

# **STATE AND SOCIETY IN KERALA**

*VI SEMESTER*

Elective Course

***For***

***B.A. POLITICAL SCIENCE***

***(CCSS)***

*(2013 Admission)*



**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

**SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**Calicut University P.O, Malappuram Kerala, India 673 635.**

**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

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**STUDY MATERIAL**

**STATE AND SOCIETY IN KERALA**

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**B.A. POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**VI SEMESTER**

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<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>PAGES</b>
<b>Module - I</b>	<b>04-18</b>
<b>Module - II</b>	<b>19-32</b>
<b>Module - III</b>	<b>33-48</b>

**Module I**

Caste and class structure  
Role of Social Reform Movements  
Rise of representative institutions

**Module II**

Nationalist and Democratic Movements,  
Communist and peasant movements,  
Trade Unionism

**Module III**

Political Parties and electoral Politics:  
Coalition Politics Emerging Trends;  
Role of Legislature in Social change.

## Module I

### Introduction

Kerala emerged as a homogeneous political state of the Indian union on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1956. When attained Independence in 1947, Kerala remained as three distinct political sections, namely, British Malabar as a part of the Madras Presidency and the Princely States of Cochin and Travancore. While Malabar was under the direct rule of the British, the latter were dependent states of the British power. The political domination of the British over Kerala was completed by 1805. In the wake of this, the Kerala Society slowly and steadily underwent a transformation parallel to that of the Indian society. To understand that transformation and the forces that worked behind it and to assess the impact of it, one needs a close understanding of the 18th and 19th century Kerala society.

### Caste and class structure

The social composition of Kerala is significant since it has determined the sociological foundation of Kerala politics. The traditional four-fold division of society (Chaturvaranya) is not applicable to Kerala. Numerous sub castes have grown around the major castes. Prominent castes like the Nayers and Ezhavas do not fit into the traditional caste division. Although the Scheduled Castes and tribes may have certain common characteristics and on this basis can be demarcated from other groups they lack the cultural homogeneity to be considered a social unit. Inter-caste hostility is often greater among them since some of them receive better opportunities of modernisation and earn greater social mobility. The members of the lower castes, unwilling to leave their caste, however low it may be, tried to improve their status by adopting the cultural patterns of the higher castes. In social change the caste association has greater significance than the caste itself. Castes and sub-Castes remain even now the basis of social and political action. Kerala may be described as a communal museum. Communities, advanced and backward as well as large and small have made up the Kerala society. Many factors such as religious revival and rivalry, economic compulsion, spirit of modernisation, etc. Contributed to mental stir which took the form of social reform movements.

The religion and society of Kerala has also changed greatly over the centuries. Here, over two thousand years ago, the Tamil speaking people developed a fairly advanced civilization independently of the Aryan north. During this period, Kerala remained a part of an area sharing the same language and cultural activities. The entire South India was referred as to 'Tamilakam' by the Sangham works as well as contemporary foreign accounts. Gradually Keralites broke away from the Tamilians, a process undoubtedly encouraged by their geographical situation. In the course of centuries we developed our own culture, in the process extensively absorbing Aryan elements from the north, as well as Arab and European elements from the west. These influences affected the language and religion of the Keralites.

A silent revolution was taking place in the socio-religious system of Kerala during the last phase of the Sangham Age. It was a landmark in the formation of the agrarian society of Kerala. The simple tradition of the tribes became extremely complex as the people migrated to the other parts and turned in to settled agriculturists. The rapid increase of the new ideologies with the emergence of Buddhism, Jainism, Brahmanism, Christianity and Islam shook their tradition and

became extremely complex. In the wake of socio-economic transformation, the heterodox religious ideologies themselves underwent major changes and got reconstructed more or less in idioms of pre-existing tradition.

The formation of organised Brahmin settlements in Kerala in the ninth century must have been the result of a slow process of migration from time to time. Usually the whole of Kerala was covered by a network of temple centered Brahmin settlements. A combined administration of knowledge, institutional support, division of labour and ideology was essential for the formation of such settlements. The Brahmins had great knowledge and this enabled them to be a dominant community in Kerala. People govern themselves and others through the production of knowledge. The Nambootiris (Kerala Brahmins) gradually got dominance as the advisory committees of the Kings. The final stage of Brahmin domination coincides with the rise of Kulasekharas. They were the patrons of Brahmanism in Kerala. Large numbers of temples were constructed and Namboodiris became powerful and influential. The Brahmins attained a position of primacy in social and religious matters. Manipravalam works testify to the dominant position of the Brahmins in contemporary Kerala society.

The final stage in the development of society is marked by the emergence of class and state. Initially, the state emerged out of gross inequality in the distribution of produce. Later it was dominated by those who managed to obtain the greater portion of land, labour and other basic sources of subsistence. Unequal distribution culminated in unequal access to the sources of livelihood.

At the beginning of the twelfth century, the land of Kerala was governed by dozens of Naduvazhies under a feudal system which went by brahmanical codes of morality. A self-regulating social system organised in terms of communities prevailed and managed the affairs. The higher-ups in the hierarchy monopolised the juridical-political matters by tradition. The juridical conventions and the administration of justice were primarily based on Sastraic jurisprudence institutionalised as 'Desamaryada' or local conventions. Since the Brahmins were the hegemonic group with enormous economic and cultural control, their Vedic Sastraic-Puranic adaptation constituted the chief tradition of wisdom for representing the socio-political processes. Knowledge generated power by constituting people as subjects and then governing the subjects with the knowledge. The technologies that are derived from knowledge are used by various institutions to exert power over people. There is a link between knowledge and power.

An important characteristic of the Hindu society of Kerala was the observance of the caste system which made the social life of the vast majority of the people miserable. This social stratification is a particular form of social inequality. The caste system that had stratified communities on the basis of inequality was part and parcel of the economic pattern of Hindu society in the pre-colonial period. The primitive communist society of Kerala was replaced by a system which divided the society into castes. First in to three or four then it became dozens and scores. Religion had been a central factor in the culture of Kerala since the beginning of its formation. As an ideology, religion played an important part where the caste system progressively established here.

Caste based social order was the creation of the age-old Hindu religion. Caste is not the growth of a single age or even a few centuries. It assumes different characteristics at different times. Caste structure goes out of inter-relationships between groups. The institution of caste based social stratification was a major effect of the sastraic-puranic mode of representation of the hereditary social division of labour.

In the division of labour, superior castes were specialising in honourable, lucrative jobs and inferior castes in humble, menial jobs. Division of means was done according to the status and need of each caste. In this dispensation all caste groups received their portion of the material benefits. Thus carpenters, smiths, barbers, washer men, ploughmen all got their share of the produce to help them stay alive, at a reduced rate. Inter dependence was the essence of separateness in the caste system. Here caste and occupation went together and a man was born not only into his caste based profession but also into his employer's hands as well.

The institution of caste evolved gradually during the post-Sangham period. Though the caste system in Kerala had some peculiarities of its own it was the version of Brahmin-centered Varna-caste system that prevailed elsewhere in India. Kerala has its own peculiarities in the evolution of class-caste society. Only one of the four Varna - the Brahmins-had become part of Kerala Hindu society. Many of the ruling families belong to the next one the Kshatriya caste. But the bulk of the people who carried on the warfare, the professions of Kshatriya were drawn from outside this caste. The traditional warriors of Kerala, in historical times, are non-Kshatriyas.

The third caste Vaisya is totally absent from the caste hierarchy of Kerala. The nonexistence of any caste whose traditional occupation is trade in the Hindu society of Kerala is significant. The people who perform the function of Vaisya caste-the Jews, the Muslims and the Christians-were outside the Kerala Hindu society even in historical times. At the same time there were minute divisions of caste and sub-caste for each minor occupation.

The caste rules operated in the most irrational manner. The triple defilement practices of untouchability, unapproachability, unseeability were observed by people at all levels of Hindu society. Though the Savarnas did not permit the low caste Hindus to approach them without feeling themselves polluted, no such distance pollution was associated with the Christians and Muslims; but their touch was considered polluting.

There were externally identifiable castes significant too. The style (mode) of clothing, the shape and position of the tuft of hair and the differing style and material of the ornaments functioned as the caste marks of the bodies. The clothing of Keralites even in the beginning of the twentieth century was prescribed by customs with striking differences based on caste and sub-caste identity. Clothing functioned as a sign-system to signify caste of the individual. One would wear a cloth to on one's waist strictly limiting the lower end above the knee-joint or up to the knee-joint or above the ankle or stretching down the ankle.

There is also 'ceremonial pollution' / 'contact pollution' / 'distance pollution' at the intra-caste level. Women were regarded as polluted and as conveying 'atmospheric pollution' during their monthly periods and after delivery. A death or birth in a family entails pollution on all members of the 'tharavadu' and of those connected families. These types of pollution have to be removed by

prescribed ceremonies. In the caste, sub-caste society of Kerala, the nature of relationships between the male and female bodies was controlled and channelled for the reproduction of the caste bodies without upsetting the system. The actual marriage ceremony among the Nair and the Ezhava castes was the tying of the token of the wedlock around the girl's neck which was performed at a very early age. But their actual customary sexual union with males was not considered as significant to be ceremonial, especially in the matrimonial joint family. Veli - the Brahmins sacred marriage - was the only form of marriage in which the female and male are united ceremonially.

The Nambootiris developed a very specific custom of marriage relation within their caste. In their anxiety to preserve undivided the Brahmaswam lands, only the eldest son of the head of the family was permitted to contract a marriage. The permission was extended to the second son when this was necessary to secure succession. The practice of Sambandham (concubinage) of the junior members of the Brahmin family was observed with the lower caste women (not below the Nairs). The junior members could not bequeath property to their children or even maintain family.

The nineteenth and early twentieth century was a great turning period which changed the face of Kerala far more than did the preceding thousand years. A new era set in Kerala which witnessed the emergence of the society quite different. Kerala experienced an intellectual revolution or renaissance during this period which totally changed the outlook of the people. Religious, cultural and ideological as well as economic issues lead to important dimensions and conflict in the social order. This period witnessed the formation of a consciousness about the identity of Kerala in all areas of social endeavour. The nature, direction and momentum of these changes constitute the basis for the introduction of an alternative system of beliefs and re-structure of social institutions.

### ***Contributions of Missionaries to Kerala society in the pre-independence Period***

Christianity reached Kerala even before it reached Europe. Ever since, the religion was part and parcel of Kerala society. The Church adopted many customs and practices of the native Hindu community. However, when the Portuguese came in the 15th century, they were interested in large scale conversion. There was a positive effect for this. The missionaries did not pay attention to the caste system in Kerala. They converted people from different castes into Christianity. They were more or less treated alike. Moreover, to treat people as upper or lower was against basic Christian values. Besides this, the Kerala Christians were brought under the Roman Catholic Church by the Synod of Diamper of 1599. The Roman Church was known for its efficient administrative set up.

Thus, the Church in Kerala came under a good administrative mechanism. However, this in turn led to the growth of factionalism within the Church in Kerala. But, on the other hand, it promoted freedom of thought and expression within the Church. The Missionaries were interested not only in conversion. As a course of their work, they wanted to establish educational institutions as well as hospitals and other social service centres. For this, they received the patronage of local rulers. Homoeopathic medical system was brought to Kerala by the missionaries. Now, there is fully fledged practice of this system in the State.

A Prussian missionary by name W.T.Ringletaube established schools in Nagercoil and nearby areas in the period between 1806 and 1816. Rev. Mead of the London Mission Society (LMS) is known for his work in the field of education in Thiruvithamkur during the period 1817-1873.

Bailey, Baker and Fenn belonged to the Christian Missionary Society (C.M.S) which was active in Kottayam between since 1813 and 1930. They set up a Grammar School at Kottayam and School for girls at Alapuzha during this period.

With the help of the CMS missionaries, the Syrian Christians set up a College and a Seminary at Kottayam for training their priests. Kottayam turned into a literary hub since then. British missionary, Rev. J. Dawson set up an English School at Mattancherry in 1818 with financial aid from the Cochin Government.

In the Malabar area, the Basel German Evangelical Mission started a primary school in Kallayi at Kozhikode in 1848 and an English school in Thalassery in 1856. Dr. Hermann Gundert ( 1814 – 1893 ) the German Basel Evangelical missionary, is well known for the compilation of Malayalam grammar book, *Malayalabhaasha Vyakaranam* (1859).

He also prepared the first Malayalam-English dictionary (1872). Dr. Gundert translated the Old Testament of Bible from Hebrew and the New Testament from Greek into Malayalam. He published around 13 books in Malayalam. He is the one who brought punctuations marks like full stop, coma, semi colon, colon and the question mark into the Malayalam language. He traced Malayalam language to Ramacharitam, the poem pre-dating the Sanskrit alphabet. The works of missionaries in the field of education paved the foundation for the radical Changes in the Kerala society.

### **Role of Social Reform Movements**

The latter half of the 19th and early half of the 20th centuries witnessed the beginning of powerful social reform movements in Kerala society. The fight against caste disabilities and inequalities which prevailed in Kerala was waged by enlightened reformers like, Sri. Naraya Guru, Chatambi Swamikal and Ayyankali, Pandit Karuppan, Mannathu Padmanabhan, V.T.Bhattathirippad, Dr. Palpu, Kumaranasan, Vakkom Moulavi, Blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara, T K Madhavan, Sahodaran Ayyappan, **Vagbhatananda, Thycaud Ayya, Ayya Vaikundar, Poikayil Yohannan (Kumara Guru), Brahmananda Swami Sivayogi** They condemned the social evils like untouchability, unseability and unapproachability which deep rooted in Kerala Society. They considered these evils as inhuman and ungodly. They devoted their entire time for the propaganda against these social evils in the whole of Kerala. They revolted against Brahmin ascendancy and campaigned for the mitigation of the rigours of caste. Even though their reform movements met with strong opposition from the caste Hindus, they did not flinch back from awakening the people against the social evils. Their active propaganda bore fruit in Kerala.

**Sri Narayana Guru:** Sri Narayana Guru is one of the greatest reformers of modern India. He was born in 1854 in a family of peasants of the Ezhava community at Chempazanthi in Trivandrum District, which was then a bilingual area where Tamil and Malayalee cultures met. Madan Asan, his father was a cultivator as well as scholar in astronomy and medicine. His mother was Kuttu.

He revolted against Brahmin ascendancy and campaigned for the mitigation of the rigorous of caste. He was an exponent of the principle of equality of men and an opponent of the inequalities in religion and society. He rendered manifold services to promote the welfare of the backward and downtrodden people.



Narayana Guru began his public activity as a rebel against the Brahminical tradition. The right to install idols, and to perform poojas in temples were the monopoly of Brahmins but Narayana Guru opposed the same. After bath and prayer, he took a stone of the shape of Sivalinga from the bed of the river Neyyar and installed it for worship at Aruvipuram near Neyyatinkara. After wards, he moved from place to place and established more than sixty temples. He declared the brotherhood of man and equality of all before God. Thus, he augmented the social revivalism.

This bold act of Narayana Guru, upset the Brahmins who dominated the consecration of temples and other connected ceremonies. They questioned the propriety of Narayana Guru to consecrate a temple. But Guru boldly repeated that he did not consecrate Brahmin Siva, but an Ezhava Siva. This reply attracted the Ezhavas and they considered him as their leader and became his followers. The Ezhavas themselves officiated as priests in the temples founded by him. On the walls of the temple, he inscribed the following principles. “Devoid of dividing walls of caste or rave Or hatred of rival faith, We all live here in Brotherhood Such, know this place to be! This, Model Foundation”

Sri Narayana Guru associated himself with the untouchables and intermingled with them. He also took a few low caste boys to his Ashram at Varkala and cultured them to adopt his principles with regard to caste. Narayana Guru instructed the students of his institutions not to ask any one of his caste or reveal to anyone his or her own caste. He also campaigned against the observance of certain practices such as *Talikettukalyanam*, *Tirandukuli* among the Ezhavas and achieved a large measure of success in persuading them to give up these practices. He believed that casteism was the main obstacle in the way of social, economic and political emancipation not only in Travancore but the whole of India.

On 7 January 1904, Sri Narayana Guru, Dr. Palpu and poet Kumaran Asan, jointly invited many leaders of the Ezhava caste to attend a meeting at Trivandrum to discuss the idea of forming an organization to uplift the Ezhava community under the spiritual and social leadership of Sri Narayana Guru. This meeting decided to form an organization for the propagation of the ethics of Sree Narayana Guru, and he was made as its life President and Kumaran Asan its secretary Thus the organization ‘Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam’ (S.N.D.P.) was established on May 15, 1903. Its first annual session was held at Aruvipuram in 1904 under the guidance of Sri Narayana Guru.

The basic aim of the *Yogam* was to popularize the message of Sri Narayana Guru and bring about the social and spiritual regeneration of the Ezhavas and other backward communities. The S.N.D.P. attracted the untouchables of Kerala with its socio-religious programmers and united them.

Though the religion, dress, language, etc. are different, as all belong to the same caste (mankind), there is no harm in intermarrying and interlinking’. Narayana Guru brought him the resin of a universal brother hood of all. Narayana Guru showed that caste distinction had no relation to the abilities of man; any one can rise to any position of excellence by his own abilities. He asserted that the foundation of caste are unstable even in the Hindu *Vedas*. Distinctions of caste

should be discarded, as they prevent the taking up of vocations or professions according to one's own aptitude and abilities.

Narayana Guru was of the firm opinion that education and trade were essential for the mental and material wellbeing of the Ezhavas. He informed the people that emancipation was possible through education. From the beginning of his public career, he paid much attention to educational work.

Thus Sri Narayana Guru set in motion a radical socio-religious reform movement. Throughout Kerala, from one end to the other, he built and consecrated scores of grand Temples of Sanskrit deities for lower castes and encouraged others to do so. Moreover, he established *Vedic Patasalas* and invited Pulayas and other depressed classes to join in worship and study.

Through the work of Sri Narayana Guru, the untouchables have entered upon a new age, and made a discovery of their own personality. An unprecedented sense of self respect made them proud people and in the later politics of Kerala they were destined to play a major role. A wave of reforming activity surged over the land at the beginning of this century as a result of the teachings and social works of Sri Narayana Guru. Thus he augmented the Depressed class Movement among the Ezhavas. The effect of Sri Narayana Guru was felt in South Travancore that encouraged the people to fight for their right.

**Ayyankali:** Another noted social reformer of modern times in the cause of eradication of untouchability in Travancore was ayyankali. He was born on 28 August 1863 into a Pulaya family at Venganoor near Trivandrum. Ayyankali became extremely conscious of the low social and economic condition of the pulayas and the bondage enforced upon them by the higher castes and therefore he fought for the emancipation of his people. His first attempt at asserting his right and freedom was when he bought a bullock-cart which was then a luxury for the pulayas. The higher caste neighbours were jealous and annoyed at him for buying a bullock cart.

The first attempt of Ayyankali was to assert the right of using public roads for himself and his people who were denied this right for a long time. Moreover, those who remained as Hindus lacked a leader who could organize them to claim this right.

In 1907, Ayyan Kali formed an organization by name "Sadhu Paripalana Sangham". The main objective of this was the socio-economic emancipation of the pulayas. Ayyankali fully realized the importance of education for the social advancement of his people. As a first step, he opened a school for the pulayas at venganoor in 1904. The attempts of Ayyankali were successful in drawing the attention of the Government to the educational needs of the pulayas and many other concessions needed for their education. As in the case of many other communities, he also demanded employment opportunities for the pulayas under the government.

Thus the social reformers came from time to time as atomic individuals and worked to liberate the oppressed class from the feudal lords and other social evils. They ignited the depressed class movement in the whole of Travancore and educated the people to fight for self respect and liberation from oppression.

**Chattampi Swamikal:** Like Sri Narayana Guru, another social reformer who worked for the abolition of untouchability in Kerala was Chattampi Swamikal. He was born on August 25, 1853 in a Nair family at Kannamula in the outskirts of Trivandrum. Though he did not have much of a formal education; he was endowed with an intellect of high caliber. At the age of 24, he undertook an extensive tour of south India. In the course of which he established contacts with many religious saints of repute and got opportunities of acquiring mastery of Hindu theological literature as well. In his late twenties, he returned to Trivandrum and plunged into religious activities aimed at the eradication of social evils like untouchability

His learned discourses as well as works on religion, philosophy and the brotherhood of man, soon won for him a wide circle of disciples. By identifying himself with the aspirations and problems of the common people in his speeches, writings and social activities, Chattampi Swamikal gave the reform movement in Kerala an intellectual appeal, a social basis and a practical turn.

Chattampi Swamikal had a liberal social outlook. He wielded his pen as an instrument of social change. He believed that early society was based on the principles of social freedom and equality and that *Chaturvarnya* was introduced by the Brahmins in order to further their own self-interest. By projecting the picture of an original casteless society in ancient Kerala and of they have wrought in it by the introduction of *Chaturvarnya*, Chattampi Swamikal kindled social awareness among the people and gave an impetus to the social-religious reform movement in Kerala.

He always expressed his profound faith in the philosophy of Ahimsa and non-violence. He denounced the primitive custom of animal sacrifice observed in Temples as barbarous and inhuman and thus set the pace for its isolation in Temples owned by the Devaswom Department in Travancore during the Regency of Sethu Lakshmi Bai (1924-1931). In his religious work '*Vedadhikaranirupanam*', Swamikal shattered the myth of Brahmins right to the monopoly of Vedic learning and asserts the right of every Hindu, irrespective of caste, have free access to the treasures of the Vedic lore. His another work '*Sarvamatasamarasyam*' gives the gist of the truths common to all faith and emphasizes the fundamental unity of religion. He worked in close co-operation with Sri Narayana Guru in the common cause of Hindu social and religious regeneration. His death on 1924 was a great loss to the cause of social reform movements in the whole of Travancore.

. **Pandit Karuppan:** Pandit Karuppan (1885 – 1938) was a poet, dramatist and social reformer who made relentless crusader against untouchability and social evils. Hailing from a community of inland fishermen, Karuppan worked well to steer steering socio-economically and educationally backward communities to the front. Being the first human rights activist of the Cochin State, he used his literary ability and managerial skill to fight illiteracy, social injustice, casteism and superstitions. He also campaigned for the rights of lower-caste people. As a social reformer, Karuppan quit his teaching job and organised the people of his own community. Various sabhas were formed aimed to achieve the upliftment of the subaltern dalit castes. He even persuaded other communities like Velas, Sambavas, Ulladas and Kudumbis to form similar Sabhas to give impetus to their fight against social evils and injustice.

**Mannathu Padmanabhan:** Mannathu Padmanabhan (1878 - 1970) was a social reformer and a freedom fighter who is recognised as the founder of the Nair Service Society (NSS). Being a visionary reformer, Padmanabhan organised the Nair community under the NSS. Even though, he started his career as a government school teacher, he changed his profession and started practicing law. With an ambitious mind to uplift the status of the Nair community, he stated the Nair Service Society in 1914. He fought for social equality, took part in the Vaikom and Guruvayoor temple-entry and anti-untouchability agitation. In 1959, Padmanabhan along with Christian Churches led a united opposition against the Education bill introduced by the State Ministry, which was known as the Vimochana Samaram (liberation struggle). The movement caused the dismissal of the Communist government and even sowed seeds to introduce President's rule in the state. He was honoured with the title Bharata Kesari by the President of India and also received Padma Bhushan in 1966.

**V.T.Bhattathirippad:** Vellithruthi Thazhathu Karutha Patteri Raman Bhattathirippad (1896-1982), popularly known as V. T. Bhattathirippad or V. T. was a prominent freedom fighter who played a key role in removing casteism and conservatism that existed in the Namboothiri community. He tried to reform the conservative practices of the Namboodiri community. V.T can be credited for starting the progressive theater movement of Kerala. His drama 'Adukkalayil Ninnun Arangathekku' was the first play in Malayalam which had a definite and concrete social objective. The slogans became very popular during the period which sought for the transformation of "Brahmins into human beings".

**Dr. Palpu:** Padmanabhan Palpu (1863 - 1950) was a bacteriologist and social revolutionary who is known as the "political father" of the Ezhavas. Palpu studied at colleges in Trivandrum Madras and then went to England and completed his medical training at London and Cambridge. Returning to India, his low caste status prevented him from obtaining employment in the Travancore Health Service which made him to move to Mysore in order to get work. As Palpu became aware about importance of education as a way of socio-economic advancement and also as means to improve health, Palpu attempted to highlight inequalities in Travancore society and organised a petition duly signed by 13,176 Ezhavas. He presented it to the Maharajah of Travancore and demanded their right to admission in schools which was managed by the colonial government and also access to employment in public service. As a result of this, drastic changes happened in the Travancore with their demands getting satisfied.

**Kumaranasan:** N. Kumaran Asan (1873–1924), also known as Mahakavi Kumaran Asan was also a philosopher, a social reformer and a disciple of Sree Narayana Guru. He initiated revolutionary changes in Malayalam poetry during the first quarter of the 20th century. He became the first secretary of SNDP Yogam and started a news paper called Vivekodayam, the mouth of the S N D P Yogam. 'Buddha Charitha' and 'Duravastha' are good examples of his talented hands. Through 'Duravastha' reveals the social discrimination which prevailed during the 1920's. Kumaranasan received the 'Mahakavipattom' for his true and heart touching work 'Duravastha'.

**Vakkom Moulavi:** Vakkom Muhammed Abdul Khadir Moulavi, (1873 – 1932) popularly known as Vakkom Moulavi was a social reformer, prolific writer, Muslim scholar, and freedom fighter who laboured hard for the social upliftment and moral renewal of his community. As a scholar in Arabic, Persian, Urdu and Malayalam, he encouraged the Muslims to take English education and be an active part in modern progressive movements. He popularised Arabic-Malayalam by

publishing an Arabic-Malayalam monthly called Al Islam. He founded the Travancore Muslim Mahajana Sabha and Chirayinkil Taluk Muslim Samajam for social uplifting the Muslims and propagating liberal ideas among them. Maulavi Sahib has contributed a lot to the educational and social fields which transformed the Muslim community in the state.

**Kuriakose Elias Chavara:** Kuriakose Elias Chavara (1805 -1871) was the co-founder and first Prior General of the first congregation for men in the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church which is now known as the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate(CMI). After his elementary education, he joined the seminary. After being ordained in 1829, Father Kuriakose along with two other priests founded a community named 'Servants of Mary Immaculate'. As a social reformer, Kuriakose Elias Chavara played a large role in educating the people of the lower ranks of society. He first introduced the system called "A school along with every church" later known as 'Pallikudam' making free education available for everyone. As he believed that intellectual growth and the education of women was the first step towards overall social wellbeing, the first religious congregation for women was founded. With the help of an Italian missionary, Fr.Leopold Beccarohe, Fr.Kuriakose Elias started an Indian religious congregation for women, the Congregation of the Mother of Carmel. In 2014, Pope Francis authorised the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to propagate the decrees relating to the miracle attributed to Kuriakose Elias' intercession. As the Pope approved the canonization of Kuriakose Elias, he would be lifted to the position of 'Blessed' with the ceremony likely to be in October 2014.

**T K Madhavan:** TK Madhavan was a social reformer and journalist who led crusade for the eradication of untouchability. He was born in 1880. Madhavan was a disciple of Sree Narayana Guru. He founded Deshabhimani weekly with K P Kayyalakkal. He took part in the Congress conference of 1923 at Kakkinada and earned the support of Mahatma Gandhi in the fight against caste prejudices. He was one of the leaders of Vaikom Satyagraha in 1924. He passed away in 1930.

**Sahodaran Ayyappan:** Ayyappan was a journalist, thinker and social reformer. He was born in Cheraï in 1889. Sahodaran movement was established by him to fight against the discrimination in the name of castes and untouchability. He organised Mishrabhojanam in 1917, in which people from different castes had meals together. He founded an organisation named Vidyaposhini and established the newspaper Sahodaran to propagate his ideas. He passed away in 1968.

**Vagbhatananda:** Vagbhatananda Gurudeva(1885-1939) was a social reformer who played a crucial role in the social reform movement in modern Kerala. His magnetic personality and oratorical skill engrossed towards him a large number of supporters. He founded the Atmavidya Sangham, a group of professionals and intellectuals who had a more secular approach to reform. He condemned caste barriers and idol worship and urged his followers to reject such practices. Being a vigorous campaigner against addiction to liquor, his teachings helped to strengthen the base of the nationalist movement mainly in north Kerala.

**Thycaud Ayya:** Thaikkattu Ayyavu Swamikal (1814–1909) was a spiritualist who is considered to be one of the greatest social reformers of Kerala. He was the first to break customs related to caste in Kerala when caste restrictions and untouchability were at its peak. Ayyavu wrote several books on Bhakthi, Jnana and Yoga in Sanskrit, Tamil and Malayalam with Brahmotharakandom, Pazhanidaivam and Ramayanam Pattu prominent among them. His disciples Chattampi Swami, Narayana Guru, Swayam Prakasini Amma, and others followed the teaching of their great teacher.

**Ayya Vaikundar:** Vaikunta Swami (also known as Muthukutti Swami) (1809-1851) was a man of progressive social outlook. Even though he was also called as Mudichoodum Perumal, he had to give up the name as it could only be used by the upper class people during the time. So parents called him Muthukutti. After learning Nalvazhimoodur, Thirukural and the Bible he went for a pilgrimage and meditation in Thiruchentoor. Returned at the age of 24, he called himself as Vaikunda Swami. He tried to alter certain social customs which was prevailing at that time among Nadars. In 1836, he founded an organisation called 'Samatva Samajam' to fight for the redressal of the gripe of the Avarnas. The Samatva Samajam being one of the earliest social organisation, Vaikunda Swamikal become a pioneer social revolutionaries in Kerala. As his popularity increased, the King of Travancore arrested him and tortured. After returning from imprisonment, Vaikundar inspired a group of his devotees to undertake a religious exercise called Thuvayal Thavasuu.

**Poikayil Yohannan (Kumara Guru):** Poikayil Yohannan (1878 – 1939), known as Poikayil Appachan to his followers, or Kumara Gurudevan was a Dalit activist, poet, Christian preacher who founded the socio-religious movement Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha ('God's Church of Visible Salvation'). Born as a bondsman to a Syrian Christian family, he had to follow Christianity and a Christian name, called Johannan. Well literate and versed with Bible, Johannan sought to create a sense of unity among the Christian Dalit communities. Even though he joined the Marthoma church, as he realized that the church treated Dalits as an inferior class, he left the church. In 1909, Johannan left Christianity and formed his own Dalit liberation movement named 'Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha' (PRDS). Known as Poikayil Appachan or Kumara Gurudevan later, Johannan advocated devout liberation, and sought to empower and unite the Dalits. Poikayil Yohannan bought several acres of land and set up schools and industrial training centers in various places. He even established several government aided schools for Dalit education.

**Brahmananda Swami Sivayogi:** Brahmananda Sivayogi (1852-1929) the founder of the Sidhasramam was a strong advocate in Yoga system of philosophy. He founded the 'Ananda Maha Sabha' in 1918. Sivayogi fought against various social evils and was wished to bring changes in the Marumakkathayam system of inheritance, widow marriage, prohibition of liquor and female education. He laid stress on happiness (ananda) which was essential for the welfare of mankind. He has written more than 15 books including Mokshapradipam and Anandasutram. His personality and teachings truly influenced the social life of Kerala.

Pandit Karuppan, Mannathu Padmanabhan, V.T.Bhattathirippad, Dr. Palpu, Kumaranasan, Vakkom Moulavi, Blessed Kuriakose Elias Chavara, T K Madhavan, Sahodaran Ayyappan, **Vagbhatananda, Thycaud Ayya, Ayya Vaikundar, Poikayil Yohannan (Kumara Guru), Brahmananda Swami Sivayogi** are the prominent renaissance leaders who shaped the history of Kerala. Kerala had given birth to hundreds of social reformers who contributed to the well being of the society. Even though many people have provided service for the social renovation movements in Kerala, it would be worth to note down about the prominent people who lend their hands to build up the state.

### **Temple Entry Proclamation**

In Travancore the movements for the mitigation of the severities of caste, if not its total abolition, have been popular. The teachings of Sree Narayana Guru gave a momentum to the forces which were generated by the extension of western education among the masses and the tolerant policy pursued by the state in recognising the legitimate claims of the backward



communities. The promulgation of the Temple Entry Proclamation was a reform of far-reaching importance, not only to the teeming millions of Travancore but a momentous act of emancipation and hope to the whole of India. The Proclamation runs as follows:—"Profoundly convinced of the truth and validity of our religion, believing that it is based on divine guidance and on all-comprehending toleration, knowing that in its practice it has throughout the centuries, adapted itself to the needs of changing times, solicitous that none of our Hindu subjects should, by reason of birth or caste or community, be denied the consolations and the solace of the Hindu faith."

His Highness the Maharaja had earlier in his reign commanded the appointment of a committee to examine the question of Temple Entry for the 'Avarnas', to find out the extent of the demand for reforms, to ascertain the attitude of the Savarna castes, to examine the question in the light of the Hindu scriptures and formulate proposals as to the lines on which the reform might be effected. The committee expressed their considered opinion that a Parishad of learned persons, well versed in the theory and practice of Hinduism, should be summoned, and that the reform might be effected by the ruler with their approval. They also suggested certain methods by which the rigour of the custom excluding the Avarnas from the temple might be softened. But the Maharaja did not believe in half measures. With an outlook which no Indian monarch had been able to entertain for a couple of thousands of conservative years, His Highness the Maharaja Sree Chitra Thirunal affixed the Sign Manual to the momentous Proclamation. It was on the eve of the Maharaja's birth day in 1112(1936 A.D.) that the edict was promulgated.

The Proclamation was received throughout India with delight and admiration. It was welcomed by the whole civilised world. To the Hindus it was matter of pride and fresh hope. The repercussions of the Proclamation were so great that the Christians and Muslims were so great that the Christians and Muslims were equally warm in giving it a hearty reception. Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer referred to the day of the Proclamation as a unique occasion in the history of India and specially of Hinduism. Gandhiji expressed the hope that "all other Hindu Princes will follow the noble example set by this far-off ancient Hindu State." The Prime Minister of Madras described the Proclamation as the "greatest religious reform in India after the time of Asoka". The Maharaja gave the biggest charity that any ruler could give to his subjects in opening the doors to every class and creed.

### **Vaikom Satyagraha**

A movement had set on foot to demand admission of the certain sections of the people, the so called "unapproachables" banned from approach into the public roads adjacent to the famous temple at Vaikom. Conservative opposition was trotted out with obstinate determination. The feeding of Brahmins inside the temple was regarded as an important offering to the deity, and uninterrupted custom was pleaded by those who opposed the movement. It was contended that if the 'Avarnas' were allowed to come into the approach roads the temple priests would be polluted and the temple consequently defiled. The forward section resolved to try the methods of 'Satyagraha' and several individuals, a large number of whom being Nayars and other caste Hindus, organised a "Jatha" to lay their grievance before Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bai, the Regent of Travancore.

A resolution was moved in the Legislative Council demanding the opening of the temple roads to the 'Avarna' Hindus. But it was thrown out by a majority of twenty-two against twenty-one votes. A little after this Mahatma Gandhi visited Vaikom -1924, interviewed several orthodox

Brahmins and others, and explained the movement as one which was calculated to remove social injustice and to advance the cause of humanity. Public opinion in the state was so favourable that the government threw open the approach roads to the 'Avarnas'. "I call it a bed-rock of freedom", said Mahatma Gandhi, "because the settlement is a document between the people and the state constituting a big step in the direction of liberty in one respect at least". The course of events in Vaikom led to similar attempts in Suchindram and Thiruvappu.

### **Guruvayur Satyagraha**

The famous Guruvayur Satyagraha is a memorable episode in the history of the national movement. With the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee decided to begin Satyagraha before the famous temple at Guruvayur with effect from 1st November, 1931. It was a movement for temple entry and abolition of untouchability. The Satyagraha began accordingly under the leadership of Sri. K. Kelappan. Among the Kerala leaders other than Kelappan were Mannath Padmanabhan, A.K. Gopalan and N.P. Damodaran. Guruvayur began to attract the attention of all India. There were certain untoward incidents during the early period of the Satyagraha. They served to heighten the tension in the minds of the people who were in sympathy with the movement. After the movement had run its course for about ten months, Kelappan entered on a fast before the temple on September, 21, 1932. The fast electrified the atmosphere. On October 2, 1932 Kelappan broke his fast in response to Gandhiji's wishes. There after a referendum was held among the Hindus to find out their views on the question of temple entry. More than 77 percent of the Hindus expressed themselves in favour of temple entry. The Guruvayur temple was thrown open to Harijans only in 1946. Though the Satyagraha did not immediately result in the opening of the Guruvayur temple to all Hindus, the movement helped to create a strong public opinion in the country in favour of temple entry and abolition of untouchability.

### **Rise of representative institutions**

Constitutional reforms were started first in Travancore. A legislative council was created in the state by the Maha Raja Sri Mulam Thirunal in 1888. He reformed the council thrice in his lifetime in 1898, 1919 and in 1921. He also made a unique experiment in 1904 by creating an additional body, larger in size with no law-making powers.

The work of legislation in Travancore, till then, was carried on like any other business of Government; the laws thus made were promulgated by the Rulers of the state in the shape of Regulations and proclamations. First legislative council consist of eight members, six officials and two non-officials, all nominated by the Maha Raja. The Dewan was the ex-officio President. The tenure of the council was three years.

The functions and powers of the council were very limited. Members of the council were very limited. Members of the council had no right to ask questions or to move adjournment motions. Matters to be discussed in the council were also restricted. Laws or regulations passed by the council could get validity only on the signification of the assent of the Maha Raja who had absolute right to give or not to give his assent. In short, "its functions were mainly of an advisory nature"

The people of the state demanded for the first time a share in the government of the state. More than ten thousand people of the state including top-ranking men of all prominent communities signed a memorial in 1891 and submitted it to the Maha Raja. It is known in Travancore history as



the Malayali Memorial. The grievance of the people high-lighted by the memorial was “denial to them of a fair share in the Government of the country and their systematic exclusion from the higher grades of its service. The complaint was against the policy of appointing outsiders as dewans. In fact it was a direct challenge to the authority of the ruler to rule as he pleased and an assertion of the right of the people to have their due share in the government of their state.

The malayali memorial could be regarded as the beginning of a great change to come in the state. It was the first of a series of popular agitations in the state which ultimately resulted in the establishment of responsible government. It was the first movement organised and led by the educated class and first occasion on which the people united in spite their communal and caste differences, on a political issue. Above all, it was the first political expression of a new class the middle class growing in strength in society. All subsequent constitutional reforms in the state were intended in one way or another to meet the growing demands of this new class.

Ten years after the inauguration of the first legislative Council, another constitutional reform was made. A regulation was promulgated by the Maha raja on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 1898. It was called the Travancore Legislative Council. In 1913 the council was given its maximum strength of fifteen members, eight officials and seven non-officials. A change, however, was introduced for the first time in 1907, enabling the members of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly to select to the Council a member for each of the four revenue divisions of the state.

The Sri Mulam popular Assembly of Travancore was an assembly of the representatives of the landholders and merchants in the country created by the Maha Raja in 1904 in addition to the legislative council. It was not a law making body and was therefore not a part of the legislature. The object of calling this assembly into existence according to the government was solely to give the people an opportunity of bringing to the notice of government, their requirements, wishes or grievances on the one hand, and on the other to make the policy and measures of government better known to the people so that all possible grounds of misconception in regard to the action of government may be removed. It was clever device to ensure better understanding between the government and prominent people of the state without giving the latter any power in legislation or administration.

In 1904 the total number of members was 100. The assembly was expected to meet only once a year when it might sit for a few days. Provinces was made for the dewan to preside over the meeting and address the assembly regarding the working of the several departments during the previous year and the measures Government proposed to adopt in the current year. Following the address of the dewan, the members could make representations regarding of the Dewan, the members could make representation regarding the measures affecting the people at large or the different communities and interests. Government servants were not allowed to be members of the Assembly.

The first meeting was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 1904. However, from its very inception, members of the Assembly began to urge the government to enlarge the scope of the Assembly. Moreover, representations were almost continuously made by the members for the legislative council and for proportion of non-official members to the legislative council members of the assembly were not in favour of the assembly and legislative council remaining as two independent

entities, and themselves serving as members of a powerless body. The government made favourable response to their wishes.

In 1932, bicameralism was introduced in Travancore. Two houses came into existence namely, Lower House, the Sree Mulam Assembly, and an Upper House, the Sree Chitra State Council. The earlier bodies were abolished. In Sree Moolam Assembly, of the 72 members, 43 were elected by General Constituencies and 5 were from Special Constituencies. 14 seats were reserved for minority communities. The Sri Chitra State Council had 37 members, of whom 27 were nonofficial's (16 from General Constituencies, 6 from Special Constituencies and 5 nominated). This bicameral setup was established on January 1, 1933. This system continued till 1947.

In Cochin, Diarchy was introduced in 1938. In Malabar, 5 Members were sent to Madras Legislature. Sri. Kongattil Raman Menon was a minister in the C. Rajagopalachari Ministry (1937-39).

### **LEGISLTURE DURING THE RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENTS (1947-1956)**

(Between Independence and formation of the State of Kerala)

On September 4, 1947, the Maharaja of Travancore announced the move to establish a responsible Government. A new Assembly was to be formed. It was to function as the Constituent Assembly. It was called the Representative Body. It had a Council of Ministers headed by a Prime Minister. Pattom A Thanu Pillai was the Prime Minister. The Maharaja was the Constitutional Head. The Responsible Government in Cochin took form on August 14, 1947. The first Prime Minister was Panampilly Govinda Menon. Adult franchise was introduced in 1948. The Legislative Council was renamed as Legislative Assembly. In the First Legislative Assembly of Madras (1937-46), created under the 1935 Act, there were 16 members from Malabar. The State of Travancore-Cochin was formed on July 1st 1949, by merging the states of Travancore and Cochin. The Maharaja of Travancore became the Rajapramukh of the new Travancore-Cochin State. The Legislative Assembly was formed by merging the legislative bodies of Travancore and Cochin. The First Legislative Assembly (1949-51) consisted of 178 members. The Chief Minister of Travancore, T. K. Narayana Pillai became the first Chief Minister of the new State of Travancore-Cochin.

## Module II

### Nationalist and Democratic Movements

Kerala has long been a source of fascination to the social scientists. Notwithstanding the state's small size. There are a number of distinctive socio-economic and political factors, delineating the state of Kerala from the other Indian States. Robin Jeffrey has also drawn our attention to this distinctive nature of popular involvement in the public politics Kerala. Jeffrey even attributes the high level social development in Kerala to this remarkable political culture.

#### *Emergence of Nationalism*

The last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the emergence of nationalism in India. The Indian National Congress was established in 1885 and it soon became the spear-head of the Indian Nationalist Movement. These developments did not go unnoticed in Kerala. A conference was held at Kozhikode in 1904 under the auspices of the Congress and in 1908, a district congress committee was formed in Malabar. Beyond this, there was no political activity worth the name in Malabar.

Political activity in Kerala received a new impetus with the outbreak of the First World War and the spread of the Home Rule Movement. Home Rule leagues sprouted in different places in Malabar and the activities of Congress men received enthusiastic encouragement from the people. In 1916 and 1917, the annual meetings of the District Congress Committee were held with great fanfare under the name of the Malabar District Political Conference. Resolutions were adopted at these conferences, demanding self-government for India and the release of political prisoners. In Travancore and Cochin also, political activities were taken up under the aegis of the Congress. Congress Committees were started in Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam. In 1920, the following resolutions adopted at the Nagpur Session of the Indian National Congress to organise Provincial Congress Committees on a linguistic basis, a Kerala Provincial Congress Committee was formed integrating Congress activities in the three territorial divisions of Kerala. The first All-Kerala Political Conference held at Ottappalam in April 1921 was attended by delegates from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. In a sense, this was the herald of the movement for a united Kerala which - became a reality, 35 years later.

#### *Malabar Rebellion*

The non - co - operation movement was in full swing during this period of time. It was particularly strong in Malabar, where the Moppilas were agitated over the Khilafat issue. The Gandhian movement had a tremendous impact in Kerala, with large numbers joining the satyagraha campaign. Gandhiji visited Malabar in 1921, giving a further impetus to the movement. Khilafat Committees sprang up in large numbers and the fraternity between the Hindus and Muslims, through the work in Congress - Khilafat Committees, was a truly remarkable feature of the non-co-operation movement in Kerala, in its early stages.

The speed with which the Khilafat agitation spread, especially in the Eranad and Valluvanad taluks, created alarm in official circles. A perplexed officialdom clamped down prohibitory orders in the two taluks. Meetings were banned and many people were arrested in the name of law and order. A tragic episode then ensued, namely the Moppila Rebellion or the Malabar Rebellion of 1921. Police attempted to arrest the secretary of the Khilafat Committee of Pokottur in Eranad on a charge of having stolen a pistol. A crowd of 2000 Moppilas from the neighbourhood foiled the attempt. The next day, a police party in search of Khilafat rebels entered the famous Mambaram mosque at Tirurangadi. They seized some records and arrested a few Khilafat volunteers. A rumour spread that the mosque was desecrated. Hundreds of rustic Moppilas converged on Tirurangadi and besieged the local police station. The police opened fire. The mob reacted in a mad fury. Violence spread and engulfed Eranad and Valluvanad taluks and neighbouring areas for over two months. Congress leaders tried in vain to check the violence. Towards the later stages of

the rebellion, owing to unfounded rumour of Hindus having helped the police or sought police help, there were instances of atrocities perpetrated on Hindus. This marred the relations between the two communities. Meanwhile British and Gurkha regiments were rushed to the area. Martial law was clamped. A series of repressive measures followed and by November, the rebellion was practically crushed. Relief operations in the ravaged areas, undertaken mostly by voluntary agencies which received help and funds from Gandhiji, lasted for over six months.

### ***Wagon Tragedy***

The epilogue (in the sense that it came to be known only later) was the "Wagon Tragedy" in which 61 of the 70 Moppila prisoners packed in a closed railway goods wagon and carried to Coimbatore jails, died of suffocation on November 10, 1921. In the wake of the suppression of the Malabar Rebellion and until almost the end of the decade, struggle purely for political freedom was on a low key.

This lull was largely because of the brisk activity on the social front. The emphasis was on constructive programmes in which all people could join together and work irrespective of political views or affiliation. The cry for social equality was particularly strong. This was the background of the famous satyagraha at Vaikom Temple (1924) to be followed up later at the Guruvayoor Temple in 1931. Both of them exemplified the immense potentialities of satyagraha as an instrument of social change and both were started with the blessings of Gandhiji. At Vaikom, the particular demand was only for the grant of right to passage to the untouchables along the approach roads to the temple.

### ***Civil disobedience***

The second phase of the civil disobedience movement, started by Gandhiji with his famous Salt March in March 1930, found enthusiastic response from all parts of Kerala. In several places, particularly at Payyannur and Kozhikode, salt laws were broken and hundreds of agitators courted arrest. A Youth League was formed in Travancore which was able to enlist the dedicated services of quite a good number of spiritual and radical minded young men who later became the prop of the Travancore State Congress.

In the wake of the Civil Disobedience Movement, a parallel movement for responsible Government had begun in Travancore and Kochi. In Travancore, the Nivartana (Abstention) movement began as a protest against the inadequacy of the constitutional reforms of 1932. The Ezhavas, the Christians and the Muslims apprehended that the new reforms, owing to the provisions for restricted franchise on the basis of possession of property and other qualifications, would secure for them far less number of seats in the enlarged legislature than the Nairs.

They therefore demanded that the seats be apportioned on the basis of population strength. The Government, however, did not view their demands favourably. The abstentionists then organized a Joint Political Congress to exhort the voters to abstain from voting. Since the three communities together formed about 70 per cent of the population, their agitation had the characteristics of a mass movement. The Government at first adopted a repressive policy but later yielded to the demands of the abstentionists to some extent. In the election held in 1937, most of the candidates fielded by the Joint Political Congress were elected.

The Haripura Session of the Indian National Congress (1938) had resolved that the Congress as such would keep itself aloof from involvement in the affairs of the princely States. The struggle for responsible Government in the States would therefore, be the responsibility of the people of the respective States themselves. It was in this context that the leaders of the Joint Political Congress decided to form a new organization, merging the identity of the Joint Political Congress. Thus, the

Travancore State Congress came into being in February 1938. It was pledged to the goal of achieving full responsible Government for the people of Travancore. In neighbouring Kochi, the Kochi State Congress was formed.

### ***Malayalee Memorial***

In Travancore, political agitation began with the Nairs who found their dominance on the decline and resented the monopolization of higher offices by the Tamil Brahmins inducted from outside. Their appetite for political participation was whetted with the formation of the Travancore Legislative Council in 1888 - the first ever legislative started in an Indian State. The Malayali Memorial, a memorandum bearing the signatures of over 10,000 people, including a sprinkling of Ezhavas, Christians and Muslims, was submitted to the Maharaja in 1891. It was really a Nair plea for privileges and positions. This was soon followed by an Ezhava Memorial (1896), submitted with over 13,000 signatures pleading for extension of civic rights, Government jobs, etc. to the lower castes. Both the memoranda came to naught. But in the historical perspective, the impact was considerable as they laid the bases for the constitutional style of political agitation in Travancore.

### ***Ezhava Memorial (1896)***

The Ezhavas and other backward communities were denied the admission to Government schools or public services. Ezhava community under the leadership of Dr. Palpu submitted a memorial to the Maharaja in 1896 to get same privileges for Ezhavas which were being enjoyed by Ezhavas who converted to Christianity. Upon receiving negative response, they submitted second "Ezhava Memorial" to Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, during his visit to Trivandrum in 1900. This memorial also faced failure.

### ***Abstention movement***

The Constitutional Reform of 1932 did not satisfy many sections of the population. It complicated the socio-political condition of Travancore. Various religious groups and communities looked upon these reforms from the viewpoint of respective benefits for their communities. The reform of 1922 and 1932 provided an electoral scheme based upon the property qualification. It was beneficial to the Nair communities because they formed the major land owning class in Travancore. It created apprehension in the minds of the people that the Nairs would secure more seats in the Council than they really deserved on the population basis. On this ground the Ezhavas, the Muslims and some sections of the Christians opposed it. They demanded the institution of communal electorates or reservation of seats to different communities strictly in proportion to their population.

The spread of education in the state, the vigorous growth of an indigenous press, and the annual meeting of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly fostered the growth of civic consciousness in a large class of people. Educated Nairs were increasingly admitted to the public services since the Malayali Memorial. In the Legislative council of the state the Nairs had a majority. The Christian, the Ezhava and the Muslim sections of the new class started complaining against the Nair monopoly of government services and the legislature. The leaders of the Christian, the Ezhava and the Muslim groups submitted separate memorials urging Government to abolish property qualification once for all, to introduce universal adult franchise, to introduce the system of communities in the legislature.

The reforms were officially announced on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1932. It contains completely negating the arguments of these communities. Then Christian, the Ezhava and the Muslim groups cold-shouldered the reforms. These groups decided to launch a state wide agitation. They made a united front known as the Joint political Congress. The Joint Political Congress succeeded in marshalling the support of the bulk of the three communities. The agitation assumed the shape of boycott of the election to the legislature under the new regulation. It is known in Travancore history as Nivarthanam or "the Abstention Movement" the decision to launch the agitation was taken by the Joint Political congress at its meeting held at the L.M.S hall, Trivandrum on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1933.



The coalition of the three communities against the government had a profound impact on the latter. Within a few years, government took steps to satisfy their demands, especially those of backward communities. Including the Ezhava and the Muslims. Provision was made for reservation of seats for backward communities in the public service. The historic Temple Entry Proclamation was issued in October, 1937. The Joint Political Congress appeared in the garb of a political party-“The Travancore State Congress” in 1938. Its object was the attainment of responsible Government in the state.

### **The Left movements**

The history of the Left movement in Kerala is a subject that is of utmost importance and great interest to those who are committed to the cause of social progress. Kerala can never ignore the immense contribution of the Left movement in making Kerala one of the most progressive and Left-oriented States in India. The Communist Movement in India emerged out of a situation that developed in close connection with the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles of the Indian people.

From the mid-nineteenth century itself India had become a focal point of attention in the writings of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. Marx’s ‘*Chronological notes on Indian History*’ shows evidence of his keen interest in Indian affairs. In two celebrated articles-‘*The British Rule in India*’ and ‘*The Future Results of British Rule in India*’ published in 1853 in the *New York Daily* he highlighted the exploitative character of British Rule in India. According to Marx and Engels “the immediate aim of the communists was same as that of the other proletarian parties: “formation of a proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy and conquest of 22 political powers by the proletariat”.

In fact the history of Communism in Kerala, until the establishment of an independent Communist party in 1940, was the history of its struggle against foreign domination and for the introduction of political, economic and social reforms along with the Congress party. The communist groups had already begun to feel that apart from the workers and peasants party it was necessary to organize an independent Communist party. Thus the first central organization of the Communist party in India was formed in 1933 and its activities were intensified under the General Secretary-ship of P.C. Joshi. Though declared unlawful they managed to issue a monthly magazine ‘*Communists*’ and a number of pamphlets. In Kerala, while working within the Congress, the Communist leaders like P.Krishna Pillai, E.M.S.Namboodiripad, K.P.Gopalan, Mayarath Sankaran, and others, built their own ideology among workers, peasants, students and intellectuals, thus laying the organizational foundation for the future Communist Party.

The lineage of the Communist party of India in Kerala can be traced to the left tendencies within the Congress as well as non-Congress movements and the crystallization of the former in the Congress Socialist Party. Kerala came to Communism through Congress socialism. The Communists in Kerala were successful in linking their class and mass organizations with the national movement and emerged as the unquestionable leaders of the national movement during the post-war revolutionary upsurge. Many of the leaders who led a radical leftist movement in Kerala came under the influence of the Marxist-Leninist ideology in the thirties particularly after the termination of the Civil Disobedience Movement.

The Communist leaders like P.Krishnapillai, E.M.S.Namboodiripad, A.K.Gopalan and many others participated in the mainstream of national movement as ardent followers of the Indian National Congress. However gradually they shifted their ideological commitment to Marxism-Leninism.

The secret Kerala branch of the communist party started functioning from 1937. Through study classes and pamphleteering, it apparently intended to teach the new-comers the official policies and programmes of the socialist party and thus they were slowly converted into

communists. When the Second World War broke out on 1st September 1939 India was declared a co-belligerent without her consent. The situation created by war intensified the ideological struggle between the left and right wings inside the Indian National Congress.

In December 1939, a crucial and secret meeting of some 90 prominent workers of Kerala Congress Socialist Party met at Pinarayi in Tellicheery to consider the formation of communist party. 28 They decided on a transformation and to linkup with the popular agrarian and working class struggle against the economic crisis and sufferings brought out by the world war. The formation of the party was declared on 26th January 1940 through the writings on the walls by using tar. 29 The supreme concern of Communism was the final perfection of humanity in a classless society. The prominent leaders like P.Krishnapillai went underground to organize the party as it was under ban. The first job of the party was to mobilize the people and bring peasant organizations and trade unions together for a united action against the government. While the communist party in Kerala is part of a national organization, from the beginning it enjoyed a great deal of autonomy to accommodate local conditions.

The ideological change following the inception of the Communist party made the Karshaka sangham a militant organization. They were against the oppressive measures of the government and its wartime activities, and thus the Communists in Kayyur started a revolt in March 1941. It was thus the transformation of an illiterate and oppressed peasantry in a remote village like Kayyur evolved into a group of politically organized people and they were brought into the mainstream of freedom struggle.

In the pre-independence days the Communists merely represented the radical wing within the Congress, and disagreed with the national leadership over the political, economic and social reforms to be introduced in Kerala. When the ban on the Communists was lifted on 26th July 1942, the Communist party began to function in Kerala as a lawful party. The August Resolution and subsequent agrarian and political struggles initiated by the Communists finally led them to extremism after independence. After independence famine situation continued, essential commodities were highly priced, weavers had no proper work and the ration system was controlled by the wholesale merchants. The immediate result of this situation was continuous starvation and rural poverty. The peasant activists and Communists alerted the people against such situation through meetings, protests, jathas etc.. It was against the background the Second Congress of the Communist party met at Calcutta from 28th February to 6th March 1948. The party chose B.T.Ranadive in place of P.C.Joshi as its secretary. The communists continued their work mainly among the peasants and workers and followed the ideology of Marxism-Leninism.

When the Communist party came to power in Kerala in 1957, it framed lot of measures for the development of different sectors especially to the agricultural field. In the Modern period Travancore was the first Indian State to have a Legislative.

In the general election the Communists secured maximum number of seats to the legislature. The first and the most remarkable success of the ministry was the gathering together of eleven outstanding politicians and professionals who were uniformly imaginative and efficient. Every one of them had a reputation of being incorruptible and knowledgably. The Chief Minister though only 48 was among the top leaders of the Indian Left. The next in the list was C.Achutha Menon who was of great intellectual capacity and impeccable character. VR Krishna Iyer who later rose to be a judge of the Supreme Court was already a legal luminary. Health Minister A.R Menon was one of the senior most freedom fighters and a popular surgeon. The education minister Prof. Joseph

Mundassery was an eminent Sanskritised literary critic an activist in the teachers and co-operative movement and an eminent educationist with many remarkable books to his credit. The Speaker of the assembly Sankara Narayanan Thampy was also a legendary figure in the freedom struggle and a professional lawyer.

The high percentage of literacy rate, acute political conscious which created by the leaders like P.Krishnapillai, A.K.Gopalan and E.M.S.Namboodiripad, the chronic unemployment among the educated, the intense population pressure on land and a lack of industrial enterprises to relieve that pressure, all constituted a fertile soil for Communism. Further there was ideological commitment for a social and economic egalitarianism which leads to the growth of Communism in Kerala.

### **Peasant movements**

Kerala, the southern-most region on the western coast of India, is one of the states where land monopoly and absentee landlordism had been abolished under the statutory provisions of land reform acts and other legislations since 1970. Behind this development is a long history of protest movements, agrarian struggles and peasant revolts. Since the establishment of the British Raj in Malabar and its political hegemony over Travancore and Cochin, there were armed revolts and rebellions against the alien government in which the peasantry and the feudal class participated. The revenue regulation of the British, a mixture of Zamindari and Ryotwari systems, adversely affected pre-colonial agrarian relations in this region.

The large-scale extraction of surplus-produce in the form of revenue and cash payment directly and indirectly by the British from the peasantry contributed to the growth of rural poverty and pauperization among all classes related to production. The major revolts in the early decades of the nineteenth century against the colonial system, led by Pazhassi, Veluthampi, Paliyat Achan and the Kurichiyas, had taken place in this background. The spontaneous and sporadic revolts by the Mappila peasantry continued throughout the last century in south Malabar. Even colonial administrators like William Logan were compelled to highlight the agrarian origins of such disturbances. The British efforts to ameliorate the grievances of the peasantry by statutory intervention in the existing landlord-tenant relations failed miserably, as the colonial jurists and administrators did not want to abrogate the rights and privileges of the landowning class or the Janmis. They believed that any step in that direction would weaken ultimately the colonial government.

However in Travancore and Cochin, the native feudalistic governments introduced certain agrarian legislations in the second half of the nineteenth century to fulfil the requirements of fixity of tenure, fair rent and free transfer and thereby facilitate capital investments in coffee and tea plantations by the European capitalists and joint stock companies.<sup>5</sup> These legislations and their amendments and the subsequent legislations like the Nair Regulations against the matrilineal system, a feudal institution, in the long-run weakened the traditional feudal class and landlordism. In Malabar, the planter capitalist interests had been concentrated mainly in Wynad, where the major part of the land holdings had been obtained by the British government through escheat and confiscation. Therefore, the British never felt the necessity of an agrarian legislation in Malabar. There they strengthened the interests of the feudal class and kept the peasantry without fixity of



tenure and fair rent. This intra-regional difference in the land tenurial relations of Malabar and Travancore- Cochin can be traced in the character and growth of agrarian struggles in these two regions as well.

In the 20th century, Malabar and Kasargod came to the forefront of anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggles, in which the peasantry were the main participants, whereas in Travancore-Cochin the main role in these struggles was played by the labourers and working class.

In Malabar-Kasargod, the peasant movements and agrarian struggles were part of the mainstream of the nationalist movement. This situation even led to the emergence of peasant nationalism. The Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movements in Malabar led to violent uprisings mainly by the Mappila peasantry in the southern taluks of Ernad and Valluvanad. This rebellion of 1921 in Malabar was probably the greatest anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolt after 1857. The revolt was brutally suppressed by the British through enforcing 'shoot at sight' orders against the Mappilas under martial law. The rebellion drew its strength primarily from the marginal and poor peasantry. Later the Indian National Congress disowned this peasant mobilization as it culminated in violence and rebellion. The brutal suppression of the marginal peasantry and the subsequent introduction of Muslim League politics by the rich sections of the Mappila community restricted the growth of the nationalist movement in the southern taluks of Malabar. In brief, these taluks were kept away from the mainstream of the nationalist movement.

During the 1930s, the Civil Disobedience Movement, a programme launched as part of the struggle for freedom, spread to places like Calicut, Cannanore, Payyanur and Kasargod in Malabar. The peasantry and the rural proletariat participated in the programme as individuals but not as a united class. The reason was that the orthodox Congress leadership, which largely originated from the urban middle class, did not like the politicization of the peasantry. They did not realise the need for a separate platform for peasants as they felt the Indian National Congress itself was a kisan or peasant organisation.

However the impact of the Great Depression and the growing frustration with Gandhian methods in the struggle for freedom compelled many of the nationalists to organize the Congress-Socialist Party and bring out radical changes in the programme. A unit of the party was organized in Malabar in 1934 and it decided to mobilize the workers and peasants as separate class organizations. In 1936, the All-India Kisan Sabha was organized with the ultimate aim of 'complete freedom from economic exploitation and achievement of full economic and political power for peasants and workers and all other exploited classes'.

Subsequently, the All-Malabar Karshaka Sangham, an association of the peasantry, was organized with a network of units at taluk and village levels. The class differentiation among the peasants like the rich, middle, poor and landless agricultural labourers was not taken into account as part of a united programme. The leadership of the movement came from the educated middle class and primary schoolteachers in the beginning. Gradually through the peasant study classes and organizational work, a group of leaders came up from the peasants themselves. The peasant association determined to stop all illegal collections and feudal levies realized by the landlords as customary dues from the peasants. The association led peasant marches or Jathas to the houses of local landlords and demanded several concessions. When the Congress Ministry came into power in Madras, the association demanded the implementation of the Karachi resolutions relating to the

agrarian programme of the Congress. They also demanded effective tenancy legislation for Malabar and Kasargod.

For the peasant activists, it was a difficult task to organize a peasantry divided by the caste system and sectarianism. Many of the peasant activists in Malabar belonged to the upper castes and feudal families. Their visits to ordinary peasant families, not as exploiters but as emancipators, established a cordial relationship with the peasantry. From the houses of low caste families the activists took 'Kanji' or porridge and showed them that the traditional caste barriers which separated them were broken. The local association like the Abhinava Bharat Yuvak Sangham helped the Congress-Socialists in their work of organizing the peasantry.

The organization of the peasantry was a difficult task in many of the villages on account of the fear complex of the peasants against their landlords. Most of the peasantry, who had no permanent tenurial rights on the lands and enjoyed only inferior rights like Verumpattam first hesitated to join the movement. Further, the dominant caste position of the landlords helped them excommunicate the tenants from society and suspend their traditional social relations based on 'purificatory cloth' on occasions of birth, puberty and death. Many such customs had their origin in a superstitious caste-oriented feudal system. As such the landlords were in a position to suppress a rebellious tenant at material and ideological levels.

The peasants belonged to different ritualistic and caste groups. Thus to organize them at an ideological level in the struggle against the dominant economic and caste groups was a difficult process. The illiterate peasants could not digest the ideology of Marxism-Leninism properly, or its political philosophy of class struggle and economic determinism. There the indigenous social philosophy which criticized caste and priesthood and economic exploitation came to the help of the peasant activists and the nationalists. Philosophers like Brahmananda Siva Yogi, Vagbhatananda and other reformers came to the help of peasant activists in an ideological struggle against the dominant feudal class. Some of the traditional institutions that existed in this region also helped the growth of the peasant movement.

In north Malabar there had been a network of ritualistic caste associations which had existed through centuries. Each caste had a common organization and their folk deities like Teyyam. These caste associations were entirely different from the modern caste associations like the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam and the Nair Service Society. The traditional ritualistic caste associations like Kazhakam, Muchilot and Kannangat were integral parts of a feudal society. Such associations had virtually been controlled by dominant land owning institutions like Tarawads and rich matrilineal houses. As such these traditional associations strengthened feudal exploitation through their elders even in the colonial system.

When nationalism had developed in this region these associations had played a constructive role in the entire movement. The members of these associations met every month in Manram, a common place of worship, where Teyyam deities were propitiated. Therefore in the new political context, the nationalists and the peasant activists could work upon this existing traditional foundation of ritualistic caste organizations. Leaders like E.M.S.Namboodiripad had stated that the caste associations had helped in the organizational part of the political association. Later, when the communist movement developed in this region, most of the members of the ritualistic caste associations joined the party.

In 1937, a secret cell of the Communist Party of Kerala had been organized in Calicut consisting of P. Krishna Pillai, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, N.C. Sekhar and K. Damodaran. The leadership was given to this cell by S.V. Ghate from the Communist Party of India. In 1939, at the outbreak of the Second World War, the Congress-Socialists in Malabar decided to convert themselves into Communists and launch a mass movement against the war and the imperialists.

The All-Malabar Karshaka Sangham and the Communist Party decided to observe an Anti-Repression Day on 15th September 1940, against the war situation and the repressive measures of the government. The meetings and processions on that day were banned by the authorities. In spite of such orders the peasants and workers participated in large numbers in processions organized on that day. In places like Tellicherry, Mattanur and Morazha there were firings against the demonstrators. They also reacted violently. Following these developments the Malabar Karshaka Sangham and its local units were banned by the government. The police took all sorts of oppressive measures against the nationalists and the peasant activists.

### ***The Kayyur Movement***

Therefore the political mobilization of the peasantry against the landlords and the British Raj was given priority by the Communists and the peasant activists. In a small village known as Kayyur, in March 1941, there was a demonstration by them against the oppressive measures of the police in the rural areas. It was organized by the local Communist cell. Further these peasants demanded the release of remanded peasants and activists in the Morazha and Mattanur cases. Some of these demonstrators from Kayyur were also arrested by the police.

Being Communists, the peasants were inspired by the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, the philosophy of the working class. Thus they shouted slogans for the victory of the Soviet Union, the first State established by the workers and peasants. There were further protest movements in Kayyur village against the police arrests which led to the drowning and death of a police constable. Such developments and transformation of an illiterate and oppressed peasantry in a remote village into politically motivated freedom fighters and anti-imperialist are interesting aspects of the modern history of Kerala. After the termination of the World War, the Communists once again decided to carry out their anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggles. They were motivated by the political ideology of 'revolutionary upsurge' and activation of peasantry as demanded in the party document, Forward to Find Struggle of 5th August 1946. In Malabar, the pauperised peasantry and the agricultural labourers adopted an action programme to stop black-marketing of food grains and cultivate more wastelands owned by the landowning class and the government.

The incorporation of the princely states into the Indian Union and the mass struggle for that programme had been adopted as policy by the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Therefore in Travancore the peasantry and the working class decided to fight against the policy of the Dewan, who wanted Travancore to be an independent state with an American-model constitution. The oppressive measures of the Travancore government resulted in violent clashes which culminated in an armed struggle against the police in Punnapra and Vayalar from 24 to 27 October, 1946. Nearly 800 persons were killed and many found missing. The Communist Party and its feeder associations valiantly sacrificed many of their members for the right cause of integration of Travancore with the Indian Union. A Travancore-aid committee was organized in

Malabar to help the victims. Punnappa-Vayalar gave a new message to the workers and peasants in Malabar to activate their movement against feudal agrarian relations and imperialism.

In Malabar, the peasant struggles had been concentrated mainly on wasteland cultivation, detection of surplus food grains accumulated for black-marketing, etc. In Karivellur, the local landlord wanted to transfer the paddy rent collected by him for utilization in his temple. The peasant organisation protested against his action and the situation led to police firing against the crowd. It took away the lives of two poor peasants.

In Kavumbayi, the peasant association wanted to cultivate the waste land monopolized by the local landlord. It led to police-firing and the death of five small peasants and the arrest of a large number of peasants and activists. In places like Koothali, the peasant association tried to cultivate the wasteland owned by the government. In such organized and activated struggles thousands of peasants were imprisoned. The Government of Madras promulgated an ordinance on 23 January, 1947, to suppress these struggles and arrest the Communists. In some places there were struggles against the caste system and for authorization of temple entry to the depressed caste members. Several cases were charged against the peasant activists involved in such struggles against the feudal order.

A study of the peasant struggles in Kerala highlights some significant characteristics of the movement. They developed as part of the nationalist movement in which all sections of the peasantry participated. But in the post-war crisis of 1946 and 1948 it was mainly a movement of the small peasantry and the landless agricultural labourers. The leadership of such struggles was provided by the Communists and their peasant organizations. These struggles had qualitatively changed from those of the early phase on account of various factors like ideology, changes in the pattern of agrarian classes and social transition. During the early phase the struggles were influenced by the philosophy of non-violence, the ideology of the national movement, although the class organization of the peasantry had been based on the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Further it was a united movement consisting of all sections of the peasantry and that was reflected in the character of the All-Indian Kisan Sabha.

The main techniques of the agrarian struggles were militant agitations, demonstrations and protest movements. Further, the programme was not concentrated on abolition of landlordism or nationalization of large land holdings. The role of landless agricultural labourers had not been articulated as it was a united movement. It was mainly an ideological struggle fought against the imperialists and the landlords by large sections of peasantry. In Kerala, the class character of the national movement had significantly influenced the character of the peasant struggles during the first phase of the movement.

### **Trade union movement in Kerala**

The social revolution of great magnitude that occurred in Kerala was never seen as part of the general, national mainstream of changes in the same period. The trade unions in Kerala started during the time of the trade expansion. James Dm, an English man started a factory "Deras Mail Company" at Alleppey in 1958. Many workers came to the factory from five to six miles away. They came early in the morning and returned at night. Children also worked in the factory.

With the arrival of the British, not only the administration but the monopoly in trade also passed into their hands. Gradually British capital found its way to Kerala and began establish

factories and investing in plantations and banking. Quite a few factories were established at Alleppey, Quilon, Kolachal and other places in Travancore. Along with foreign firms the native bourgeoisie also started establishing factories and banks.

On March 31' 1922 the first meeting was summoned under the chairmanship of Advocate P.B. Muhammed. They formed a Workers Association named "Labour Union". This was the first approach to a trade union in Kerala Then under the chairmanship of T.C. Kesavan Vaidyan an executive committee was formed. An opinion was brought forth that the labour union must be made as "Travancore Labour Association: Afterwards this union grew as "Travancore Coir Factory Workers union".

The membership to the union was made on August 1922. At that time the workers were hesitant to join the union. They looked upon the union as an enemy. A large number of Coir factories sprang up especially at Alleppy and Cherthala. During the first decade of its existence, the Association functioned more as a welfare organization rather than as a radical trade union. The labourers were not keen on joining the Association. However, they joined the Association just to please the Moopan.

It was in 1934 the first general strike of the Coir factory workers was organised by the labour Association at Alleppy. A very strong progressive and radical section was steadily growing with the Association. The workers were exploited both by agents of owners of factories and local entrepreneurs although the production was increased by the hardship of the workers, the workers did not get any increase in wages.

According to some historians attempts at organizing labour in the coir mats and mattings industry in Alleppey began as early as 1920 The organisation was known as the Travancore Labour Association (TLA). The TLA was registered under the Travancore Trade union Act of 1937. On registration, TLA was renamed as the Travancore Coir Factory Workers Union (TCFW).

Along with the Travancore area Cochin and Malabar areas were also having their own share in Trade Union activities. In organising some of the unions in Malabar, the founding members of the communist's movement played a very significant role; union struggle became part of the freedom struggle'. The development of the trade union movement and the emergence of the communist wing in it must be considered as part of the mainstream of freedom struggle and the subsequent growth of political democracy. A number of Malabar leaders of the communist party started a youth league and carried its message to Travancore. Meanwhile, a division known as the progressive group emerged in the state congress in Travancore. It particularly emphasized the need for mobilizing workers for the freedom struggle and openly alleged that the state congress was trying the line of Gandhism and non-violence and that it was not agitated enough. Subsequently, a rift in the state congress between left and right came to limelight.

'The Punnapra-Vayalar revolt of 1946 is considered as important landmark in the history of trade unionism in Kerala. The workers in Alleppey declared a general strike in September 1946. The police and the workers clashed and the police got the worst of it. On October 24, 1946 the bloodiest of armed conflicts, a battle between organized group of workers and police took place. Though started as a trade union agitation, the Punnapra-Vayalar revolt was part of a political struggle for achieving freedom and responsible government.

The objective basis for the trade union movement and the struggle by the working class of Kerala was provided by the extreme economic hardships and the poor and inhuman conditions of work particularly during the pre independence period. But with independence of the country, the cause of the struggle reverted again to economic demands. Gradually a new era of trade unionism has emerged in Kerala. Following the split of the Communist Party in 1964 the AITUC led unions began to split all over the state. The trade union arena in Kerala has become completely politicised. Each political party formed and nourished its own trade union wing. This resulted in unhealthy inter union rivalries. It is clear that trade unionism in Kerala has been entering into a new phase of growth which continues till now.

With the increase of industrialization, expanding labour force, growing trade union consciousness, increasing rate of literacy among the workers are some of the causes that led to a tremendous growth in trade union in Kerala. Kerala is now witnessing less of militancy in its labour movement, which was its bane in the past. Strikes and agitations for increase of wages and improvement of service conditions are on the decrease.

In the early days, the leadership of the trade unions emerged from the working class itself. But in the late 1930s and 40s, the working class was subjected to political mobilisation from outsiders who wanted to fight the British, the Raja and the Dewan. Fighting the employers and the establishment were complementary. This thinking spread all throughout Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. They had the common bond of communist ideology. In the process the working class could not distinguish between political issues and economic and industrial issues. It was quite natural that these could not be separated from each other. As far as patterns of initiation is concerned, almost all trade union leaders in Kerala have had strong political affiliations. Often the trade union activity is used as a stepping stone into political leadership sometimes, both the positions have come in conflict with each other. And in turn almost all the political parties have used the organised forces of working class and student movement for political purposes.

In Kerala the trade union movement has strengthened the left movement involving the CPI and the RSP and in turn these political parties have championed the cause of working class. In Kerala in the period 1947-65, irrespective of the political uncertainties and splits in the union movement, the trade union should come to adopt a common united stand whenever their broad interests were affected. Increasingly they had come to believe in the method of collective bargaining.

As far as the question of affiliation is concerned, all the trade unions in Kerala are affiliated to the central trade unions like the Indian Trade Union Congress (INTUC), All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), United Trade Union Congress (UTUC), Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) and Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS). They have close links with the Congress, CPI, CPI(M), RSP and Socialist Party.

The pattern of financial flow between the union movements and political parties explain the degree of political involvement of organised labour. The surplus budget of the trade union is a regular source of political party expenditure. The Kerala State Trade Union Council, the subsidiary of AITUC had many times raised funds for the party. The CPM and CITU have amassed several crores of rupees worth of property, buildings, vehicles, and other assets. As far as the leadership conflict is concerned, since the formation of the CITU, the Marxist unions concentrated in enhancing their political clout by organising and building up an extremist movement. But soon the



militancy spread to other unions. Along with militancy, irresponsibility also crept in. It was common for one worker to take membership in more than one union and shift his loyalty according to his wish. At times, non union strikes also took place against the advice of a recognised union. Despite political and ideological differences, inter-union rivalry, politics of the union and leadership conflicts, a great degree of unity of goals was evident among the trade unions in Kerala. Multiplicity of trade unions has resulted in low incidence of political strikes. The trade union movement during 1920-67 was running parallel to the freedom struggle in the first phase and direct involvement in the socio-economic development of the state in the final phase. But political instability in the state tarnished its image as a progressive force.

Trade Union Act is out of date in dealing with the new issues. There was a demand for legislation to deal with the problem of union recognition either through secret ballot or membership verification. Almost all the central trade unions are concerned about the possible fall out of Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation on the Indian working class. They are deeply concerned about the retrenchment, cuts in wages and benefits enjoyed by the working class for a long time and also restrictions on legitimate trade union rights. Hence they have planned to form joint action councils and launch agitations against the Government's New Economic Policy.

On major issues of industrial relations, the trade unions in Kerala have come forward to form joint action councils and programmes. In such cases, it was difficult for the employees to drive one union against another. In some cases, some of the management had even signed agreements with unregistered unions. It is observed that once "the trade unions are militant, employers are legalistic and state tender minded". But now it seems that after economic reforms were initiated, the unions are becoming more legalistic, employers more aggressive and militant, while the State continues to be soft and tender minded. The state must project itself as a facilitator rather than a provider of social protection. The employers are compelled to formulate new strategies to become more competitive.

The trade unions have been compelled to accept the reality of reforms and change and are advised to make appropriate adjustment to their attitudes and policies and also to make little sacrifices to make production efficient and keep industries running instead of forcing them to close down. The State is becoming more capital friendly and reversing its earlier labour friendly approach. One important result of economic reforms is the decline of trade unions. Jobs in the organised formal sector are being lost all around. Workers are now more concerned with keeping their jobs than demanding further improvements.

Many trade unions are witnessing declining membership and lack of interest even in paying their membership fees. Unions are deliberately kept out of joint consultations and decision-making process. To some employers, unions have become a nuisance. The workers have failed to understand the underlying threat that these labour laws are in the process of modification in favour of the Capital. The trade union movement today stands divided and fragmented. The political parties treat the unions as appendages to boost their vote banks. In Kerala, a new generation of workers is emerging. There is little concern for larger issues like growing unemployment, declining industries, loss of investor confidence and worsening wage relativities and even re emergence of contract system and pre capitalist modes of production. There is little democracy at

the work place as well as in the day to day functioning of trade unions. In some unions there is no internal democracy.

Basic issues concerning the working class in general and specific group of workers in particular are not discussed and debated. In Kerala, the trade union movement today is trying to establish a common platform for launching a “save industry” campaign and build trade union unity cutting across political differences. They know that the employer also is threatened. So unless both the partners join together, survival becomes difficult. The focus must be on larger organisational goals rather than personal or individual gains. What we need is a work culture based on mutual trust and good work and opportunities to grow, both for the employer and the employee.



### Module III

#### Political Parties in Kerala

A proper evaluation of the party system in Kerala is a painstaking task. The state is noted for its curious political behaviour and complex party relations. The state is noted for its curious political behaviour and complex party relations except three or four of them, almost all parties have entered into mutual working alliances and pushed the ethos of ideology. Parties are classified according to the nature and style, such as (1) national, secular, Socialistic; (2) leftist, socialist, and (3) Regional, Communal.

Kerala is the geographical expression of three sub-regions, with somewhat different political history and culture: Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. The legacy and political style expressed by these units and inner political history added to the diverse political style of Kerala. Travancore was marred by political and communal rivalries and the interaction of state Congress with communal associations predominated the political scenario. Cochin was small in size and its contribution was also not conspicuous like that of Travancore. Malabar, as a province of the erstwhile Madras State, had problems as well as prospects. The tempo of the national movement was effective and the communist penetration in to the rural belt was very much successful. The emergences of Muslim League in Malabar are also a potent factor in state politics.

The sum total of these developments since independence was the steady decline of one-party government and the inevitability of coalition pattern of politics. The personal feuds, factional struggles, communalism within and outside the congress altogether brought the communist to power in 1957. Since then, party struggle underwent a metamorphosis with Congress or Communists as the main axis in state polity. The third force was the articulation of caste and interest groups under the garb of regional parties. As result, the two strong forces humbled to the regional parties and the political space left little scope for any substantial polarization. Realignment became the order of the day. Seats were captured by the manipulation of votes by shifting coalition pattern. Ideology suffered the severest causality. Parties began to split, splinter-splitting and make up politics became a routine exercise.

The heterogeneous nature of polity is also the complexion of the society. Its record in literacy, unemployment, density of population, female ratio, and communication-demand deserves specific mention. Kerala pushed into the limelight, with the election of the communist party to power in 1957. Conversely, the vested interest groups pulled them successfully out of power by an unconstitutional procedure. The faction-ridden Congress could neither offer stability nor political alternative.

The concept of bargaining culture is interpreted as a necessary balance or even as a consensus. Agitational style of politics, coalitionism based on sheer expediency, pre-dominance of pressure groups etc., became the permanent features of Kerala's polity. Elections and capture of power became the goals of almost every party. Alliances were forged and broken without any guilt of conscience. Almost all parties (Major, Medium, Minor and sub-Minor) obtained chances to serve the people through different coalitions.

Violence is not feature of the political culture in Kerala unlike in West Bengal, Assam or Punjab. Except some minor incidents of RSS-Marxist clashes and communal riots, Kerala is comparatively peace minded. But the polity is ever sensitive with constant faction-struggles inside and outside the legislature. The major and minor communities alike have political arms. It is different question, how far these parties could mobilize their community. Since pressure is there, they suit label pressure-parties. Interestingly, the Congress and Communist forces depend on them.

### **National Parties**

The Parties under this group are the Indian National Congress (I), Communist Party of India (Marxist), Communist Part of India, Barathiya Janatha Party major political party in Kerala. The nature, character, ideology and working arrangement of these parties are related to national outlook.

#### ***Indian National Congress (I)***

The legacy of the national movement, socialist appeals of the organizations, consistent support of the middle class and recruitment of working class, youth factor and other elements form the basic nature of this party. The INC (I) though formally launched on 1 January 1978, is the legal and political successor of the major Congress Party which survived after independence and the major rift in 1969. The appeals it carried underwent serious metamorphosis at various stages. Independence, the State Congress was an amalgamation of regional, communal interests and a sizeable set of freedom-loving nationalists. The post-independence period saw Congress moving further, untouched by Gandhian character. Personal feuds, regional and communal struggles and functional rivalries intensified during this period. With the split in 1969 the old guards were purged and the leadership gap was ably filled by youth element which brought a radical momentum in the Congress. Throughout these periods the Congress remained the centre of power struggle in state politics.

The post-1969 period saw Congress adopting cadre-party technique and the new leadership under A.K Antony and K.Karunakaran successfully challenging the major enemy, the CPI (M). The new Congress was mainly responsible for the Marxist wilderness during 1969-80 periods. Adopting the communist style of alienating the major force (which the Communists tried successfully in 1957, 1965 and 1967 elections) the Congress entered into working alliance with CPI and Muslim League. It carried and encouraged minor parties as well, with the result it could recapture the lost image in 1967 and the setback came only in 1978.

In the 1978 split, ideology had a secondary role in 1969. The two powerful groups in the KPCC, the Antony faction and Karunakaran faction played cards well in the new split. The decline of Mrs. Gandhi's image in the post-emergency wave accelerated the splitting process. While the powerful Antony group joined Congress (U), the Congress (I) in Kerala became the mainstay of Karunakaran faction. Between 1978 and 1980 the Congress (U) was wavering but the Congress (I) stickled to the traditional policy of challenging the Marxists.

The Congress had in the meantime split into two the INC (I) and the INC (U). Due to difference in the INC (U) again split to another groups Congress (S). Again it split into another faction INC (A) under the leadership of A.K Antony. The merger of the INC (I) and the INC (A)

and of two factions of the happen in middle eighties then Congress (I) won 1991 Assembly election K.Karunakaran again Chief Minister of Kerala. Due to “Pam oil” case K.Karunakaran resign from the CM post, Antony Became C.M of Kerala. This power exchange also transfers the power structure and Leadership of Congress under the Control of Antony group. This intensified the growth of Group politics in INC (I), these groups are (A) and (I) group. First one under the control of A.K Antony, later under the control of K.Karunakaran. Congress party face another split under the leadership K.Karunakaran he formed new party it named “Democratic Indira Congress (K)”. DIC (K) didn’t create any impact in Kerala Politics, later they came back to Congress. In the 2011 Assembly election Oomen Chany Became the Chief Minister of Kerala.

It is a centrist party without committing either to left or right, although it has an appeasing tendency which recruited large number of middle class. Its faith in peace, democracy, secularism, liberalism and parliamentary democracy elevates the party’s position to a national structure with a secular and socialist image. At the same time it reinforced its traditions among the socio-religious sections of the society. Therefore the Congress appeals to the majority middle class. It made traditional inroads among the Christian and Nair Muslim support. It wins some sections of labour sector and scheduled caste and some Ezhava support. Thus, the Congress in total represents a cross-section of the Kerala society.

#### ***Communist Party of India (Marxist)***

Communist Party of India (Marxist) is undoubtedly the biggest party in Kerala. It has a disciplined cadre, consistent leadership and popular appeal. But that provided the major source of its strength and weakness when the Congress and other parties adopted a pragmatic coalition strategy to put the CPI (M) in political wilderness during 1969-79 and since 1981. CPI (M) literally believes in socialism and communism through the establishment of the state of the dictatorship of proletariat. The social base of the party are the poor peasants of the lower middle class, agricultural workers, organized labourers and the hard core of the NGOs in state service. Besides, it carries the majority of the poor Ezhavas and harijans and the minority of Muslim, Christian and Nairs. Since its origin in 1964, it emerged as the major Communist Party and in certain times out shadowed the rival CPI. Unlike the Congress, it was free from loose defections and floor-crossings except on solid grounds. The revolutionary image it built up with the Punnappra Vayalar and Kayyur incidents and the recruitment of educated youth, poor peasants and agricultural workers made it a tremendous force in Kerala. It was particularly strong in the rural areas of Travancore and Malabar, and in industrial areas it built up strong trade-union network. The anti-Congress wave, in addition, was crucial to its victory in 1957.

The split in the party after the Chinese attack made the CPI favourable to the Soviet Union, whereas the rebel group organized the powerful CPI (M). The leaders in the undivided party, particularly Dange, Rajeswara Rao and M.N Govindan Nair, stood with the official group. The rebels led by E.M.S Nambooripad, A.K Gopalan and others organized the CPI (M) and carried the wind their favour.

The CPI (M) initially chalked out a two-fold strategy to defeat the Congress and expose the weakness of CPI in Kerala. It succeeds in both in the 1965 midterm elections, and the Marxists became the biggest party in Kerala. The big-brother attitude of the CPI (M) estranged the fellow-partners and splinter Marxist group let loose a reign of terror in various places of the state.

Still the CPI (M) is very powerful in many respects. Its popular base does not show any considerable decline, although not in terms of seats captured in the Assembly. The student, youth, labour and agrarian reforms of the CPI-led government reduced a section of tenants, who are known as neo-landlords, the Marxists could develop new social base.

A clear polarization of leftist forces is difficult under Kerala conditions. Yet the CPI(M) can bring together like minded parties such as the CPI and left parties. Coalitionism in Kerala is not streamlined on ideological or similar economic-political interests. The immediate concern was power and to defeat the majority enemy. The main agenda behind L.D.F to defeat the Congress or U.D.F .Now CPI(M) General Secretary is kodiari balakrishnan and two prominent stalwart of CPI(M) are V.S Achuthanthan and Pinarayi Vijayan.

### ***Communist Party of India***

CPI is a leftist-socialist group. After the major split in the undivided Communist Party, the party CPI was initially humbled to a minor party. The credibility it consolidated in the post1967 period by allying with the Congress initially and with the Marxists later made it another bargaining force in the state politics. CPI-Congress relation in the 1970-77 periods became slightly controversial. Backed by the international relations and diplomacy between Moscow and Delhi. The CPI hailed the Bank nationalisation, abolition of privy purses etc. The CPI leader C. Achutha Menon successfully piloted the first government in Kerala to serve for a full tenure. The Congress backing was consistent and CPI (M) was isolated during these periods. The breakdown of “emergency caucus” confused the CPI, which hailed the imposition of internal – emergency in 1975. The role of CPI became controversial while Mrs.Gandhi’s image during this period was on the decline. As a result, the CPI had to break up relations with the Congress and subsequently joined the Marxist-led LDF. Presently, the CPI concentrates on aggregating the energies of the LDF to alienate the main enemy, the Congress (I).

### ***Bharathiya Janatha Party***

It is only since the 1980s that Hindu political groups have made a serious attempt to participate in the political process. Both the Hindu Munnani and the Bharatiya Janata Party, in spite of their limited presence, have added a new dimension to politics in Kerala. Their growth has taken place in the context of various allied organisations that have been operating in the state for some time.

In the 1980s there has been a silent and widespread expansion of politics and related activity that draw their basis from exclusivist categories and identities. This is not only true of the nation as a whole, but also of Kerala. The growth of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) in Kerala is such a development.

Through the early 1980s, the series of clashes between RSS and communist cadres cost the state much in terms of peace and harmony. With the CPM coming to power in 1980, the incidents of violence increased. The clashes now spread from Cannanore to other parts of Kerala as well. Another group of Sangh Parivar is VHP. Vishwa Hindu Parishad was started in Kerala in 1964, when launched it was hoped that it would provide a common platform for all sections of Hindus to

come together. It was hoped that the major caste organisations of the Ezhavas and the Nairs, the SNDP and the NSS would come together. Although this has not happened.

RSS in Kerala has adopted a new policy of building a united Hindu front, leading to the creation of a Hindu vote bank. This it said, was not only to safeguard Hindu interests, but also to fight the forces of minority communalism, as represented by the accommodation of the demands of the Muslim League and Kerala Congress, by both the UDF and the LDF. The widespread disenchantment with Kerala's front politics and its accompanying brand of political opportunism, are sufficient reasons for the BJP to attempt an entry into the political scene. However, the BJP is conscious of its limitations in Kerala, given the reality of front politics which makes it difficult for any party not aligned with either bloc.

### ***State parties in Kerala***

#### ***Indian Union Muslim League (IUML)***

It is recognized by the Election Commission of India as a State Party in Kerala. Though Indian Union Muslim League is a Muslim-community-oriented party, it decided to retain its allegiance to India after independence, when the original Muslim League of undivided India went to Pakistan. The party has a stronghold in northern Kerala. They form the second largest party within the present ruling coalition United Democratic Front (UDF). The Indian Union Muslim League was formed in Madras on 10 March 1948. It had presence in the Parliament right from 1952 to present day. In Kerala, it has led the cabinet once under the late C. H. Mohammed Koya, who became the Chief Minister of Kerala in 1979. In alliance with Indian National Congress and other parties, Muslim League has been an active member of the United Democratic Front. The party participated in the ouster of the first Communist Party of India (CPI) government in Kerala in 1959. In 1960, the party took part in the formation of a coalition government in the state, consisting of the Indian National Congress, Praja Socialist Party and IUML. A break-away faction, the All India Muslim League joined LDF and the Indian Union Muslim League joined UDF. Muslim League is among the few Muslim organizations that maintains consistent presence in the Indian Parliament.

#### ***Kerala Congress (M)***

The Kerala Congress a regional political party in the state of Kerala. The mass base of the party predominantly consists of Christians from Kottayam and Idukki districts of Kerala. Presently, the Kerala Congress (M) is the third largest party after the Congress and IUML, in the alliance of United Democratic Front (UDF). The party has its roots in the erstwhile Travancore region and is traditionally dominated by the farmers, mostly Syrian Christian.

The Kerala Congress has suffered severe divisions and several factions (called groups) have emerged, all claiming the name 'Kerala Congress' in various times in its history. Factions included the parent under P. J. Joseph, Kerala Congress (Mani) under K. M. Mani, Kerala Congress (Balakrishna Pillai) under R. Balakrishna Pillai, and Kerala Congress (Jacob) under Johnny Nellore. The group that had retained the official recognition by the Election Commission of India to the name 'Kerala Congress' was the one led by P. J. Joseph (which is informally called the Joseph group) until 2010.

#### ***Revolutionary Socialist Party***

It was formed in March 1940 and the first conference was held in 1946 at Delhi. RSP formed in Kerala in 1950. It claims to be Marxist Leninist party and believes in Revolution. The RSP at the national Level adopted an anti –Congress policy. Until 1969 it was anti-Congress and shared

power in the Government. But with the expansion of the mini-front led by the CPI-Congress during 1969-78, the RSP deserted the Marxists. Again it joined hands with Marxists after the emergence of Congress (I) in 1978, which brought some division in the party. Though the RSP is a small party, it enjoyed the fruits of power in Kerala.

The credit of RSP is that it is free from caste politics and pursues a leftist line against the "haves". Its hold over the trade union field, particularly in cashew and textiles, is unbeatable. The pocket brought of the party are Chavara, Eravipuram, Mararikulam, Kunnathoor, Arynad and Kollam.

There are several political parties worked in Kerala many of them enjoyed the fruit of power. It include **Janathipathiya Samrakshana Samithy** . The party was formed in 1994 when the CPI(M) leader K.R. Gowri Amma was expelled from Communist Party of India (Marxist). Now JSS Under the LDF. The **Janata Dal (Secular) (JD(S))** is a centre-left Indian political party led by former Prime Minister of India H.D. Deve Gowda. The party is recognized as a state party in the states of Karnataka and Kerala. It was formed in July 1999 by the split of Janata Dal party. It has a political presence mainly in Karnataka. In Kerala, the party is part of the Left Democratic Front. **Communist Marxist Party** is a political party in Kerala, south India. The party was founded in 1986 when Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) leader M. V. Raghavan was expelled from the CPI(M) due to a grave difference of opinion regarding the formation of alliances with the Muslim League. In March 2014, the party split and the faction led by C. P. John continued in the UDF while the faction led by K. R. Aravindakshan, which had the support of M. V. Raghavan, decided to cooperate with the Left Democratic Front although it was not officially inducted into the front. Now new parties are trying to test the luck in the coming electoral politics of Kerala.

### **Electoral Politics in Kerala**

The acquisition and exercise of power is essential for the sustenance of any political system. Power is acquired in democratic political systems through the achievement of victory at the elections. An understanding of the nature of power is helpful for preventing its misuse. Power can be acquired through coercion or wilful compliance of those over whom it is exercised. The nature of the electoral process indicates the extent to which the will of the people has been truly expressed. The behaviour of political parties during the election campaign gives an inkling of the methods of action which may be adopted by the forthcoming ministry in tackling political issues. Through mass mobilisation the spade work is done for the subsequent operation of the political system. The mechanics of party politics are capable of determining the functioning of the political system. The political system is ultimately dependent on the political culture of the people, always deep-rooted in tradition and history.

The electoral process is instrumental in transmitting power periodically from the electorate to the political system. In Kerala some of the traditional sources of power have been destroyed. The authorities of traditional families, landed aristocracy, monarchical institutions and superior castes have been considerably reduced as a result of social and political transformation and land reforms. Some religious institutions (particularly church), organisation and community based associations continue to be mighty sources of power in Kerala politics. Evaluation of the extent of



charismatic power possessed by political actors is difficult. Only a few leaders have been able to exercise charismatic power. Even in such cases the sphere of influence had been limited to particular groups of people and regions. The legal source of power is the most discernible and determinant.

In democratic system elections are treated as the most important input into the political system. Elections could never be a precise measure of public opinion since no voter may be expected to have a comprehensive understanding of the program of political parties. Elections have become an inseparable part of the political life of India. As a result of the introduction of adult franchise the educated ruling elite has been largely replaced by the comparatively less educated elite possessing unconventional habits of life. Regional, class, communal and religious bases have given strength to parties, particularly, in Kerala. The modernising trend and economic stress have highly politicized the Kerala voter. The electoral behaviour in Kerala had undergone radical change since independence and particularly after the formation of the linguistic state of Kerala and liberation struggle.

Reorganisation of states on linguistic lines took place on the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission. Thus the long-cherished dream of the Malayalees for a United Kerala came true on November 1, 1956. The entire Malabar District of Madras and the Kasargod Taluk of South Canara District were added to Kerala and the Tamil-speaking southern region of old Travancore State was annexed to the Madras State. The rule of Rajapramukh was ended and Shri P.S. Rao was appointed Acting Governor of Kerala. On November 22, 1956 Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao assumed the gubernatorial office in Kerala.

### ***1957 General Elections***

The first elections to the Kerala Assembly were held from February 28 to March 11, 1957. Out of the total 126 seats, 11 seats were reserved for scheduled castes and one for scheduled tribes. The number of constituencies was 114, of which twelve were two-member ones. The electors numbered 7,514,626 and the total number of valid votes polled as 5,837,577. The Communist Party of India emerged as the largest single party in the Assembly with 60 seats. It was for the first time in the history of the world that the Communist party came to power through ballot. Five of the Independent candidates returned to the House had the support of the Communist Party in the elections and they, therefore, joined the communist Legislature party. The first popular ministry of Kerala headed by Shri E.M.S. Namboodiripad, leader of the Communist Party, was sworn in on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1957. This Government did not last long. An agitation known as “liberation struggle” was launched by the Congress-led opposition and the president issued on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1959 a proclamation under article 356 of the Constitution dissolving the Assembly and introducing Presidents rule in the State.

### ***1960 Elections***

First time, the polling throughout the state was held on a single day. There was an electoral alliance between the Congress, the P.S.P. and the Muslim League. The results of the elections were as follows: Congress-63, PSP-20, Muslim League-11, CPI-29 and Three Independents-. Shri Pattam A Thanu Pillai of the P.S.P. took over on February, 22 as the coalition Chief Minister leading a council of eleven ministers. Shri. R. Sankar of the Congress was designated as Deputy

Chief Minister. Shri. Pattam A Thanu Pillai relinquished the reins of power on September 25, 1962, consequent on his appointment as Governor of the Punjab. Shri. R. Sankar took over as Chief Minister the next day. Shri Sankar continued as Chief Minister for about two years. Following some differences of opinion with the Chief Minister, the Home Minister Shri. P.T. Chacko resigned on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1964. A political crisis was precipitated in September 1964 which resulted in the formation of a dissident group in the Congress Legislature Party. This group consisting of 15 MLAs lent support to a no-confidence motion moved against the Sankar ministry on September 8. The motion was carried and the legislature dissolved leading to Presidents rule for the third time in the state. And the dissidents formed a new party, Kerala Congress.

### ***Abortive Elections of 1965***

A fresh delimitation of the constituencies increased their number to 133. The INC. alone fought the elections in all seats without any alliance. In the meantime the Communist party had been split into two, viz. the CPI and the CPI (M). The CPI had electoral understanding with the S.S.P. and the Muslim League. The CPI was in alliance with the R.S.P. which had an understanding with the Kerala Congress. The INC won 36 seats, the CPM-40, the S. S. P.-13, the ML-6, the CPI-3, the Kerala Congress-23 and Independents 12. As the final post-election picture emerged, no single party could form a ministry commanding majority. Thus the 1965 elections became abortive. Once again on March 25 Presidents rule was invoked for the fourth time.

### ***1967 Elections***

Kerala next went to the polls two years later along with the March 1967 General elections. A new polarization of political forces had taken place leading to new electoral alliances. Politically the most potent factor was the new United Front of the CPI (M), the CPI, the ML, the RSP the Samyuktha Socialist Party, the karshaka Thozhilali Party and the Kerala Socialist party. Then the INC faced the elections single-handedly. The Seven-party CPI (M) led United Front won a decisive victory at the hustings. It could win a convicting majority in the Assembly. The second Namboodiripad ministry was thus formed on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1967. This ministry soon ran into rough weather and Chief Minister Shri Namboodiripad resigned on October 24 1969. A fresh alignment of political forces within the Assembly led to the formation of an eight-member cabinet headed by Shri. C. Achutha Menon of the CPI on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1969. The ruling alliance consisted of the CPI, the ISP, the ML, the RSP and the Kerala Congress. For the first time in the legislative history of the State, the cabinet was led by a personality who was not a sitting member of the Assembly, but a member of the Rajya Sabha. In a by-election held on April 21, 1970 Shri. Menon was returned to the Assembly from Kottarakkara. In the meantime a split occurred in the ISP and three members of the party joined the PSP. In order to avert a political crisis Shri. C. Achutha Menon recommended the dissolution of the Assembly on June 26. He tendered the resignation of the Cabinet on August 1, 1970. The State was forthwith placed under Presidents rule for the fifth time.

### ***Assembly Elections in 1970***

Elections were next held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1970. The allies of the ruling front now included the INC, the CPI, the RSP, the ML and the PSP. It secured 79 seats. Shri C. Achutha Menon formed his second ministry on October 4, 1970. The INC and the KC which were allied of the ruling combine did not join the ministry at first, but extended support from without. The fourth Kerala Legislative Assembly had the distinction of being the first Assembly in the State to complete its normal Constitutional term. Moreover, the normal term of the Assembly which



expired on October 21, 1975 was extended on three occasions over six month periods during the Emergency.

### ***1977 Elections***

A fresh delimitation of Assembly Constituencies was effected in 1974. As a result, on the eve of March 1977 elections, Kerala had, as at present, 140 Assembly seats. As in the previous election the main contestants were the ruling front and the opposition front. The former represented an alliance of five recognized political parties viz., the Congress, the CPI, the ML, the RSP, the KC and the unrecognized political party of P.S.P. This combine was supported by the National Democratic Party (NDP), a newly-formed political projection of the Nair Service Society. It was the general election after the withdrawal of Emergency imposed on June 26, 1975. Despite the polarization, straight fights were confined to only 33 constituencies. Elections were held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1977. The ruling front secured 111. A two-member ministry was formed with Shri K. Karunakaran of Congress as Chief Minister on March 25, 1977. However, Shri. Karunakaran had to resign on April 25, 1977, following certain references by the Kerala High Court in what came to be known as the Rajan case. Then under the leadership of Shri. A.K. Antony who as not then an M.L.A., a 15 member ministry assumed office on April 27, 1977.

Shri. Antony was later elected from Kazhakuttom in a bye-election held on October 22, 1977. Shri. Antony himself resigned on October 27, 1978 in protest against the stand taken by the Congress on the Chikkamagalur bye-election in which Smt. Indira Gandhi was the candidate of the party. Shri. P.K. Vasudevan Nair of the CPI became the Chief Minister when the next ministry was sworn in on October 29, 1978, but his ministry also resigned on October 7, 1979 in order to create an atmosphere conducive to the formation of a Left Democratic Front in Kerala. Shri. C.H. Mohammed Koya of Muslim League assumed office on October 12, 1979, but the four-member ministry was forced to resign on December 1, 1979. The Assembly was dissolved and Presidents rule was invoked in Kerala for the sixth time and it continued up to 24<sup>th</sup> January 1980.

### ***Assembly Polls – 1980***

The Congress had in the meantime split into two the INC (I) and the INC (U). The Kerala Congress also followed suit, the splinter groups being the KC (M) and the KC (J). The ML (O) assumed the name AIML. When the January 1980 polls were looming large on the horizon, political alignments in the State had undergone a sea-change involving a drastic regrouping of major political parties. The stage was set for the eventual emergence of two political combines the United Democratic Front (UDF) consisting of the INC (I), the IUML, the KC (J), the PSP, the NDP and the Socialist Republican Party (SRP a new political organization of the SNDP), and the Left Democratic Front comprising, the CPM, the CPI, the INC (U), the KC (M), the KC (PG), the AIML and the RSP. The UDF had worked out seat adjustments with the Janatha Party in a number of constituencies, though they were locked in battle in some others.

The LDF won 93 seats and 4,832,481 votes. The UDF secured 46 seats and 4,426,669 votes. The lone Independent candidate supported the LDF while it was in power. Shri. E.K. Nayanar of CPM, headed a 17 member ministry which was sworn in on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1980, revoking President's rule.

Despite the thumping majority for the LDF in the Assembly difference of opinion among the ruling partners culminated in the withdrawal of support, of 16<sup>th</sup> October 1981, to the ministry by the Congress (U). The ministry had then the majority of one member excluding the Speaker. And

the ministry resigned on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1981, When the 8 member KC (M) withdrew its support to the Government. The Chief Minister tendered resignation and the next day the President took over the administration for the seventh time, placing the sixth Kerala Assembly in suspended animation.

Again a political realignment took place. The Congress (S) and the KC (M) joined the UDF. An eight-member UDF Ministry was sworn in on December 28, 1981 with Shri. K. Karunakaran of Congress (I) as Chief Minister. It was the twelfth ministry in Kerala since the formation of the State on November 1, 1956. Troubles began to rise again. The Congress (S) split into two factions, 16 members joining the Antony group [Congress (A)] and six remaining as members of the Chacko group. Three members of the five-member party lent support to the ministry. Thus the Government had then the lead of a single member who was the Speaker. On 15<sup>th</sup> March 1982 Shri Lonappan Nambadan of KC (M) withdrew his support to the ministry and consequently the Karunakaran ministry resigned on March 17. The Assembly was dissolved on the advice of the outgoing Chief Minister and again the State fell under president's rule for the eighth time.

### ***1982 Elections***

The political alliances had undergone a further change when the Congress (A), the KC (M) and the Janata (G) jointed the UDF. The two political fronts emerged in the 1982 electoral arena were the UDF and the LDF. The UDF included seven parties viz., the INC (I), the IUML, the KC (M) the KC (J), the NDP, the SRP, the Janata (G), the RSP (S) and the NRSP. The DLP also declared support to the Front. The LDF comprised the CPM, the CPI, the Congress (S), the AIML, the RSP, the KC (S) a party formed by Shri Lonappan Nambadan, the DSP and the Lok Dal. The Janata party had seat adjustments with the LDF. The number of political parties in Kerala now rose to 25 as against five in 1957. The UDF won 77 seats, LDF won 63 seats. The UDF ministry with Shri K. Karunakaran as its leader, assumed office on March 24, 1982. The merger of the INC (I) and the INC (A) and of two factions of the Muslim League were the most important events during the regime of the UDF ministry. This was the second ministry in Kerala which could complete the full term of office.

### ***1987 Assembly Elections***

The ninth elections to the eighth Kerala Assembly were held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1987. The UDF and the LDF were, as usual, the two major political fronts. The UDF included the INC (I) the IUML, the KC (J), the KC (M), the NDP (P), the SRP (S) and the RSP (S). The LDF comprised the CPI (M) the CPI, the RSP, the IC (S), the Janata and the Lok Dal. And the third front consists of the BJP and the Hindu Munnani. A record number (764) of independent candidates was also in the fray. The LDF secured 78 seats ensuring a decisive majority in the House, UDF won 60 seats. A five member ministry with Sri. E.K. Nayanar as the Chief Minister was sworn in on 26<sup>th</sup> march 1987.

### ***Assembly elections 1991***

Having won a majority the UDF formed its cabinet with Shri.K. Karunakaran as the Chief Minister on 24-6-1991. Later the Chief Minister had to leave for United States for medical treatment consequent on a road accident. A few communal issues flared up during his absence and there was a hue and cry for a change of leadership. Although Shri. Karunakaran returned to the leadership, the clamour for change reached its crescendo with the ISRO spy scandal. This resulted in Shri. Karunakaran making an exit and Shri. A.K.Antony was sworn in as Chief Minister on 22-

3-1995. Arrack Prohibition was the major political plan proposed by Shri. A.K. Antony. This was also made main issue for the next general elections held on 27-4-1996.

### **General Election 1996**

Changes in the internal political scenario of the Kerala Congress surfaced in the last phase of the UDF ministry, Shri. T.M. Jaob parted with the KC (M) and contested the next elections separately within the UDF. SRP and NDP disappeared as political entities, with the 1996 general elections. L.D.F. formed its ministry on 20-5-1996 under the leadership of Shri. E.K. Nayanar who was not an elected member of the assembly at that time. Later he was elected from Thalassery Constituency. As a measure of strengthening the process of decentralisation of power the number of ministers was reduced and a 14 member cabinet was sworn in.

### **2001 Elections**

In the election held on May 10, 2001 the United Democratic Front consisting of Indian National Congress, Muslim League, Kerala Congress (M), R.S.P. (Bolshevik), Kerala Congress (Jacob), Kerala Congress(B), and J.S.S secured 99 seats in the Assembly. The electronic voting machine was used in 140 constituencies for the first time. The Eleventh Kerala Legislative Assembly was constituted on May 16, 2001 and an eight member coalition ministry headed by Shri A.K.Antony was sworn in on May 17, 2001. On August 29, 2004 Chief Minister Shri A.K.Antony submitted the resignation of his Ministry. Subsequently a new five member Ministry was formed with Shri Oommen Chandy as the Chief Minister on August 31, 2004. On September 5, 2004 the Ministry was expanded with the induction of fifteen more Ministers.

### **2006 Elections**

The election to the Twelfth Kerala Legislative Assembly was held on April 22, 29 and May 3, 2006. In the election, the Left Democratic Front secured a thumping majority. A nineteen member Ministry headed by Shri V.S. Achuthanandan was sworn in on May 18, 2006. The first session of the Twelfth Kerala Legislative Assembly commenced on May 24, 2006. Shri K.Radhakrishnan was elected as the Speaker of the Assembly. The LDF won with 98 seats.,The 19 member LDF ministry was sworn into power on 18th May 2006 with Shri.V.S.Achuthanandan as the Chief Minister.Shri. K. Radhakrishnan was elected as the speaker and deputy speaker is Shri. Jose Baby.

### **2011 Elections**

The thirteenth legislative assembly election was held on 13 April 2011 to elect members of the 140 constituencies in Kerala Election results were released on 13 May 2011. The results proved to be one of the closest elections in Kerala's history, with the UDF beating the LDF by a margin of 4 seats. There are 2 major political coalitions in Kerala. The United Democratic Front (UDF) is the coalition of parties led by the Indian National Congress. The Left Democratic Front (LDF) is the coalition of mainly the Leftist parties, led by Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M). Bharatiya Janatha Party (BJP) is also contesting in the state and fielded candidates. The 21st ministry headed by Shri. Oommen Chandy became Chief Minister of Kerala.

### **Coalition politics in Kerala**

Theoretically speaking the success of a coalition depends on the presence within it of a central political force, the restraint shown by the constituent parties in pursuing their own narrow, partisan policies, a common goal accepted by all, a mature leadership and above all the ability of the constituent parties to be on the same wave length with the central force. These factors were absent

most of the time in the coalitions in Kerala and hence the coalitions could not complete their tenure successfully.

The intraparty and interparty relations in a coalition influence the working of the coalitions. The success of a coalition again depends upon the relations between the ministers and the relations between the Chief Minister and other ministers. As leader of the coalition the Chief Minister has to coordinate and guide the activities of the different ministries and lead them to the specific goals. It is his responsibility to maintain discipline among his colleagues. The ministers should not be allowed to pull in different directions thereby contributing to the destabilisation of the ministry. The Kerala experience has shown that a good deal of time is spent by the Chief Minister in sorting out interparty and intraparty differences. This has adversely affected the developmental programmes and ultimately the welfare of the people. In the political struggles launched in Kerala by the important political parties, one finds a strong undercurrent of ideology but it is conspicuous by its absence in the coalition ministries. More often than not coalitions break as a result of personality clashes rather than on ideological differences. Because of ministerial instability, Kerala had seven spells of President's rule ranging from 51 days in 1979-'80 to 2 years and 6 months in 1960s.

The Seventies was marked by coalitions based on the plank of anti-Marxism. The Marxist party was kept at bay by five coalitions with periods ranging between 30 days and 6 years and 4 months. This decade witnessed the emergence of two communal parties the N.D.P. and the S.R.P. By the end of the decade splits took place in almost all political parties. There is not a single political party in Kerala which has not split during the last three decades right from the Congress (I) and C.P.I. to N.D.P. and S.R.P. 'Split within a split' can be appropriately used in the Kerala context. The splinter groups are known in the name of their leaders indicating clearly the basis of the split. The existence of parties like Congress (Antony), Kerala Congress (Joseph), Kerala Congress (Mani), R.S.P. (Sreekantan Nair), R.S.P. (Baby John), Janatha (Arangil), Janatha (Gopalan), N.D.P. (Therampil), N.D.P. (Kidangoor), S.R.P. (Sreenivasan), S.R.P. (Vijaya Raghavan) etc. clearly illustrate this point. Factionalism had plagued almost all political parties in Kerala. Coalitionalism is neither good nor bad under Kerala circumstances. But it has come to stay and settled very much in the polity. The chance of one party government in Kerala is almost a utopia.

### **Role of Legislature in Social change**

The Kerala Legislative Assembly completes 50 years of its existence on the first day of April, 2007, exactly five months after the State celebrates its 50th birthday. But the legislative history of Kerala begins much earlier, in 1888, with the establishment of Legislative Council in Travancore. The evolutionary process of the legislature and the legal system during a period spanning more than 100 years reveals the decisive influence of socio-economic and political factors. Administration of justice was mainly based on local customs and practices. Property laws and personal laws were based on the feudal system and caste system. Many practices, which may now appear to be brutal, uncivilized and unfair such as slavery and untouchability, were considered legal. The introduction of a civilized and modern criminal justice system based on the English legal system and later the adoption of the Constitution with a Preamble proclaiming justice- social, economic and political- as its cherished goal, guaranteeing fundamental rights in Part III and enumerating guiding principles for legislation in Part IV, are landmarks in our legal history.

We find that even before the State of Kerala has come into existence, several progressive laws for social welfare were enacted in Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. Important among such laws are those on tenant-landlord relations, laws abolishing child marriage and polygamy, decentralization of power to local bodies, labour welfare legislation, forest protection law, abolition of child labour, law providing for free and compulsory primary education, Co-operative Societies Act, laws on inheritance and succession etc.. The law making efforts made by 11 successive legislative assemblies in 50 years may be viewed as a continuation of the earlier trend in some cases and a deliberate deviation from that trend in others. There have also been serious efforts to solve emerging social and economic problems through legislation.

The number of laws enacted by each Legislative Assembly from the First to the Eleventh (1957 to 2015). The number of original legislation may be around 500. Here is only a brief look at some important legislative endeavours, which produced very significant impact on the socio-economic and political situation in the State. The first ministry, which came to power in Kerala in April 1957, naturally became the focal point of global attention as it was the first communist government elected to power in a democratic country. Legal and political pundits were keenly watching the performance of the State Government, especially how the Government would use its law making powers in tune with its avowed political ideology within the constraints of the Constitution of India. The first Kerala Legislative Assembly, which had a short life of just 28 months, can legitimately claim to be the initiator of many important legislative measures with a progressive outlook. It started with a law to prevent with a progressive outlook. It started with a law to prevent eviction of tenants and soon followed up by the Land Reform Act. This Act granted ownership rights to tenants and heralded the way for comprehensive land reform laws by succeeding legislatures.

Another significant legislative initiative of the first Kerala Legislative Assembly was the Kerala Education Act. It has a unique place in the legislative history of our country as the first ever attempt to enact a comprehensive law on school education, covering both public and private institutions. The Act contained provisions to ensure fair conditions of service to teachers and to end exploitative practices followed by private managements. It empowered the Government to take over the management of private schools, which did not comply with the provisions of the Act. Another noteworthy provision in the Act was on free and compulsory primary education. Nearly 50 years after the Kerala Education Act and four years after the 86th Constitution amendment, making free and compulsory primary education a fundamental right, Parliament is yet to enact a law providing for free and compulsory education to fulfil the constitutional mandate.

The Kerala Education Act has earned a place of its own in our constitutional history as well. It became the subject matter of a reference by the President of India to the Supreme Court of India for its advisory opinion under Art. 143 of the Constitution, the first ever instance of the exercise of such advisory opinion by the Supreme Court. Some provisions of the Act had to be amended as advised by the Supreme Court. The Court also made several provisions of the Act inapplicable to minority educational institutions which enjoyed the protection of Art. 30. It remains to be added that the combined opposition to such progressive measures as Land Reforms Act and Education Act snowballed into a massive agitation which finally culminated in the overthrow of a democratically elected government, which still commanded a majority in the State Legislature, through a blatant abuse of the power under Art. 356 of the Constitution.



Land reforms measures initiated by the first Kerala Legislative Assembly were carried forward by subsequent legislative assemblies. Important amendments were introduced in 1961, 1963, 1968, and 1970. In the year 1964, the Kerala Land Reforms Act was included in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution, thereby making it immune from judicial review on the ground of violation of fundamental rights. The impact of land reform legislation was not confined to landlord – tenant relations, but extended to the entire gamut of the State’s socio-economic and political scenario. Today, however, we find new forms of exploitation emerging in the agrarian front demanding effective legislative intervention.

Another important area where the state has achieved remarkable progress is democratic decentralization, thanks to the effective initiatives of the Kerala legislature. The first Administrative Reforms Commission under the chairmanship of EMS Nambudiripad had emphatically asserted in its Report that democratically elected local self government institutions must be the basic unit of administration. The Kerala Panchayat Bill and District Council Bill, which embodied the recommendations of ARC were introduced in the Legislative Assembly; but lapsed on the dissolution of the House. These Bills paved the way for Kerala Panchayat Act 1960, Municipalities Act 1960, Municipal Corporations Act 1961 and District Councils Act 1987. Finally, in accordance with the provisions of the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendments, the Kerala Panchayat Raj Act and the Kerala Municipality Act were enacted in 1994. Delegation of many important powers to the three – tier Panchayat Raj System, reservation of one-third seats (including that of chairperson) to women and reservation to SC and ST are the salient features of these Acts. Important amendments were made to the Panchayat Raj Act, in 1999 in pursuance of the recommendations of a Committee headed by Dr.Satyabrata Sen. The establishment of an Ombudsman to enquire into allegations against Panchayat Raj institutions and recognition of the right of every individual to know about all the activities of the Panchayat through this amendment ensured transparency and made Panchayat Raj Institutions more effective instruments of Local Self Government.

The initiative of the Kerala Legislature in the field of labour welfare have gained country wide recognition. Laws protecting the rights of agricultural workers and head load workers have been hailed as models for other States. The workers in almost all the segments, organised as well as unorganised, have been brought under the purview of welfare funds through appropriate legislation. Equally important is the contribution made by the Cooperative Societies Act of 1964. The Act ensures democratic functioning, transparency and voluntary membership of co-operative societies. Provisions to establish an autonomous Recruitment Board for making appointments in Co-operative institutions were introduced by an amendment in 2000. In short the Kerala Co-operative Societies Act provided a stable legal framework to the co-operative sector, enabling it to play a vital role in the State’s development .

One of the important tasks of the legal system is to provide for remedies and for redressal of grievances and amicable settlement of disputes. Since judicial remedies are generally considered to be technical, formal, expensive and time consuming, a search for alternatives has convinced our lawmakers that an expeditious, informal and inexpensive system of relief could be provided through the ombudsman system. Thus allegations of corruption and complaints of



maladministration are now effectively dealt with by the Lokayukta, established by the Kerala Lokayukta Act 1999. This Act has been described as an exemplary legislation among the Lokayukta Acts in force in many Indian States. In addition to the Lokayukta, the Kerala Women's Commission with powers to intervene in women's complaints, has been established under the Kerala Women's Commission Act 1995. The Kerala State Human Rights Commission and the State Information Commission, constituted under Central Acts, are also functioning effectively in our State.

The contribution of the Kerala Legislative Assembly in providing an autonomous and stable legal framework to institutions of higher education in the State is also significant. This was done through the Kerala University Act 1957 (Subsequently amended in 1974), the Calicut University Act, 1975, the Mahatma Gandhi University Act 1985, the Cochin University Act 1971, (later re-enacted as the Cochin University of Science and Technology Act in 1986), the Kerala Agricultural University Act 1971, the Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit Act, 1994, and the Kannur University Act, 1996. But it must be added that the legislative attempt to establish a centre of excellence in legal education through the National University for Advanced Legal Studies and Research Act, 2005 is seriously flawed because it is conceived as a self financing University. The provision of the Act, as they exist now, do not ensure the academic, administrative and financial autonomy of the University.

The menace of ragging has assumed alarming proportions in institutions of higher education all over the country. A bold initiative to curb this menace was taken by the Kerala Legislative Assembly in 1998, when it enacted the Prohibition of Ragging Act. If effectively implemented, this Act can put an end to the barbarities being practiced in the name of ragging, which drive many children, in a mood of desperation, to end their educational career or even to end their life.

The mushroom growth of professional educational institutions in Kerala, without any law to regulate their activities, has created a situation of total anarchy and exploitative practices in the field of professional education. The judgments of courts, which were often contradictory and inconsistent, or couched in ambiguities, afforded only adhoc solutions. The directives from the Court and popular pressure led to the enactment of the Kerala Self-financing Professional Colleges (Prohibition of Capitation Fees and Procedure for Admission and Fixation of Fees) Act in 2004. But this Act, which allowed private managements absolute freedom in the matter of admissions and determination of fees tuned out, in effect, to be a license to plunder. The Kerala Professional Colleges or Institutions (Prohibition of Capitation Fee, Regulation of Admission, Fixation of Non-exploitative Fee and Other Measures to Ensure Equity and Excellence in Professional Education) Act enacted by the Kerala Legislative Assembly in June 2006, in stark contrast to the 2004 Act, is model legislation worthy of emulation by other state legislatures. The Act harmonises the twin objectives of excellence in education and social justice by ensuring merit in admissions and regulating the fee structure in a rational manner. An elaborate system of freeships is envisaged so as to ensure that no meritorious student is denied professional education because he /she is poor.

The Kerala Legislative Assembly can also claim credit for enacting a comprehensive legislation embodying the concept of 'Sports for All.' The Kerala Sports Act, 2001, provides for the constitution of Sports Council at State, District and Local level aiming at the development of

sports and games ensuring greater public participation. This again is a pioneering legislation which could secure as a model for other states.

Commendable as the performance of the Kerala Legislative Assembly in the 60 years of its existence is, it is necessary to point out an undesirable tendency, which strikes at the very essence of democracy. It is true that the Constitution permits ordinance making to meet exigencies when the legislature is not in session. But promulgation of an ordinance when there is no urgency, allowing it to lapse by not presenting it at the next session of the Assembly, and then re-promulgating it after the session is prorogued is really a 'fraud on the Constitution' as held by the Supreme Court in *D.C. Wadhwa v State of Bihar* (AIR 1987 SC 579). For instance, the Felonious Activities (Prevention) Ordinance, which contained provision making serious inroads into the liberty of an individual, was promulgated in June 2005. The ordinance lapsed because it was not introduced as a Bill in the subsequent session of the Assembly. After the session was prorogued the Ordinance was again re-promulgated. Such practices, which deny an opportunity to the elected representatives of the people to perform their legitimate role, really make a mockery of democracy.

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