This terminological or linguistic problem is solvable maybe in the context of a radical knowledge movement. So if one wants to do or talk of politics in the emancipatory sense then one must locate his/her activity and discourse in a knowledge movement. Some of these things become very clear when we see these things happening during Gandhi's time. We may see Gandhi as the builder of a new knowledge movement and a new political movement, both of which may be justifiably called emancipatory movements.

If we see this country as divided between India and Bharat then all politics after Independence represents India. If you see Science, State and Capital intertwined with

one another you would be seeing India. Politics worth the salt would be produced perhaps by coming together of a knowledge movement of the people, a *lokavidya* movement and an assertion by the people that ordinary life needs to be restored to its pre-eminent status.

In the modern world separation of 'knowledge' and 'being' again dates back to the period of emergence of Science, Capital and the State. Seeing them as chief sources of violation of ordinary life, also gives us that conceptual space where knowledge and being are *not* separated. *Lokavidya* and ordinary life are then inseparable. Cognition of one without the other is not possible. Ordinary life is the only dwelling that *lokavidya* knows and *lokavidya* is what knowledge in ordinary life is called. Then we will see that an emancipatory political movement is not separable from a peoples' knowledge movement.

Bharat and India may be seen as each being in the other. One can easily point out various aspects of life and aspirations in Bharat which are similar to the life and aspirations in India and conversely, see various aspects of life in Bharat spread out in India. The idea of ordinary life is to bridge the divide not to create a new one. Ordinary life is not just the life of ordinary men and women, it is ubiquitous. The *sant-parampara* (Saint Tradition) is the tradition of creation and re-creation of ordinary life in thought and in practice in ever new circumstances (of violation, marginalization, suppression etc.).

11. Lokavidya Publications

Lokavidya thought is presented through various publications in the languages Hindi, Telugu, Marathi, Bangla, Urdu and English. Given below is a list of such publications. They can be obtained from Vidya Ashram. They can be read on the Vidya Ashram website <https://vidyaashram.org/publications/>.

English Publications

- Gandhi's Challenge to Modern Science (Book)
- Lokavidya, Internet and the Future of the University (Book)
- Lokavidya Perspectives : A Philosophy of Political Imagination for the Knowledge Age (Book)
- Bulletins : Dialogues on Knowledge in Society – (Five bulletins)
 - (i) Knowledge in Society,
 - (ii) Virtuality and Knowledge in Society,
 - (iii) Knowledge Satyagraha,
 - (iv) Radical Politics and the Knowledge Question,
 - (v) Global Fraternity of Peoples' Knowledge Movements.
- Stop Displacement : An LJA Bulletin

Hindi Publications

- Lokavidya Vichar (Book)
- Lokavidya Samvad (Journal) 16 issues, special issues on artisans, farmers, women, local market, Dialogue on Knowledge in Society in the Information Age, Literary Knowledge
- Lokavidya Panchayat (Journal) 17 issues
- Karigar Nazaria (Bulletin)
- Sur Sadhana (Journal)
- **Politics of Knowledge** - A series of booklets (Five Booklets) : Bauddhik Satyagraha, People's Politics and the Question of Knowledge, Gyan Mukti Awahan, Yuva Gyan Shivar, Lokavidya.
- **Lokavidya Jan Andolan Booklet series** (Nine Booklets) : Visthapan Roko, Bazar Modo-Lokavidya Bazar Banao, Lokavidya ki Kitab – Souvenir, LJA First International Conference 2011, Lokavidya Satsang, LJA Bihar Conference 2012, LJA Madhya Pradesh Conference 2012, LJA Steps in Malwa and Nimad, Jan Sangharsh aur Lokavidya samaj ki Ekta, Everybody Must Have A Regular Income and It Ought To Be Equal To The Pay Of A Government Employee.
- **Swaraj Pustakmala**(Two Booklets): Swaraj par Vimarsh ke Sandarbh, Swaraj Paramparayen
- Nyay Tyag Bhaichara (Book)

Telugu Publications

- Lokavidya Prapancham (Journal)
- Stop Displacement (Booklet)
- Lokavidya (Book)

Marathi Publication

- Lokavidya (Book)
- Everybody Must Have A Regular Income (Booklet)

Bangla Publication

- Everybody Must Have A Regular Income (Booklet)

Urdu Publication

- Everybody Must Have A Regular Income (Booklet)

Announcement/ Invitation of the First International LJA Conference published in the languages – Hindi, Bhojpuri, Marathi, Bangla, Telugu, Kannada, Malyalam, Chinese, English, French, Spanish, Italian, and German.

All these publications and many important articles of the members of Vidya Ashram are available on the website <https://vidyaashram.org>. Events in real time are covered on the blogs www.lokavidyajanandolan.blogspot.com, <https://darshanakhadablog.wordpress.com/> and on the website.

12. GLOSSARY

1	Adivasi	Tribals
2	Andolan	Movement
3	Bahujan	Ordinary people
4	Bauddhik Satyagraha	Knowledge Satyagraha
5	Chhota dukandar	Small retailer
6	Gyan, Vidya	Knowledge
7	Kahani	Story
8	Kala Marg	Art path
9	Kisan	Farmer
10	Karigar	Artisan
11	Karigar Nazariya	Artisanal standpoint
12	Lokavidya	Knowledge in society, knowledge with the people.
13	Lokavidya samaj	Farmers, artisans, adivasis, women, samall retailers and service providers.
14	Lokavidyadhar	Bearers of lokavidya.
15	Lokavidya Jan Andolan	People's Knowledge Movement
16	Lokavidya Satsang	Assembly of people for moral rigor
17	Lokavidya Samvad	Dialogue on knowledge in society
18	Panchayat	Assembly
19	Pukka	Firm, regular
20	Sur	Rhythm
21	Sadhana	Steading with moral conditions
22	Srijan	To create
23	Striyan	Women
24	Zubani	Oral

**The goal of LJA is to move towards and contribute to building a
SOCIETY
in which everybody's knowledge is equally acknowledged,
there is wellbeing for all
AND
everyone has a equal status and respect in society.**

- 1. Think about everybody's wellbeing and work toward that.**
- 2. Double standards be shunned.**
- 3. All forms and streams of knowledge be seen as equal.**
- 4. Uphold the goals of end to poverty and inequality in society.**
- 5. Respect for knowledge and philosophy of life that promotes harmony with Mother Earth.**