

STUDY MATERIAL

# CONTEMPORARY KERALA

VI SEMESTER

Core course

## B A HISTORY

*(CUCBCSS - 2014 Admission onwards)*



**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

**SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

Calicut university P.O, Malappuram Kerala, India 673 635.

**773**

**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

*STUDY MATERIAL*

**B A HISTORY**

**VI Semester**

**CONTEMPORARY KERALA**

*Prepared by:*

**Sri. Harikrishnan G**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Department of history**  
**K K T M Govt. College,**  
**Pullut.**

*Layout:*

*Computer Section, SDE*

©

Reserved

# Module I

## Political Experiences

**First Election- Ministry Under E M S Namboodiripad- Major Areas of Reforms- Education, Land. Liberation Struggle- Coalition Politics- Emergency and Kerala Experiences- Formation of Political Fronts- LDF and UDF.**

### Political Experiences

The State of Kerala was formed on November 1, 1957 as per the States Reorganisation Act of 1956. The erstwhile Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district of Madras state were reorganized to form the state of Kerala. After the first ever elections to the Kerala Legislative Assembly in 1957, the Communist Party of India emerged as the single largest party. E M S Namboodiripad formed the first elected government with the support of 5 independent legislators.

### First elections

The Kerala Legislative Assembly election of 1957 was the first assembly election in the Indian state of Kerala. The Communist Party of India won the election with 60 seats. The Election Commission of India conducted elections to the newly created state between 28 February – 11 March 1957. The elections were held to the 126 seats (114 constituencies) including 12 two member constituencies of which 11 and one reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively, in which 406 candidates were contested. The voter turnout was 65.49%. The ministry was led (Chief Minister) by Communist Party of India leader E. M. S. Namboodiripad from 5 April 1957 to 31 July 1959 and had eleven ministers.

One of the first democratically elected Communist governments in the world, Namboodiripad and his cabinet are known for their introduction the Land Reform Ordinance and the Education Bill. The government was dismissed in 1959 by the Central Government, which invoked the controversial Article 356 of the Indian Constitution following what later became known as The Liberation Struggle.

<b>Minister</b>	<b>Ministry/Portfolio</b>
1	E. M. S. Namboodiripad Chief Minister
2	C. Achutha Menon Minister for Finance
3	T. V. Thomas Minister for Labour and Employment and Transport
4	K. C. George Minister for Food and Forest
5	K. P. Gopalan Minister for Industries
6	T. A. Majeed Minister for Public Works
7	P. K. Chathan Master Minister for Local Self Government
8	Joseph Mundassery Minister for Education and Cooperation
9	K. R. Gowri Amma Minister for Revenue and Excise
10	V. R. Krishna Iyer Minister for Home Affairs, Irrigation, Prisons, Law and Electricity
11	A. R. Menon Minister for Health

#### **Ministry under E M S Namboodiripad-Major areas of reforms-Education-land**

The formation of the Communist government in Kerala headed by EMS Namboodiripad on April 5, 1957 was hailed in India and across the world by the Left and progressive forces. The Communists had no previous experience of running a state government in India; neither were there any comparable precedence around the world where a Communist Party came to power by winning democratic elections. The state government was of course constrained to work within the framework of the Constitution of India and the policies pursued by an antagonistic Central government, coupled with strident opposition from the Congress Party allied with various vested interests and caste and religious organisations. Despite this, the Communist government under the

leadership of EMS Namboodiripad took many pioneering steps to further people's interests through its policies in agriculture, industry, education, public health, public distribution system, social security measures, decentralisation of power, police policy, administrative reform etc. People's active participation in the evolution and execution of these policies became the role model for subsequent state governments led by the Left parties in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura. The experience of this Communist government contributed

### **Agrarian Reforms**

The most important contribution of the Communist government was in the sphere of agrarian reforms. The approach of the government was guided by the understanding of the Communist Party that the peasant question stood as a foremost national question. The government passed many legislations to help the peasantry to solve their problems as well as redress different problems in agriculture, the Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill being the most decisive step.

As promised in the Policy Statement, the government issued an ordinance on April 11 (just six days after forming the government) prohibiting all evictions of tenants, sub-tenants and occupants of homestead land on any ground including failure to pay rent. Furthermore, all court proceedings initiated by landlords against tenants, sub-tenants or occupants of homestead were stayed. The ordinance was issued as a prelude to the Agrarian Relations Bill that the government intended to pass.

The Ordinance, which prohibited evictions and the final Bill adopted in June 1959 marked a new stage in the economic and socio-cultural life of the people of Kerala.

The Agrarian Relations Bill was opposed by the landlords, Nair Service Society, certain Christian organisations, Indian National Congress, Praja Socialist Party and Indian Union Muslim League. Within hours of the closure of the Assembly session during which the Bill was passed, these sections unleashed what they called a "liberation struggle" to bring down the Communist government in Kerala. The government was dismissed by the Congress Central government on July 31, 1959. The President did not give assent to the Bill but it was returned with a directive to regularize all transfer of land made by landowners in between December 18, 1957 when the Bill was published and on July 27, 1960 when the Bill was returned by the President to the Kerala Legislative Assembly.

The government was not able to complete its full 5 years term. Government was dismissed by the President of India by the use of Article 356 of Indian constitution following the "Liberation Struggle" (Vimochana Samaram).

## **Liberation Struggle" (Vimochana Samaram)**

The Vimochana Samaram (1958–59) was an anti-Communist backlash against the first elected state-government in Kerala, India, which was led by E. M. S. Namboodiripad of the Communist Party of India. Organised opposition to the state government was spearheaded by the Catholic Church in Kerala, the Nair Service Society and the Indian Union Muslim League, and backed by elements of India's ruling Indian National Congress Party; although termed a "liberation struggle", the campaign was largely peaceful, taking the form of statewide meetings and public demonstrations. In June 1959, Kerala was rocked by mass protests calling for the resignation of the communist ministry. The Indian government finally bowed to pressure and dismissed Namboodiripad on July 31, 1959.

It was the first time a Communist government was democratically elected to power in India. It initiated the pioneering land reforms and educational reforms by introducing new bills in the state assembly. However, some clauses in the new bills became controversial and the government had to face severe opposition from influential interest groups, such as the Catholic Church of Kerala, Muslim League and NSS.

### **The controversial legislation**

#### **Education bill**

The immediate cause of the outbreak of the Liberation Struggle was the introduction of the Education Bill by the minister of education Joseph Mundassery. The bill had revolutionary content that could have affected the administration of educational institutions, which were financially aided by the government. Many of these institutions, at that time, were under the control of various Christian congregations and a few under the Nair Service Society (NSS). The Education Bill claimed to regulate appointments and working conditions of the teachers in the government-aided schools. The remuneration of the teachers were to be paid directly from the government treasury. It also mandated to takeover any government-aided educational institution, if they fail to meet the conditions set by the newly promulgated bill.

#### **Agrarian relations bill**

With the introduction of agrarian relations bill, the government sought to confer ownership rights on tenant cultivators, to grant permanent ownership of land for the agricultural labourers, who reside in their premises at the mercy of landlords, and to attain an equal distribution of land by putting a ceiling on the individual land holdings so as to distribute the surplus land among the landless. With the introduction of the bill, government tried to address the social imbalance that prevailed in the state. In those

days, the agricultural labourers, called as kudikidappukar, were considered as slaves. Though they were allowed to stay in a piece of land allotted by the landlord, they were denied any payments for their labour and permanent rights in the land. However, many radical proposals of this bill raised panic among the landowning communities of Kerala, especially Nairs and Syrian Christians.

### **Interest groups**

**Political parties:** Besides the socio-religious organizations, all the major opposition parties including Indian National Congress, Praja Socialist Party (PSP), Muslim League, Revolutionary Socialist Party, and Kerala Socialist Party rallied together demanding the dismissal of the EMS ministry. They formed a joint steering committee with R. Sankar as the president and P. T. Chacko, Pullolil, Kumbalathu Sanku Pillai, Mathai Manjooran, Fr. Joseph Vadakkan, B. Wellington, N. Sreekantan Nair, C. H. Muhammed Koya, and Bafaqi Thangal among its members.

**Syrian Christians:** A significant proportion of the schools in Kerala were owned by Syrian Christian churches. They found many reformist policies of government as infringements over their rights and hence used newspapers and other publications, such as Deepika and Malayala Manorama to propagate panicking messages against the controversial policies. Christians used their political influence in the central government in order to derail the educational reforms; the Education Bill was referred to the Supreme court by the President of India and on 17 May 1958 the Supreme Court reported that some clauses of the bill infringed the constitutional rights of minorities. However, government got the presidential assent on 19 February 1959 after revising the bill. The disagreement got widened and the Church representatives sought the help of NSS to fight against the government. Following the Angamaly police firing (13 June 1959), in which seven of its members were killed, the Catholic Church and other Syrian Christian Churches actively participated in the struggle, mobilizing massive support.

**Nair Service Society:** NSS, a community welfare organization of Nairs, was a major opponent of land reform policies of the government, which they considered as radical and ill-disposed towards the Nair community of Kerala. In December 1958, NSS joined up with the Catholic church to form an anti-communist front. The government retracted partially on sensing trouble, that could be created by the alliance of NSS and the Syrian Christians, and indicated its readiness to make concessions. However, the founder leader of NSS, Mannathu Padmanabhan, declared that "the aim is not limited to the redressal of specific issues but extended to the removal of the

Communist Party". He called on all the field units of NSS to organize the people, and also the educational institutes to close them.

### **Agitations and reprisals**

Rallies and demonstrations against the government took place throughout the state. The protests were spearheaded by the Indian National Congress, the then ruling party of India and were later supported by various religious and communal groups. The communists strongly believed that the Central Intelligence Agency discreetly supported these protests, financially and otherwise. The death of a pregnant fisher woman, named Flory, a Christian woman in the police firing aggravated the situation.

One notable feature of the movement was the participation of school and college students supporting the movement; the Kerala Students Union, the student wing of the Indian National Congress also played a role.

### **Result**

The immediate effect of the Vimochana Samaram was the controversial dismissal of the Communist government under E. M. S. on 31 July 1959 and imposition of President's rule in the state, under Article 356 of the constitution.

Soon after the dismissal, a state election was declared and the United Front, led by the Indian National Congress, won with a majority and a ministry under Pattom A. Thanu Pillai took office.

### **Legacy**

The Communist Party of India projects the Liberation Struggle as a conspiracy. Some of the key points of criticism were that it was an anti-democratic, CIA funded, communal movement aimed to shatter the first democratically elected communist ministry. It has further accused the Indian National Congress of publicly joining hands with anti-democratic splinters and communal forces to promote the downfall of a democratically elected government.

### **Coalition politics**

A coalition government is a cabinet of a parliamentary government in which several political parties cooperate, reducing the dominance of any one party within that coalition. The usual reason given for this arrangement is that no party on its own can achieve a majority in the parliament. A coalition government might also be created in a time of national difficulty or crisis (for example, during wartime or economic crisis) to give a government the high degree of perceived political legitimacy or collective identity it desires while also playing a role in diminishing internal political strife. In such times,



parties have formed all-party coalitions (national unity governments, grand coalitions). If a coalition collapses, a confidence vote is held or a motion of no confidence is taken.

### **Coalition politics in Kerala**

Later in 1967-82 Kerala elected a series of leftist coalition governments; the most stable was that led by Achutha Menon from 1969 to 1977.

Politics in Kerala is dominated by two political fronts: the Communist party-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the Indian National Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) since the late 1970s. These two parties have alternating in power since 1982. Most of the major political parties in Kerala, except for Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), belong to one or the other of these two alliances, often shifting allegiances a number of time. According to Kerala State legislative assembly election, 2015 Kerala Legislative Assembly election results, the LDF has a majority in the state assembly seats (91/140)

The political alliance have strongly stabilised in such a manner that, with rare exceptions, most of the coalition partners stick their loyalty to the alliance. As a result, to this, ever since 1979, the power has been clearly alternating between these two fronts without any change. Politics in Kerala is characterised by continually shifting alliances, party mergers and splits, factionalism within the coalitions and within political parties, and numerous splinter groups.

Political activity in Kerala takes place in a multi-party democratic framework, within the overall context of the National Politics of India. The state holds an invariable position of having the largest politically aware and active population in the Country. The state Legislature is unicameral and has a membership of 141, where 140 are elected and one is nominated from the Anglo-Indian community. It has 20 seats in the Lok Sabha and 9 seats in the Rajya Sabha. Elections are also held to choose representatives to the civic bodies at various levels within the State. and The State has consistently come out with a voter turnout of 70% or above in almost all elections which was ever held.

The two main political coalitions in Kerala are the leftist Left Democratic Front, led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Centrist United Democratic Front, led by the Indian National Congress. Since the early 1980s these two coalitions have alternated in government with neither Front able to gain re-election for a second term. Clashes between supporters of the two coalitions have occurred periodically. Both the INC and the CPI(M) have accused the other of corruption, promoting or condoning political violence, and "the general breakdown of law and order" during their periods in government.

The Student Federation of India (SFI) is the student arm of the CPI(M), while the Kerala Student Union (KSU) is a pioneer of the students' movement of the INC. The two major parties and their student wings have a long history of political activity in Kerala.

The United Democratic Front (UDF) is an alliance of political parties in Kerala, created by the prominent Indian National Congress (INC) party leader Shri. K. Karunakaran in the 1970s. Since its formation, the coalition has sustained itself on support from different social, caste and religious groups as a powerful bloc to take on the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI (M)) led Left Democratic Front (LDF). This alliance is led by the INC party in the state of Kerala. In the 2016 Legislative assembly elections UDF just won 47 out of 140 seats and hence lost the power again to Left Democratic Front. Later in 2016 august KC(M) left the alliance.

The parties in the alliance and their representation in Kerala Legislative Assembly post Kerala Legislative Assembly election, 2016 are as follows:

1. Indian National Congress (22)
2. Indian Union Muslim League (18)
3. Kerala Congress (Jacob) (1)
4. Communist Marxist Party (0)
5. Revolutionary Socialist Party(0)
6. Janata Dal (United) (0)
7. Left Democratic Front (LDF) is a coalition of left leaning political parties. It is one of the two major political coalitions in Kerala, the other being the United Democratic Front each of which have been in power alternatively for the last three decades. LDF won the May 2016 election, and is now in power. The coalition consists of Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) as well as a variety of other smaller parties.
8. In the legislative assembly of 2006 to 2011 the LDF controlled a majority of 99 out of 140 seats in the state legislative assembly. Veteran CPI(M) leader V.S. Achuthanandan led the LDF government in Kerala following the 2006 Assembly Election. The Kerala State legislative assembly election, 2011 saw a tight contest between the two coalitions. After the polls, the LDF came close second to the UDF by winning 68 out of the 140 seats. V.S. Achuthanandan was thereafter elected the leader of the opposition. In the Kerala Legislative Assembly election, 2016 the LDF won and gained majority of 91 out of 140 seats.

## **Current strength in Legislative Assembly**

Members of LDF and their representation in Kerala Legislative Assembly after 2016 election are as follows:

1. Communist Party of India (Marxist) - 58
2. Communist Party of India - 19
3. Janata Dal (Secular) - 3
4. Nationalist Congress Party - 2
5. Indian Congress (Socialist) - 1
6. Kerala Congress (B) - 1
7. Revolutionary Socialist Party (Leninist) - 1
8. Communist Marxist Party - 1
9. Janadhipathya Kerala Congress - 0
10. Kerala Congress (Skaria Thomas) - 0
11. Indian National League - 0
12. LDF Supported Independents – 5

## **Emergency and Kerala experiences**

In India, "the Emergency" refers to a 21-month period from 1975 to 1977 when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi unilaterally had a state of emergency declared across the country. Officially issued by President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed under Article 352(1) of the Constitution because of the prevailing "internal disturbance", the Emergency was in effect from 25 June 1975 until its withdrawal on 21 March 1977. The order bestowed upon the Prime Minister the authority to rule by decree, allowing elections to be suspended and civil liberties to be curbed. For much of the Emergency, most of Gandhi's political opponents were imprisoned and the press was censored. Several other human rights violations were reported from the time, including a forced mass-sterilisation campaign spearheaded by Sanjay Gandhi, the Prime Minister's son. The Emergency is one of the most controversial periods of independent India's history.

## **Rajan case**

The Rajan case refers to the death of P. Rajan, a student of the erstwhile Regional Engineering College, Calicut, as a result of torture in local police custody in Kerala during the nationwide Emergency in India in 1976, and the legal battle that followed,

which brought out the facts of the incident to the public. His remains are yet to be recovered.

## **Background**

During the nationwide Emergency in India between 1975 and 1977 Fundamental Rights of the citizen were suspended by the government, hence creating a period of police activism. In Kerala, the Naxal movement was at its peak during this period. Major operations of Naxals in Kerala were attacks on police stations in rural areas. The police acted with vengeance upon the Naxalites and used the word Naxal to address those upon whom they had vengeance.

## **Incident**

Rajan, a student of the Calicut Regional Engineering College (presently the National Institute of Technology Calicut), was arrested by the Kerala Police on March 1, 1976, during the nationwide Emergency in India along with his fellow student, Joseph Chaly, who later suffered imprisonment for 9 months, for alleged Naxal association. As was later revealed by a petition in the High Court of Kerala, he was held in police custody and tortured as part of the interrogation. He died from torture of extreme kind, especially due to something called uruttal (a practice of "rolling" a heavy wooden log over the body of the victim). His body was then disposed of by the police, and was never recovered.

Rajan's father, T. V. Eachara Warriar, complained to the authorities about his missing son. The police finally confirmed that he died in custody upon a habeas corpus suit, the first such suit in the history of Kerala, filed by his father in the High Court of Kerala.

## **Efforts**

Rajan's mother had become insane from the developments and was hospitalised. His father, T. V. Eachara Warriar, lost all of his money but he did not know why his son was arrested, that he made enquiries to police officers, who, he felt, would be able to give him the details about his son's arrest and also about his whereabouts. He made representations to the authorities, which produced no result. Somehow, he came to know that Rajan was arrested under directions of the DIG of Police, Crime Branch, Trivandrum. He met the then Home Minister of the State Sri K. Karunakaran. He sent petitions to the Home Secretary to the government of Kerala 3 times. There was not even a single reply or acknowledgment. The weeping eyes of the parents were asking where their son was.

Mr. Warriar continued his efforts at getting some information about his son by similar representations made to the President of India and Home Minister to the government of India with copies to all the Members of Parliament from Kerala. He made similar

representations to the Prime Minister of India and others, all to no effect. He met several police officers and came to know that some of the students who had been arrested similarly were detainees in the Central Jail. He was vigorously searching in vain for his son in the three Central Jails and also in the various other police camps and other places. He met the Chief Minister several times because the Chief Minister had personal knowledge of the arrest of his son and also of his detention. On the last occasion he met Sri. Achutha Menon, who expressed his helplessness in the matter and said that the matter was being dealt with by Sri. Karunakaran, Minister for Home Affairs.

He appealed to the general public in Kerala by expressing his grievance in a pamphlet distributed to the public. The Home Minister who was a candidate in the recent elections addressed several public meetings in Mala, Kalpetta and other constituencies of the State and in some of the meetings he made mention of the fact that Rajan was involved as an accused in a murder case and that was why he was kept in detention. Rajan was never produced before a Magistrate.

Rajan's father fought a long battle against the establishment to bring to light the facts behind the disappearance and expose atrocities committed by the state. The petition and subsequent investigations found that Rajan had indeed been taken into custody, and perhaps died when in police custody. His body was not found, and many charges against the accused in this case had to be dropped. The accused included the chief of the Crime Branch wing of Kerala Police, DIG Jayaram Padikkal, who was convicted but the conviction was overturned on appeal. Karunakaran was the Home Minister during the emergency. He resigned from the post of the Chief Minister of Kerala in 1978 from adverse judgement in the case. Warriar wrote the book, *Memories of a Father*, narrating his fights.

At the declaration of emergency, Kerala was ruled by the United Front Government under the coalition of CPI and Congress. The chief minister was C. Achutha Menon and K. Karunakaran head the home ministry. The home minister, being an ardent supporter of Indira Gandhi and a powerful Congress leader acted as the true representative of the prime minister in implementing the emergency provisions in Kerala. Immediately following the declaration of emergency, the police was given full freedom in enforcing the emergency provisions. Accordingly, special police camps were opened in all the district head quarters. Hundreds of political opponents and social activists were detained all over the state. Strict discipline and conduct were enforced in the government offices. The employees were forced to hold their tongue and do their work as envisaged by the declaration of emergency. Dissent and protests in any manner, orally or written were made illegal and it was interpreted by the authorities as against the national interest.

Police had a free hand to arrest any person and detain under custody without making it into record. The emergency period was said to be marked by widespread humanrights violations in Kerala. Gagging of free and independent individuals, ban on political organizations, raiding of party offices, unrecorded arrests, man-missing cases, custodial violences and deaths etc. were reported to have been increased on an unprecedented scale.

Despite these worse socio-political situation, the emergency period had facilitated improvement in the implementation of certain major area of developmental activities. Through the public distribution system, the government could distribute food stuffs at fairly stable prices. It is said that, this positive factor had helped the ruling coalition to win back in the elections immediately held after the emergency. There was a thorough improvement in the implementation of land reforms during the period. The surplus land notified to the government as well as its redistribution showed substantial increase. Similarly, there was a marked increase in the number of applications by tenants for the assignment of titles to them, 10.8 lakhs in 1974, 20.2 lakhs in 1975 and 31.1 lakhs in 1977. Where as the rate of total cases which had been disposed off was only half percent, in 1975, the same rate was about 83 % in 1977. Application from hutment dwellers also showed increase from 3.3 lakhs in 1974 to 4 lakhs in 1976. Dramatic improvements were also seen in the one lakh housing scheme. The number of completed houses virtually doubled from 30,000 in 1974 to 57,000 in 1976. In general administration as well, incidences of absenteeism and late arrivals as well as early departures were said to have remarkably fell. During the first year of the emergency, the Home Minister claimed that, economic offenses involving rs. 67 crors had been detected. 77 civil servants were compulsorily retired. On accounts of charges of corruption, favoritism and abuse of authority, actions were taken against 97 senior officials in the police, revenue and forest departments. There was a decline in the instances of industrial strikes in the public undertakings.



## MODULE II

### KERALA ECONOMY

**\*Addressing the Land Issues- Agriculture\*Internal Migration-Agrarian Migration of Peasants from Travancore to Malabar-Effects\*External Migration-Gulf and European Countries-Effects \*Development of Service Sector-Kerala Development Model its Advantages and Disadvantages- Economic Development and its Critiques.**

As elsewhere, in Kerala also, ecology remains as an important influence in shaping the nature and dimension of the economy by facilitating a diversified natural resource base and thus permitting a varied occupational pattern. The landscape of Kerala may be broadly classified into three viz. low lands, mid lands and high ranges. Consisting of sandy and fertile soils of the river valleys, lakes and backwaters, the low lands stretch along the coastal plain on the western side of Kerala. They are highly congenial for such activities as fishing, rice and coconut cultivation and horticulture. Here, the population density is the highest. The Western Ghats which range along the eastern borders of Kerala form the highlands. It is covered up by thick forests in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges; forests are interspersed with plantations which had emerged since the colonial periods. The population density is the lowest in the region. Prior to the sprouting of plantations, chiefly tea, coffee and rubber, right from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the highland mountain ranges had been covered almost entirely up by the natural tropical evergreen forests. The land lying in between the low lands and the high lands constitute the midland. The midlands are dotted with valleys broken intermittently by isolated hills and the plains leading to the forest-covered uplands. Coconut, rice, cassava, arecanut, cashew, rubber, pepper, ginger etc. are the chief agricultural crops of the midlands.

The agro-climatic conditions in Kerala suit the cultivation of both cash crops and food crops. In 19<sup>th</sup> century, due to the various changes operationalized in the socioeconomic structures of the Malayali society consequent to the consolidation of colonial rule, the traditional agrarian sector came to be thrown opened to unitary market on an ever-widening scale. Consequently, slowly and steadily, cash crops began to dominate the agricultural sector of Kerala.

The colonial period also witnessed the development of several agro-processing industries such as coir, cashew, wood and edible oil. These industries continued to occupy an important place, especially in terms of employment. In the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a small segment of large modern industries based on minerals, chemicals and engineering have come up along with an increasing segment of small and medium range industries, some based on modern technologies and practices of management.

A striking feature of Kerala's development experience is the growth of the service sector. Historically too, this sector has been more pronounced in Kerala than in the rest of the country. The largest shares of income and employment are generated in the service sector. Over the years, the preeminence of service sector in Kerala economy has registered a phenomenal growth, so much to the effect that, in the contemporary scenario, Kerala economy can neither be described as agrarian nor industrial. To quote an economic figure, the contribution from primary (agricultural), secondary (industrial) and tertiary (service sector) towards the gross state domestic product (GSDP) was 15.11 %, 21.05 %, and 63.22 % respectively during 2011-12. An analysis of the sectoral distribution makes it clear that, the contribution of the agricultural sector towards the income of the state has been decreasing; whereas the same from the industrial sector shows a stagnant trajectory. However, there has been a steady increase in the contribution of the tertiary sector towards the state income.

Kerala is having an active political society as compared to the rest of the country. There is a high degree of political activism in Kerala society. Its implications on the society and economy have been a strong point of contestation among scholars subscribing to different intellectual and political persuasions. While a set of narratives are cynical of the socioeconomic consequence of over-politicisation on partisan lines, another group of literature attribute Kerala's unique model of societal formation to the very process of popular mobilization through socio-political activism, improvement in the material conditions of large sections of population and public spending on the part of the government for fairly long periods of time.

The present chapter seeks to make an historical reappraisal of the general course of the Kerala economy since decolonization. It would entail a brief overview of the land reform experience, followed by a discussion on the major trends in the agricultural, industrial and service sectors of the Kerala economy. Socio-historic context of the migration process, both internal and external with their larger socio-political consequences would be discussed. Finally, there would be a critical reflection of the Kerala Model Development.

### **Addressing Land Issues/ Agriculture:**

The Historical Background: Kerala had one of the most complex agrarian systems in India. In the pre-colonial period, the economic and social status of a caste or family or an individual was based on the nature of land rights they enjoyed. The rights in land were graded. Land rights were the privilege of the upper castes. The pre-colonial society was predominantly subsistence oriented one. In that society, rights over land had signified the rights to share the produce of land on varying proportions.



During the colonial period, there were certain important changes introduced in the socioeconomic structure of the Malayali society. Land tax began to be collected on a systematic manner and that too in cash. In order to enable the people to pay tax in cash, they had to be encouraged to acquire capital. For this, permanent ownership rights over land were created. The Pattam Proclamation of 1865 in Travancore and the Settlement Proclamation of 1905 in Cochi granted permanent ownership rights to tenants who held land directly from the state. In Malabar, the Janmis or landlords were declared as the real owners of land by the colonial government. The colonial law courts and other government machineries had afforded discriminative protection to the propertied interests as opposed to those of the majority of the marginal farmers and agricultural labourers.

The two distinct aspects of the socioeconomic history of Kerala during the colonial period were the ever-increasing monetization of the economy and the popularization of commercial cultivation. The colonial government and their dependent native governments of Travancore and Cochin had abolished the system of payment of tax in kind. Hence the cultivators were compelled to sell their products in the markets to remit the taxes in cash. The change over to commercial crops and high priced food grains due to tax pressure meant a shift from the traditional cultivation of food crops for local consumption. Commercialization of agricultural production was thus a process forced on the cultivators.

Commercialization led to the introduction of market economy and monetization of the exchanges. Another major trend emerged was the increasing dependence of cultivators on money lenders. Cash crops usually required higher inputs and therefore more credits. In the absence of proper credit facilities from the part of the government, the cultivators were often thrown on to the mercy of the money lenders.

On the eve of independence, the agrarian system of Kerala was in a state of stagnancy and backwardness. There were multiple intermediary interests groups based on land which had no inclination at all to invest directly for agricultural development. The pressure on land was varying high. The landlords used to evict their tenants and gave land on tenancy to the highest bidder. As a consequence, the production sank low and the non-agriculturists entered the scene with the sole motive of making money from land speculation. It was in this context that, the land reforms of the post-colonial period were to be situated.

Land reforms had been accorded an important place in the Indian economic development agenda ever since independence. The abolition of intermediaries, the reform of tenancy, and the imposition of ceilings on the ownership of landholdings were the major objectives of land reforms as envisaged by the Planning Commission. The need for further measures to remove the exploitative relations prevailing in the agrarian scene based on the iniquitous land ownership pattern was pointed out. Thus, consolidation of holdings, land management practices and the co-operative

reorganization of the agrarian economy were emphasized. Within these objectives, Kerala, like other states has enacted several land reforms legislations.

Even before the formation of the linguistic state of Kerala, there were administrative efforts to introduce land reforms. In Malabar, an Amendment to the Malabar Tenancy Act was introduced in 1951 which gave many protections to the tenants and small cultivators. Fair rent payable by the tenants to the landlords was substantially reduced. The tenants were also freed from the liability to pay advanced rent. Rent settlement authority was established for the fixation of fair rent. In 1954, the government of Madras brought in another amendment to the Tenancy Act by which protection from eviction was granted to all cultivating tenants occupying a piece of land for a period of six years or more.

In the united state of Travancore-Cochin, 'Travancore-Cochin Prevention of Eviction of Kudikidappukars Act' was passed in 1955. It aimed at the prevention of eviction of the hutment dwellers (Kudikidappukar) and other small tenants from the land they held. In 1954, the government of Travancore-Cochin introduced 'Restriction on Possession and Ownership of Land Bill' in the legislature. It aimed at limiting the total area of land that a person could have held to a maximum of 30 acres. However, due to political instability, this bill could not become an act.

The linguistic state of Kerala was formed in 1956 and elections were held in the next year. The Communist Party of India with the support of a few independents formed the government. On 11<sup>th</sup> April 1957, the government promulgated an ordinance prohibiting the eviction of all kinds of tenants and hutment dwellers from their holdings. In December 1957, the government introduced the Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill in the Legislative Assembly.

The Bill conferred fixity of tenure to all classes of tenants. The definition of tenant was broadened to incorporate crop sharing, all prevailing tenures and persons carrying on fugitive cultivation. Another provision of the Bill was related with the fixation of fair rent. The Bill fixed the minimum and maximum rent in respect of different classes of land. It empowered the government to fix the actual rates of rent for different localities by taking account of the various factors including the yielding capacity of land. In regard to each category of land, the rent would be settled by the Land Tribunal. The Bill also provided for the scaling down of arrears of rent which accrued due before April 11 1957.

Another notable feature of the Bill was that the tenants in possession of holdings were given the right to purchase proprietary rights from the landlords on the payment of a compensation or purchase price. To tackle the problem of unequal distribution and excessive accumulation of land, ceiling limits for families were fixed. The Bill fixed 15 acres of double crop Nilam (paddy field) or its equivalent as the ceiling area for a family consisting of five members. In case there were more members, every additional member could get an extra acre subject to a maximum of 25 acres. The ceiling limit of an unmarried adult was fixed as seven and half acres. All plantations were exempted from

ceiling provisions. The landed property of factories, mills, workshops, private forests, commercial sites etc. had been left out of the ambit of the ceiling provisions.

The land in excess of the ceiling area was to be surrendered to the Land Board. Land held by the Land Board is to be distributed by assignment after reserving land necessary for public purposes. Kudikidappukar would get high priority in the distribution. There was provision for the constitution of Land Tribunal for the implementation of the legislation. The Land Tribunal consisted of one presiding officer nominated by the government from among advocates or judicial officers and two members elected by the local authorities of the concerned areas. The Land Board had jurisdiction over the entire state. Whereas land assignment was its main function, it controlled the Land Tribunal settlements and distribution of compensation. The Board consisted of the head of the Land Revenue department as chairman, a District Judge and a third member elected by the Legislative Assembly.

The Assembly decided to circulate the Bill for eliciting public opinion and subsequently it was referred to the Select Committee. But the landlords and similar vested interest groups opposed the Bill tooth and nail. The Bill was passed on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1959 and the liberation struggle against the government began on the 12<sup>th</sup> June. In July 1959, the President of India took over the administration of the state under section 356 of the Constitution. The President returned the Agrarian Relations Bill for modifications. In the meanwhile, the general election of February 1960 brought the anti-Communist coalition to power and the new government passed the Kerala Agrarian Relations Act in the same year. The Act was the first united legislation which embodied the broad principles of land reforms as laid down in the five year plans. But several provisions of the act were struck down by the courts. So a fresh legislation was introduced and passed as the Kerala Land Reforms Act of 1963.

This Act retained most of the provisions of the Agrarian Relations Act, but with certain modifications. The definition of small land holders was slightly widened. The Act gave fixity of tenure to tenants, giving at the same time a limited right of resumption to landlords. It prescribed uniform rates of rent. There was also provision for the imposition of ceiling on holdings. A uniform extend of 12 standard acres has been prescribed as the ceiling limit for a family of five members. The maximum area for a family consisting of more than five members was fixed at 20 acres. However, the working of the Act brought on many fresh cases of eviction. The powers of resumption given to the small land holders proved to be disadvantageous to certain categories of tenants. Even certain decisions arrived at by the Land Tribunals uphold the instances of eviction. In this backdrop, more specific provisions appeared to be necessary to ensure protection for all categories of tenants. So, when the United Front Ministry came to power in 1967, they enacted the Kerala Stay of Eviction Proceedings Act 1967. This Act stayed the eviction of all types of occupants of land.

The Kerala Land Reforms Amendment Act 1969 was considered to be the most comprehensive of all pieces of land legislations. It abolished landlordism once and for

all. It conferred full ownership rights on the actual tillers of the soil. This act extended the definition of tenant in such a manner as to make it difficult to evict a person in occupation of land.

Landless householders were the main beneficiaries of the land reforms in Kerala. Nearly three lakh landless householders became owners of a tiny plot of land- 10 cents each in rural areas and 3 cents in urban areas. The percentage of households having land rose to 87.2 in 1982. 93 percent of the rural labour households in the state possessed land. The average size of the marginal holdings declined from 0.29 hectares in 1970-71 to 0.18 hectares in 1986-87. At the same time, the area under large holdings increased from 7.2 percent of the total to 9.67 percent. The share of ownership of land of the top ten percent of households in 1982 was 55.4 percent of the total landholdings. Land reforms in Kerala had touched only the lower stratum. Distribution and redistribution of land ownership rights were confined to the bottom subdivision and fragmentation forced the owners of the small holdings to sell their lands. That too indirectly led to the consolidation and concentration of ownership rights at the top.

There is a movement of agrarian population away from agriculture. During the period 1974-75 to 1983-84 the percentage increase of agricultural labourers was 24 percent while that of non-agricultural labourers was 67 percent. The share of work force engaged in agriculture was 37.8 percent in 1991. The cultivators constitute one third of this and agricultural labourers, the rest. The cultivators are not able to provide employment to agricultural workers. The real wage rates of agricultural labourers were increased, but the average annual days of employment fell from 198 days in 1964-65 to 147 days in 1983-84.

In agricultural production too, the growth rate is not satisfactory. The growth rate in production declined from 1.22 percent to .58 percent during the decade 1973-1983. The area under grain came down from 9.60000 hectares in 1970-71 to 5.93000 hectares in 1990-91. The share of non-food crops in the area cultivated increased from 60 percent in 1970-71 to 71 percent in 1989-90.

The ceiling provision in the Land Reforms Act did not generate expected surplus land for distribution. The expected surplus land in 1959 was about 7,20,000 hectares. But the extend of land ordered for surrendered was only 67,000 hectares in 1988. Several land owners with large tracts of land above the ceiling successfully circumvented ceiling limit by creating bogus tenancies. The exemption given to plantations had led to large scale conversion of land into plantations.

The tribal's engaged in shifting cultivation under oral tenancies were given no protection. But the encroachment of their land by the non-tribal's and their legitimization of such encroachments uprooted the tribal's and led to deforestation. As far as agriculture was concerned, land reforms seem to have reinforced the already well-established trend of shift from food crop cultivation to cash crop cultivation. The cost of cultivation of paddy is vary high in the state as compared to other states in India. There

may be several reasons for such a plight. The high price of manure, lack of irrigation facilities and drainages, hike in the real wages of agricultural labourers, the organization of labour on trade union lines and declining labour efficiency forced cultivators to shift to cash crop cultivation. This in turn led to the under employment and unemployment of the aged agricultural labourers in the villages. Dependence on imported food grains has changed the Malayali culture allot, since the question of food is inextricably connected with the life and culture of the people. Globalization of prices has already led to a price hike of food grains and the global commercial agreements entered into between the governments at the national levels may adversely affect the prospects of Kerala's cash crop cultivation in the immediate future.

### **Agrarian Migration of Peasants from Travancore to Malabar:**

The peasant migration from Travancore to Malabar during 20<sup>th</sup> century is an important episode in the social history of modern Kerala. It has greater significance in the expansion of commercial agriculture in the Malabar region, its economic development and change in the demographic pattern. The migration of peasants from Central Travancore started from 1920s onwards. Majority of the migrants were small peasants who had permanently settled in Malabar. The peasant migration from Travancore popularly known as Malabar Migration (Malabar Kudiyettam) was not a movement sponsored by any government agencies, but one mobilized by the land-hungry small peasants who wanted a better economic life in the unexploited lands of Malabar. Along with them, the wave of migration also consisted of many rich and middle peasants who were also in search of a new environment and a sound economic development.

Even earlier in Travancore, there were peasant migration from the thickly populated lowlands to the high range areas like Mundakkayam, Peerumedu, Upputhara, Vandamedu, Mulamattam, Velliyamattam, Udumbannur etc. When there was no land for fresh occupations, the movement gradually came to an end. Then it was turned to Malabar.

**Social Background:** The land monopoly system enjoyed by the Tarawads and Stanams in Malabar was reinforced by the British colonial government. This policy virtually left large area of land uncultivated and waist. The tenorial system of Malabar did not encourage capital investments on land. In settlement registers, even hills and forests were registered as occupied by private individuals. On the other hand, there was a high pressure of population on agricultural land in Travancore.

In Travancore, commercialization of land became most effective during the late 1920s following the promulgation of the various community legislations permitting the partition of joint family holdings. These regulations/ legislations gradually eliminated the inferior tenorial system. Even the small peasantry enjoyed a permanent occupancy in their landholdings. Such a process of economic change was relatively slow in Malabar. Due to this economic mobility, the small peasants of Travancore who desired to migrate



to Malabar were successful to accumulate some capital by way of sale of their small holdings. The capital so acquired fetched them sufficient waist lands in Malabar. As such, the migration involved a transformation of land-poor peasantry into middle or rich farmers. The Malabar landlords welcomed them as the migrants brought them Manusham (gift or advance) for obtaining leaseholds or for permanent land alienations.

Majority of the migrants were Christians belonged to Syrian Catholic denomination. The migrants were mostly from present day Kottayam district such as Pala, Changanaserry, Kanjirappally, Kuruvilangad, Ramapuram, Bharananganam etc., from Todupuzha Taluk in Idukki district and from the hill areas of Ernakulam district such as Kothamankalam and Moovattupuzha. Among the migrants, there were many Nairs as well. Migrant settlements could be seen in many hilly areas of Malabar. Some of the migration pockets are: 'Rajapuram, Chullikara, Malakkallu, Chittarikkal, Malom' etc. in Kasargod district, 'Madampam, Payyavoor, Chamatachal, Chemperi, Iritty, Peravoor' etc. in Kannur district, 'Tiruvambady, Kodenchery, Kuttiyadi, Chakkittappara, Marutonkara' etc. in Kozhikode district, 'Perikkallur, Thettamala, Pulpally, Mananthavadi' etc. in Wayanad district, 'Nilamboor' in Malappuram district, 'Mannarkkad and Vadakkancheri' in Palakkad district, 'Vellikulangara' in Trissur district etc.

Huge tracks of uncultivated forests and waist lands were converted into farms and plantations during this period. The supportive role of Syro-Malabar Catholic Church in the Christian migration centers and NSS (Nair Service Society) in the regions where the Nair migrant settlements are seen is well-acknowledged as they supported the migrant communities with schools, hospitals and other infrastructures. Migration has left its impact on the demography of Malabar especially in its Eastern Hill regions. The share of Christian population which was insignificant during the 1920s grew to substantial numbers by 1970s.

The migration started since the 20s and 30s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and continued well into the 1970s and 80s. Between 1920 and 1930, a group of 30 families from Travancore acquired land in such places as Peravur, Kolayat and Kuttiyati and settled themselves in isolated settlements. Planter capitalists like Kocheeppa Tarakan purchased 1500 acres of Koottali estate and tried to establish rubber plantations. During 1930-40, there were attempts to find out new places for settlement. In 1936, the Maniyil Nambudiri household transferred about 22,000 acres of land to Ramavarma Raja of Poonjar for an amount of 36,000. These holdings consisted of the Kolayat and Paroth hills. This was followed by many planters investing capital in purchasing land for establishing plantations in the highlands of Malabar.

Between 1940 and 1950, the wave of migration was strengthened further. The world War situation and inflation were helpful for middle and rich peasants to accumulate capital on account of the increase in the price of the commodities. These profits were invested in the purchase of land in Malabar. An attempt to establish cashew plantation was made by George Tomas Kottukappalli in the Cheemeni area of Hosdurg

Taluk of Kasargod during 1940-43. Landless agricultural labourers were also migrated in search of jobs in these plantations. Between 1950-60, almost all Taluks of Malabar including Kasargod where waste lands were available, were occupied by settlers from Travancore. After that, the availability of waste lands were diminishing and peasants in search of waste lands had to migrate to such places like Shimoga and Koorg in Karnataka. Gradually, the migration came to an end since there was no availability of unoccupied land in Malabar.

When migration became a regular feature and majority of the migrants were Christians, the Diocese of Calicut and other social service agencies began to show interest in organizing community welfare activities. The Diocese of Calicut organized certain colonies with its funds for poor peasantry, mostly consisting of agricultural labourers in Malabar. In these colonies, Christian peasant families were settled and titles to landholdings were given. Calicut Diocese Bishop Dr. A. M. Patroni, Mar Alexander Chullaparambil and Chevalier V. J. Joseph etc. were the key figures associated with the establishment of migrant colonies. The Diocese of Talasseri in 1954 purchased about 10,000 acres of land from Dr. P. J. Thomas. In 1951, the Nair Service Society purchased 5000 acres at Panathady and established a colony. In 1961, the N.S.S. again purchased 10,000 acres on Melcharth from Kottiyoor Devaswam. This led to the eviction of several already established peasant families.

Between 1940 and 1970, large areas of private and government forests had been converted for habitation and plantation purposes. But, details of non-forest lands occupied by the migrants for cultivation are not available. It could be presumed that, large area of land under this category have been occupied. Migration had left its deep impact on the socioeconomic structure of Malabar society. Christian migration was chiefly responsible for the expansion of commercial cultivation in Malabar, green revolution and urbanization in the Eastern hilly regions. Business of the hill products began to flourish. The migrants introduced a new variety of pepper known as Chettan in the region. In due course of time, that name (Chettan) became a synonym for the migrant Christians in Malabar. The church agencies had started several centers meant for imparting training to the farmers like the Dairy Farm and the Agricultural Training Center at Pariyaram started by Bishop Dr. A. M. Patroni in 1964.

The Christian peasantry in Malabar had played a significant role in the social transformation in Malabar. In Malabar, a network of educational institutions were started by the Calicut Diocese. A large number of educational institutions had been started at primary, upper primary and higher secondary levels and well-maintained with government funds. As early as 1927, Fr. Fernandez of Calicut Diocese had started a primary school at Kolayad. In 1924, a high school at Choondale had been started under the initiative of Fr. E. Beretta. The colleges at Sultan Battery and Nirmalagiri in Kuthuparamba are the two institutions started by the church authorities for the benefit of the migrants. The N.S.S. college at Mattannur and M.E.S. college at Mannarghad had also been started for the migrants. In 1980, the government had started a college at

Kodancheri, an early migration area. Many health care institutions had also sprung up in the region.

The migration caused the emergence of many suburban centers in the highlands. It was followed by an effective communication system with district headquarters and an extensive scheme of rural electrification. The Christian peasantry had played an active role in social transformation in the region. They had organized collective campaigns demanding tenancy legislations. Out of such agitations, emerged such associations like the Malanadu Peasant Union and such political parties as the Karshaka Tozhilali Party (KTP). Father Vatakkann and B. Wellington were some of the leaders of the new party. With a sizable vote share, such political formations had remained as influential in Kerala politics till recently. Their activities too had certain role to be claimed in the administrative process leading to the abolition of landlordism in 1970. Now, the peasants enjoy absolute rights over their landholdings. The formation of a separate district of Wayanad in 1980 was intended for implementing effective plans for these regions.

The migration had helped many small peasants to become middle and rich peasants. Even a petty bourgeois group had emerged from them with liquid capital in hand. This group now seeks for small scale and large scale industries and other opportunities of investments. It had accelerated changes and caused social transformations in the highlands. One adverse effect of the migration was that, widespread encroachment to the tribal land had made the tribals landless in the adjacent regions of the migration centers.

### **External Migration- Gulf and European Countries:**

Every facets of life in Kerala, economic, social, demographic, political and even religious are influenced by migration in one way or another. At the state level, there are about 3.75 million migrants in Kerala. 1970s proved to be an important watermark in the history of migration from Kerala. Prior to that, though there were international emigrations to South East Asian countries like Ceylon, Berma, Malaya, Singapore etc., large scale emigration from the state began only in the 1970s. Arab countries of the Middle East form the chief destination for about 95 percent of the emigrants from Kerala. Of this, Saudi Arabia alone account for about 40 percent of the Malayali emigrants. Outside the Arab world, U.S.A. followed by the European countries like England, Germany and others are the principle destinations, accounting for about 2 percent of emigrants from Kerala.

The principal places of origin of emigrants in Kerala are the Malappuram Trissure area. These are followed by Thiruvananthapuram, Palakkad, Kozhikode, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Ernakulam etc. The hilly districts of Wayanad and Idukki account for only small number of emigrants.

Background: Hike in the price of oil in 1973 and consequent rise in the revenue generated a favorable climate for industrialization and social change in the Gulf (Middle East) countries. As a result, there experienced a huge demand for the services of foreign



workers. Hence, a large number of workers began to migrate to the Middle East, especially from India. Migration which started with a few thousands during the mid 1970s, assumed huge proportions during the 1980s and 1990s.

At the turn of the millennium, the total stock of the Indian migrants was estimated at about 2.8 million. Of this, migrants from Kerala was over 1.4 million. During the period, Kerala got about 6000 crors from the Gulf as worker's remittances. This migration and the flow of migrant remittances had created unprecedented change in the Kerala economy since 1970s.

Based on the annual labour outflows, scholars identify four main phases in the labour migration from India to the Middle East. They are the initial phase of steady growth between 1976 and 1979, the peak phase between 1980 and 1983, the declining phase between 1984 and 1990 and the revival phase between 1991 and 1995. The worst year in the history of Indian migration to the Middle East was 1990, when over 1.8 lakh Indians were repatriated from Kuwait on account of the Gulf War. Of this, over one lakh were Malayalis.

### **Important Aspects of Migration:**

Emigration is a costly affair. An average emigrant spends about rs. 40,000 for going abroad. Money is required to buy tickets, for visa fees, and for an agents commission. About 27 percent of the emigrants raised the funds for emigration cost from family savings, 50 percent borrow from relatives, 60 percent take institutional loans and 40 percent sold ornaments and jewelries. Only a small minority sold lands. Most migrants use more than one sorts of these.

There are two distinct phases in the historical trend in the migration experience of Kerala. The first phase of migration started during the 1940s, when Kerala became closely integrated with the rest of India. It was in the context of the second world war and the Indian independence. Till then, Kerala was a net-in-migration state. That is, more persons from the neighboring states came to Kerala than the number of Keralites moved to these states. But after the integration, Kerala became a net-out-migration state. The number of Keralites moving to Madras, Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and the like metropolitan cities exceeded the number of persons coming to Kerala from other states. The second phase began during the 1970s. During this decade, associated with the oil boom in the Gulf countries, the number of international emigrants from Kerala phenomenally increased.

Factors Responsible for Migration from Kerala: an important motive of migration is the improvement of economic conditions through occupational mobility. Migration is a result of the operation of negative factors or push factors at the place of its origin and the pull factors or positive factors at destinations. The chief factor contributed for the large scale migration from Kerala may be pointed out as the weaknesses in the Kerala Model of Development. A vibrant social sector coexisting with a stagnant production sector is the complementary legacy of the Kerala Model of Development. Consequent to

the rapid decline of mortality rate, there was a demographic shift in Kerala. As a natural corollary to this, developed the problems of large scale unemployment of the youth and low wages. Further there was an agricultural stagnation in the Kerala economy caused by the wage hikes and other agrarian reforms during the 1960s.

The grim side of the matter is that, structural reforms in the agrarian sector were not followed by the programmes like agricultural mechanization. All attempts at this direction were blocked by the trade union militancy. In the absence of the modernization of the sector, there was a stagnancy in the agricultural sector in general and in rice and coconut cultivation in particular. A vary high proportion of the migrants from the state belonged to the coastal and middle lands of the state, where the rice and coconut are the main agricultural crop. The accelerated development in education also can be considered as a pushing factor for migration. With the declining prospects of agriculture as a profitable venture, people began to consider education of children as the most meaningful investment. This resulted in an unprecedented expansion of the education sector in the state. Consequently, there developed a huge gap between the supply of educated persons and the availability of employment opportunities in the state. It became necessary for the educated of the Kerala youth to seek employment in the fast developing metropolitan centers elsewhere in the world. The failure of the state institutions to expand employment opportunities in the secondary and tertiary sectors also served as a powerful factor contributing to the large scale migration from the state.

The growing economic opportunities in the industrial cities of India after independence and in the Gulf countries consequent to the oil boom of 1970s served as the positive pull factors that facilitated migration from Kerala.

Impacts of Migration: Socio-economic and demographic factors lead to emigration and out-migration. Emigration and out-migration in turn would lead to remittances. Remittances would cause social and economic changes. These changes would further become factors promoting migration. One of the major impact of migration on Kerala economy is the cash remittances made by the emigrants into their households. Workers' remittances from the Middle East to Kerala presents a phenomenal increase over the years. It rose from rs. 824 cor in 1980 to rs. 1310 cor in 1990 and to over 5857 crore in 1994. At the turn of the millennium, remittances accounted for about 27 % of the state domestic product of Kerala.

The annual remittances received by the Kerala households were 2.55 times higher than what the Kerala government received from the central government as budgetary support. Besides cash, the households receive several items in kind, clothing, ornaments and jewelry, electric and electronic gadgets etc.

Remittances per emigrants vary according to educational levels. The remittances are mainly spent on household consumption, educational purposes, debt repayment, construction and repairing of buildings and bang deposits. Considerable improvements can be noticed in the living standards of the families of the emigrants. Conspicuous

consumption is the another major impact of emigration. Migration exercise a positive influence upon the ownership of the consumer durables. One of the important avenues in which the remittances have been used is the construction of large mansions. These mansions spread across the rural landscape become an environmental concern. It has been observed that, the size and quality of houses built by the migrants have vary little relation to the needs of their families as measured by the number of members in them. Further, the environmental consequences of using large quantities of cement and concrete in these constructions are enormous. Another major cultural impact of emigration is the unprecedented increase in the use of automobiles.

One of the important public policy issue regarding emigration is how best to make use of the growing NRI deposits in the bangs of Kerala for the social purposes. The government has been attempting to mobilize these funds for the industrial development of the state. Successful models like the Nedumbassery International Airport has been materialized by the NRI funds. Given the work culture, trade union militancy and political intervention prevailing in Kerala, there has been certain aversion among the NRIs to confidently invest their money in the development projects of the state. However, development projects in the social sector like education have good chances of absorbing the NRI capital. The development ofIT is another potential sector where collaborative ventures can be built up with the NRIs.

To sum up, it has been well-established that, since the 1970s, the most important factor which exercised greater influence on the regional economy like the labour market, consumption, investment, savings, poverty, income distribution and economic growth has been migration to the Gulf and the migrant remittances.

### **Development of the Service Sector:**

Kerala's achievements in terms of social development has been truly remarkable and widely noticed. Kerala entered the new millennium with a literacy rate of about 91 percent which may be treated as equal to 100 percent according to UNESCO standards against the national literacy rate of 66-67 percent. In terms of life expectancy at birth, Kerala's figure is 72 years for males and 75 for females, where as the national average life expectancy rate is 64 and 65 for males and females respectively. In terms of infand mortality rate (IMR) too, Kerala compares favorably (10 per thousand for males and 8 per thousand for females) with the national averages of 53 for males and 54 for females. Kerala also compares favorably with the all India average in terms of total fertility rate (TFR) 1.6 for Kerala and 2.8 for India.

These measures place Kerala in the company of the developed world. The important factor to be noted here is, these achievements have mutually reinforcing effect. For example, the high rate of literacy, especially the female literacy rate (88 percent in 2001-2002) can be said to have directly influencing many other factors such as infand mortality rate, total fertility rate and general standards of health, nutrition and well-being. It is interesting to note that, these gains have been achieved in tandem with

the vary impressive record of rapid poverty reduction. It is in this context that, the development of service sector has to be situated.

### **Education in Kerala:**

Kerala had a fairly long tradition of indigenous educational heritage as exemplified by such pre-modern establishments meant for imparting learning as 'Salai', 'Kudipallikoodam', 'Oothupallikoodam', 'Kalari' etc. During the pre-modern epoch, there had been separate and distinct educational arrangements for the various castes and communities. It was during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that, systematic attempts began to be made for bringing about uniformity in the diverse localized educational traditions and practices. By the early decades of the nineteenth century itself, rudimentary forms of modern educational institutions began to emerge in Travancore and Cochi under the initiatives of the missionaries and later by the patronage of the native rulers. On this foundations, by the early quarter of the twentieth century itself, these two regions had registered remarkable progress in terms of the expansion of education. However, the Malabar region which was under the direct colonial rule, had been neglected in terms of the educational advancement. The role of socio-religious reform movements which had flourished during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the popularization of modern education has to be emphasized. The reform movements in general had perceived the acquisition of modern education as a means of social emancipation and llaidd great stress on mass education. Later the successive democratic governments have successfully carried forward the efforts at expanding mass education.

The initial efforts in this regard has been made by the first democratic government formed after the formation of Kerala in 1957. The Communist government had made attempts to revamp both general education and university education in the state. Thus two Bills (Kerala University Bill and Kerala Education Bill) were presented in the legislature in July-August 1957.

The Kerala University Bill was passed on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1957. This Bill was intended to make the University as an autonomous body and to convert it as an affiliating University. The Governor of the state is to be the Chancellor and the education minister to be the Pro-Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor of the University is to be appointed by the Chancellor. The colleges were separated from the direct administrative control of the University and brought under the Collegiate Education Department. The Syndicate and the Senate of the University were constituted in a democratic way. The later University Acts were in the pattern of the Kerala University Act.

Kerala Education Bill was intended to protect the rights of the teachers, to regulate the appointment of teachers in aided schools, to bring the aided school managers under the purview of law etc. It envisaged the constitution of a state level advisory board for the guidance of general education in the state and local education authority at school levels. In 1957, there were 10,079 schools of which 2129 were government schools and

private schools numbered 7950. The strength of the students was 28,02,946 which constituted 20 percent of the population. The educational agencies had been running the institutions as business concerns. Therefore, the Bill sought to curb the powers of the private school managers, to lessen the grievances of the teachers and students and to improve the quality of instruction.

The Education Bill provided the private school teachers the right to salaries directly from the government and it required the managers to make over to the government all, such as the collection of fee etc. from the students. The government would give the managers grants in aid for maintaining and running the schools. The Bill also provided for compulsory education. The Kerala Legislature passed this Bill in December 1958. It was the reforms envisaged by the Kerala Education Act of 1959 that laid the foundation for further educational innovations in the state.

The primary attention of the government in the sphere of education was to ensure primary education to all. The Education Act had insisted that the government should provide free and compulsory education for all children within a certain period of time since the commencement of the Act. It was also stipulated that, the government should provide noonday meal, clothing, books and other writing materials to students free of cost. Collection of tuition fee at the primary and upper primary levels was abolished in 1960-61, at the secondary levels in 1969-70 and at the higher secondary levels in 1990-91. The mass literacy campaign and the declaration of Kerala as a complete literate state in April 1991 can be considered as an important achievement of the socially responsive public education system.

At the close of the twentieth century, Kerala has a lot to take legitimate pride in terms of educational advancement. Kerala has already achieved the goal of universal primary education during the 1980s itself. Over 98 percent of children in the age group 5-11 are now enrolled in schools. Over the years, there has been a profound growth in the density of educational institutions so much so that, now schools are available in a range of every three kilometers throughout Kerala irrespective of the rural urban differences. Creative interventions are being made in the different aspects relating to the education system like curriculum and examination reforms, training to the teachers, restructuring of the organization of educational programmes etc. There has also been attempts to expand higher education in the state. In the place of sole university (University of Kerala) and a few colleges at the time of state formation, there sprang up several universities in different parts of Kerala. Over the years, number of arts and science colleges, professional colleges and fine arts colleges have also substantially increased. Pre-primary education is also getting institutionalized with government sponsored Ankanvadis becoming popular all over Kerala.

In Kerala, schools and colleges are mostly run by the government, private trusts and individual managements. Each school is affiliated with either the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Kerala State Education Board or the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS). English is



the language for instruction in most of the private schools, while the government run schools offer English or Malayalam as the medium of instruction. Government schools in the adjoining districts of Karnataka and Tamilnadu offer instruction in Kannad and Tamil language respectively. A handful of government Sanskrit schools provide instruction in Sanskrit supplemented by Malayalam, English, Tamil and Kannada. After ten years of general schooling, students typically would get enrolled at higher secondary level in either of the three streams vis. science, commerce and humanities. Upon completing the required course works, students can enroll in professional or general degree programmes.

Kerala top the education development index (EDI) among the various Indian states as per the statistics of 2006-2007. However, notwithstanding this, the experience of Kerala's education system in terms of quality standards perform poorly. A major factor pointed out for the quality crisis of Kerala education system is the financial constraints on the part of the government due to the quantitative unwieldiness of the sector. It has been pointed out in the studies that, even though the drop-out rate of children at the primary levels was vary low, the same shows an increasing trend at the highschool and higher secondary levels. This is particularly true about the SC and ST students. It has been estimated that, among the scheduled caste students, only 59 percent of the total number of children joining school at the primary level reach the tenth standard. Among the scheduled tribes, the dropout rate is 60 percent.

### **Health System:**

Health care system of Kerala has made tremendous progress over the past 60 years with large number of trained doctors, nurses and other technicians together with an extensive network of hospitals. The basis for Kerala's impressive records on health standards is the state wide distribution of primary health centers. There are both public and private sector health care institutions in Kerala. Successive democratic governments in Kerala over the past 60 years had shown priority for health sector. This emphasis on health system is reflected in the greater budgetary allocation as well as the rapid growth of facilities from 1956 when the state was formed till the early 1990s. By 1990, Kerala had about 36,000 beds in the public sector and 49,000 beds in private sector. From 1990 onwards, private sector began to show an explosive rate of growth. By 1996, the difference in the availability of public and private health facilities assumed new proportions. The ratio of bed availability in public to private sector was 38,000 to 70,000 in 1996.

Kerala has one of the most extensive networks of government health facilities in India. There is one government health institution in every Panchayat or village. More over, this coverage is not confined to modern medical sector alone. In many places, there are representations of other medical systems such as ayurveda, homeopathy, nature cure, siddha, unani etc.

There was a rapid expansion of health care facilities under public sector in the state during the period between 1960 and 1970. However, thereafter, the mounting fiscal constraints prevented the government to make capital investments on large scales in the health sector. Consequently, capital spending began to stagnate since the 1980s. In addition to this, during the 1990s, there was a steady decline in the revenue spending as well on the non-salary items. The net result was the deterioration of the quality of services rendered by the government institutions. It was in this context that, private medical care institutions began to sprout on a large scale during the 1990s.

As of now, the reach of private sector in health care sector is more extensive. According to the statistics of the Department of Economics and Statistics, government of Kerala 1996, on an average there is one government modern medical institution in a distance of 50 square kilometers where as there are about 5 private institution in the same area. Almost 70 percent of the total bed strength is in private hospital along with more than 10,000 of the state's 17,000 doctors. The private and public institutions have defined separate roles for themselves. While public institutions concentrate on preventive measures such as immunization programmes, the focuss of private institutions is on high technology curative care.

The proliferation of private institutions have enhanced the cost of health care considerably. The cost of medical care has been on the rise for the past several years. For many of the middleclass households, rate of increase in the medical care costs is much in excess of general household expenditure. Medical bills account for large share in most homes now. It is not unusual among the poorer sections to find families that have fallen in to debt trying to cover costs for treatments for serious illnesses. The marginal segments of the society such as the fishermen and agricultural labourers are the worst sufferers of this phenomenon.

Scholars point out different reasons for increasing health care costs in the private sector. Heavy increase in the drug prices is one of the important cause. Besides that, a number of sophisticated technology oriented treatments like organ transplants, coronary bypass graft, MRI scans, balloon angiography, joint replacements and infertility treatments etc. are getting established in Kerala's health care systems. While they offer better quality diagnosis and treatment to the afflicted, they are expensive and beyond the reach of most middleclass families. But the availability of such interventions and the sufferings of the loved ones prompted many to seek such treatments that can ill-afford. Yet another factor promoting cost increase is the popular demand for specialist care. Specialist care adds to medical bills by way of larger fees, more expensive medical investigations and often much more expensive interventions thereafter.

Recently, there has been raised severe doubts about the efficacy of Kerala model of health system. While there are several positive indicators such as high rates of average life expectancy, low infant mortality and better nutritional standards, there are several fresh challenges popping up before the Kerala health care system. Malayalis seem to be under the double burden of communicable as well as chronic degenerative diseases. Many ailments which were thought to be eradicated such as the typhoid and malaria made a fresh reappearance during the 1990s. Leptospirosis, a fatal infectious disease

caused by bacteria growing in dirty waters takes many lives during monsoons. Dengue and Japanese fevers, viral fevers spread by mosquitoes etc. are regular occurrences. Along with these communicable diseases, we see steady increase in such non-communicable diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart diseases, hypertension and cancer. Malayalis also have higher levels of cholesterol as compared to communities living in other Indian states. Thus, Kerala's disease profile is fast changing to one where the infectious and degenerative diseases contribute on an increasing scale to morbidity. Apart from that, the recent reports about the tribal deaths due to malnutrition and lack of medical care facilities point fingers to the things to be improved in Kerala's health system.

### **Kerala Model of Development- Advantages and Disadvantages:**

Kerala has been hailed by experts all over the world for having pursued a unique model of development in the third world during the later half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Over the past 60 years, the development strategy being followed in Kerala seems to be succeeded in overcoming endemic hunger and deprivation. Kerala has achieved high level of physical quality of life despite poor economic growth. With a total population of around 32 million, Kerala has assured its people better social security and quality of life as compared to the other states of India including the more wealthiest ones and, in fact, most third world countries. Indeed, in terms of indicators such as literacy, life expectancy, infant mortality, and fertility rates, Kerala is not only ahead of the third world countries, but on par with many developed countries.

What was more striking about Kerala among scholars was that, Kerala has achieved all these landmarks without undergoing any kind of large scale industrialization and agricultural/green revolutions. There has neither been a spectacular economic development and GDP growth in Kerala. Kerala Model began to find place in development literature, rather uncritically in college textbooks. However, by the early 1990s itself, some scholars began to express doubts about the efficacy of Kerala development model. They have pointed out problems such as economic stagnation, growing fiscal crisis, high rates of unemployment and socio-political atrophy. Scholars like K. P. Kannan, K. K. George, Joseph Tharamangalam, K. T. Rammohan etc. began to raise the debate as to whether Kerala's achievements could be sustained at all.

At the turn of the millennium, Kerala's development paradoxes became ever more apparent. While the social development indicators for which Kerala is well known such as literacy, infant mortality and fertility rates continued to improve, fiscal crisis also began to grow. In addition to that, scholars point out to the problems of marginalization in Kerala's development experience. Groups such as fishing communities, Adivasis, Dalits and women are getting marginalized in one way or another under the development processes. Now it has been established that, while Kerala's development model has continued to serve the people well, there is a downside to the model which needs to be addressed very seriously.

Kerala model development may be simply define as a specific pattern of socioeconomic and political development characterized by public action, support-led security and achievements in social development. Geen Dreze and Amartya Sen have



used the concept of public action to describe Kerala development processes. By public action they refer to a process of state intervention on the one hand and the demands and actions of the mobilized groups and public bodies on the other resulting in a system of support-led security as distinguished from the growth-led security. Kerala is also credited with high level of social capital. This social capital, according to certain scholars was crucial in Kerala's development experience.

During the colonial period itself, the routes of Kerala's development model has been laid down. Progressive states that initiated and implemented appropriate social policies and the community organizations that built autonomous institutions had formed the essential facets of that development process. These community organizations drew their strength from caste/community based social reform movements which contributed to the creation of community resources. These organizations also benefited from a state which was becoming increasingly responsive to their demands. Under their initiatives, developed modern institutions such as schools, colleges, hospitals, commercial and industrial enterprises etc. All of this proved to be important social capital in turn. Particularly significant was the provision of education to the lower caste groups in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Along with the growth of a mobilized population and demand groups conscious of their entitlements, there was the development of a democratic state that responded to peoples' demands through public provisioning and security and the creation of a relatively extensive welfare state by third world standards. In this process, both the state and the dominant political culture i.e. public action itself developed in adversarial relationship to capitalism and entrepreneurship. In course of time, social movements in Kerala became integrated into and even appropriated by the dominant political society, especially the left political movement as it established its hegemony. Focus on class organization and the hegemonic class discourse espoused by the left had adversely affected many groups such as women, Dalits and Adivasis by marginalizing their organizations and issues specific to them. It is also argued that the specific type of public action had led to the reduction of certain already accumulated social capital, most notably in entrepreneurship, community involvement and investments in education and health.

To sum up, scholars have pointed out that there are chiefly three weaknesses to the specific development model that has been historically evolved in Kerala. In the first plane, there has been a growing imbalances between the social development and slow economic growth. The two important consequences of this imbalance is the mounting fiscal crisis and high rates of unemployment. In the second plane, there is the so called outlier phenomenon. This is the marginalized situation of the Adivasis, Dalits and women who have been excluded from the benefits of Kerala model development. In the third plane, Kerala's peculiar kind of public action had hindered the growth of social capital. This adversely affect the development potential of the state and consequently led to the shrinking of social action.

## MODULE III

### DEVELOPMENT MODEL AND DISCONTENTS

Local Development and Issues- Silent Valley Issue- Struggle Against Mavoor Rayons- Endosulfan Problem in Kasargod- Plachimada Struggle- National Highway Expansion and Peoples' Protest- Western Ghats-Madhav Gadgil and Kastoorirangan Reports- Social Realities- Gender Issues- Women in Public Spaces- Women and Child Trafficking- Surynelli Case- Politicising Caste and Religion- SRP and NDP- Adivasi Land Rights- Mutanga Incident- Dalit Struggles- Changara.

#### **Local Development Issues:**

The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments to Indian constitution gave more powers to local governments and more representation to women. The local democracy was made a vital part of the political democracy. It was recognized that decentralization of decision making will improve political participation. When people gather together in Grama Sabhas and collectively debate and deliberate on issues of public importance, public life will be transformed. If they are provided with the decision making powers to give effect to their shared concerns, it was anticipated that local democracy will be fruitful.

1/3 of seats were reserved for women at all the three levels of local self-governments (Grama, Block and District Panchayat) and there was provision for reservation of seats for scheduled castes and tribes. The government of Kerala in 2010 enhanced seat reservation for women to 50 percent.

The first general election to the newly reorganized local self-government institutions was held in Kerala in 1995. There were 990 Grama Panchayats, 152 Block Panchayats, 14 District Panchayats, and 52 Municipalities including 2 municipal corporations. About 73 percent of population exercised their franchise. There after, general elections have been held to local self-governing institutions regularly in every 5 years. At present, there are 941 Grama Panchayats, 152 Block Panchayats, 14 District Panchayats, 87 Municipalities, and 6 Municipal Corporations in Kerala.

In 1996, the government of Kerala took up the agenda of decentralization of power as the major priority of administrative programme. The government devolved 33 percent of the state budget to the local self-governments for the execution of plans formulated by them. A detailed programme for executing local plans was chocked out.

Accordingly, it was decided that, peoples' needs have to be identified and assessed through the Grama Sabhas, the lowest village consistency. The Village Panchayat would make those needs and the proposed solutions into the form of a viable plan. For this, development seminars were to be held in every Panchayats followed by the formation of task forces for the preparation of development projects. Such

formulated projects would be coordinated and vetted at the block levels. They have to be approved after careful scrutiny at the district level by the district planning committee constituted to assist the District Panchayats. The whole process was branded named as Peoples' Campaign for Ninth Plan, popularly known as Peoples' Planning Janakeeya Aasootranam.

Need identification, situation analysis, strategy setting, projectization, plan finalization, plan vetting and plan approval are the different stages of peoples' planning.

The Peoples' plan campaign made use of the experiences from the total literacy campaign and the peoples' resource mapping programme by the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishat during the 1980s. The Planning campaign aimed at formulating systematic micro level planning with the assistance and participation of local communities. With the identification of the three tier administrative bodies at the local levels as the nodal agencies for the formulation and implementation of development projects, more resources began to be transferred to them. Consequently, the local bodies were emerged as the new locus of political and administrative power. While some projects were implemented, the peoples' campaign had experienced numerous difficulties, delays and disappointments.

The new experiment in decentralized development has been received with mixed reviews. Some scholars described it as the best hope for the future, a unique and bold experiment, democratic decentralization, small voice of socialism and even a new Kerala model. But critiques reject it as a flawed and floundering experiment and the same wine in new bottle. It has been argued that, the new endeavor has made a qualitative improvement in political development relating to development policy. It brought development discourse to the grass root level. However, it also intensified partisan political polarization. In the negative side, the peoples' planning experiment failed to induce dynamism in the regional economy in terms of productivity growth, income generation and employment.

At the end of the five years of peoples' planning campaign for decentralized developed planning, the financial situation of the state government became precarious. The huge outlay of about 35 percent of the state's development funds did not generate economic growth and increasing tax revenue for the state. The divergence with the political processes of the campaign with its actual achievement has been highlighted by the example of the Vithura Panchayat. This Panchayat was selected as one of the outstanding performers in implementing the peoples' plan. However, shortly after its elevation, a case of starvation death was reported from Vithura. The critiques point out that, along with decentralization of political and economic power, corruption also got decentralized as part of the peoples' planning campaign. A section of political opinion also raised the criticism that the whole programme of decentralized planning has been an

imperialist project to derail Kerala's development process and to reverse its achievements in the social spheres.

### **Silent Valley Issue:**

Silent Valley is an evergreen tropical forest situated in the Palakkad district. It is a store house of rare and valuable plants and animals. Wilde pepper, wilde cardamom, black gram, rice etc. are seen there apart from a variety of medicinal plants. The great Indian Hornbill, Nilgiri Tahr and the lion tailed macaque are the important ones among the wild species of animals found in the valley. The Save Silent Valley campaign was started in 1973 to save the tropical forest from being flooded by a government proposed hydroelectric project. The movement is often hailed as an important chapter in the environmental movements of India.

The Background: Kuntipuzha is a major river that flows fifteen kilometers South West from Silent Valley. It takes its origin in the lush green forests of Silent Valley. In 1928, the location on Sairandhri on the Kuntipuzha basin was identified as an ideal site for electricity generation. In 1958, a feasibility survey was conducted and on the basis of that, in 1970 a hydroelectric project across the Kuntipuzha that runs through the Silent Valley was proposed by the Kerala State Electricity Board. The proposed project was expected to provide Kerala with an additional 240 MW electricity apart from irrigating over 100 SQ kilometers in the Malapuram and Palakkad districts.

After the announcement of the imminent dam construction, the valley became a focal point of a strong environmental movement 'Save Silent Valley'. It was because of concern about the endangered lion-tailed macaque that, the issue was brought to public attention. Steven Green, a scientist from the New York Zoological Society and Rom Whitaker, the herpetologist were probably the earliest to draw public attention to the rich and endangering biodiversity of this small and remote area. Whitaker wrote a letter to the Bombay Natural History Society stressing the need to conserve the region. Reports like these alerted other naturalists as well.

In February 1973, the Planning Commission of India approved KSEB's project at a cost of about rs. 25 crores. However, due to lack of funds, implementation was delayed. Protests began to mound against the project.

In October 1976, the National Committee on Environmental Planning and Coordination (NCEPC) set up a task force under the chairmanship of Zafar Futehally to study the ecological impacts that could have precipitated by the project. As a result, the works on project had to be suspended pending the report of the task force. When the task force submitted the report, it suggested the scrapping of the project. However, there was a loophole in its report which stipulates a series of safeguards in the case of a continuing with the project. The Kerala government opted to proceed with the project by promising to implement all the safeguards. The government argued that, only 10 percent of the eco

system would be destroyed as a result of the project. However, several NGOs opposed the project and asked the government to abandon it.

The conservationists pointed out that, if the project is materialized, it would lead to the submerging of the entire lower valley. Its biodiversity would be destroyed forever. Further, it was pointed out that, settling of the workforce brought in for the construction of the project would disturb the ecological balance of the area. Again, it was alleged that, the government's claim of the destruction of only 10 percent ecological area was a far exaggeratedly reduced one.

In 1977, the Kerala Forest Research Institute carried out an ecological impact study in the Silent Valley area under V. S. Vijayan and proposed that the region be declared as a biosphere reserve. By this time, there was fairly a large scale propaganda in favor of the conservation of Silent Valley within the academy and in the society at large. Contributions of such personalities as Professor John Jacob, Prabhakaran Nair, Sathish Chandran Nair etc. deserve special mention in carrying out the messages of conservation to the wider society. John Jacob trained young nature lovers. Soon nature clubs sprung up all through the state. However, undeterred by the voices of protests, the state government went ahead with the project. Consequently, the outcry against the Silent Valley hydroelectric project so far a localized movement peopled by socially responsible individuals and small groups caught national and international attention. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) urged the governments to protect the undisturbed forests. Many eminent people including conservationists, corporate and political leaders such as Salim Ali, Madhav Gadgil, C.V. Radhakrishnan, M.S. Swaminathan, Subramaniam Swamy, Sitaram Kesari, Pilo Modi, Krishna Kanth etc. urged the governments, both national and state to cancel the project ones and for all.

The central government under Morarji Desai was however not sympathetic to the movement. The central government showed green signal to the project and in June 1979, Kerala government started the construction of the work in the right earnest. However in August 1979 N. V. Krishna Warriar, Professor Joseph John, Advocate P. Gopalakrishnan Nair etc. of Prakriti Samrakshana Samiti had approached the Kerala High Court and obtained an order staying works on the project.

Soon after that, Silent Valley Samrakshana Samiti and Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishat had started awareness campaigns with vigor. They hold protest meetings, rallies, debates and demonstrations all over the state turning the campaign into a mass movement. Famous writers joined the movement and contributed their poems, plays, stories and so on for raising social awareness. Poetess Sugatakumari played an important part in the Silent Valley Movement. Her poem 'Maratthinu Studi' (Ode to a Tree) became a symbol of protest from the intellectual community. It was the opening song or



the prayer in most of the meetings held in connection with the Save Silent Valley campaign.

Meanwhile, political change at the center brought Charan Singh to power and his government appointed yet another enquiry commission under M.S. Swaminathan to reinvestigate the issue. In January 1980, the Kerala High Court rejected the writ plea filed by the conservationists and this gave confidence to the state government to restart the works on the project. However, the works soon had to be stopped again on the orders of the Kerala Governor till the final report of the committee constituted by the central government would come up.

Still the awareness campaigns went on. By this time, there was a shift in the attitude towards the movement in the media. Even those newspapers criticized the conservationist cause and wrote extensively in favor of the project, had opened up space for accommodating the opinions of the environmentalists. The national dailies like Indian Express and the Hindu actively supported the movement.

In January 1981, prime minister Indira Gandhi declared that Silent Valley will be protected. There was a mounting pressure, both national and international on the central government in favor of environmental conservation. Still, the government was not firm in scrapping the project. The area of the proposed project was left out of the area that government sought to declare as protected zone. This created widespread objection from the people. Hundreds of telegrams of protest were sent to the government. More pressure was heaped upon the government by many NGOs, scientists, intellectuals and ordinary people. It appointed yet another committee under professor M.G.K. Menon in June 1983 to reexamine the issue. On the basis of the Commission's report, in November 1983, Silent Valley Hydroelectric Project was called off. In 1985, prime minister Rajiv Gandhi inaugurated the Silent Valley National Park.

### **Struggle Against Mavoor Rayons:**

**Historical Background:** Given the dominant sociopolitical logic of 20<sup>th</sup> century, rapid industrialization was perceived as the roadway for the backward societies of the third world towards development. In a bid to stimulate the industrialization of Kerala, the first E.M.S. ministry of 1957 started negotiations with the pan-Indian capitalist group of Birla to establish a pulp producing factory in Nilamure –Beypore area on the banks of the river Chaliyar in Kozhikode district. The agreement to this effect was signed on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1958 between the government of Kerala and the Birla management. Accordingly, it was decided to setup a 100 tonne per day rayon grade pulp manufacturing factory.

The government, as per the agreement was mandated to supply the raw materials required by the industry at cheaper rates.

The company was given the exclusive right and license to fell and cut bamboo from the reserved forests of Nilambur for a period of 20 years. In 1962, through a

supplementary agreement, the felling area permissible to the company was extended to the forest divisions of Wayanad, Kozhikode, Palakkad and Nenmara. The factory started production in 1963 providing direct employment to 1840 workers and 350 office staffs. The new fiber division further enhanced the strength of the labour force by adding 1000 workers and 250 office staffs. As the production increased year by year, the volume of direct employment also grew to 5000. In addition to this, the chain of economic activities unlished by the factory created more than 10,000 employment opportunities in different parts of the state.

However, working of the factory had adversely affected the environment of the area. In 1965, the government permitted the company to purchase 30,000 acres of private forests in Nilambur for utilizing bamboo and and to later raise eucalyptus plantations in them. On environmental considerations, through a supplementary agreement of 1976, the government enforced certain regulatory measures to monitor the extraction of forest resources by the factory. Comprehensive rules and regulations were evolved for allotting the felling areas, issuing pass, recording of measurements, weights, accounting fire protection measures etc. As a result, raw materials became more scarce and costly as compared to the earlier periods. Naturally this began to affect the proffit prospects of the industry. As a result, the labour relations in the industry began to worsen.

Workers of the factory went on an indefinite strike in 1985 based on a set of demands. Abolition of the contract system, distribution of the due bonus and renewal of the long-term wage agreement were the major demands. The management retaliated to this strike by closing down the factory and this closure continued for a period of 39 months. Largely with the help of the mass media, the company successfully propagated that, it was the indiscipline among the workers together with the scarcity of raw materials and its high procurement charges had contributed to the closure. In this connection, it also published details of the loss incurred by the company since the financial year 1982-83. As the closure went on indefinitely leaving the workers and their families in untold hardships, suicide of 13 workers complicated the situation. Gradually, the indefinite strike which was launched against the management for better salary and working conditions transformed itself into a mass movement with a single demand reopen the factory and save the workers from starvation. Finally, in 1989 the company was reopened on the basis of a fresh agreement between the management and workers.

Environmental Impact: From the vary inception of the project, the government paid little heed to the environmental consequence of this industrial unit. As the production went on, it unleashed a series of issues upsetting the natural environment not only in the locality, but in a considerably wider area. The Gwalior Rayons factory at Mavoor became a threat to the Chaliyar river system. Having a river basin of about

2923 square kilometers and 168 kilometers in length, the Chaliyar river is one of the wealthiest rivers in Kerala. Nearly 2 lakh people use this river for different purposes. Both the pulp and the staple fiber divisions of the factory consumed raw water drawn from the Chaliyar river. Ever since the production started in 1963, the untreated effluents began to let out freely into the river. As a result, the once clear river turned black and the pollutants wiped out its aquatic life almost completely. Scientific investigations clearly established that, the chemical contents like lead, mercury and chromium in the river water are above the permissible limits.

In addition to the water pollution, the factory caused unprecedented air pollution in and around the locality. It caused emission of such gasses as carbon disulfide, sulfur dioxide, hydrogen sulfide etc. to air beyond the permissible levels. These gasses caused in the people of the neighborhood several chronic diseases like asthma, bronchitis, cerebral vascular accidents, heart attacks, reproductive system disorders, malformation in babies, renal stones in children etc. Such incidences are widely reported from Vazhakkad Panchayat. In 1995, three workers of the company died due to the exposure to toxic gasses. Again, in 1999, 10 people at Manathalakkadav, a nearby area were hospitalized due to breathing problems on the same ground.

The over exploitation of bamboo led to the widespread depletion of forests. During the period between 1963-1998, it has been estimated that an overall volume of about 4,62,350 tons of bamboo from the various forest divisions of Kerala, have been consumed up by the Grasim Industries Mavoor. There was a large scale denudation of bamboo forests and their conversion into eucalyptus plantations thus destroying the biodiversity of the indigenous forests. The irrational and unscientific felling of bamboo trees on a large scale had also contributed to the occurrences of forest fires. Besides, the company's conscious efforts at growing pulpwood and eucalyptus led to the large scale conversion of Kerala's natural forests into monoculture plantations. Large scale cultivation of eucalyptus had serious ecological consequences. Eucalyptus is described as the ecological terrorist as it would tend to lower the water table in the soil.

**Popular Responses:** As the production went on, massive volumes of pollutants were discharged into the Chaliyar river at Kalpally. It was the local people who had realized at first, that if the issue of pollution is not properly dealt with, the Chaliyar river, which was an indispensable part of their cultural life would succumb to a premature death. In 1964, the very next year after the company started to function, the local people had organized a march on to the company office which turned violent causing damages to the compound wall and administrative office. At the instance of the district collector, the management had agreed to make arrangements for discharging the effluents directly into the sea for which it would lay 20 kilometers of pipeline by 1966. In addition to this, the company would help local people to dig new wells as an alternative source of water



supply. However, neither the management nor the government did not do anything to implement these decisions. Gradually, the first case of environmental activism in Kerala came to an end. With the destruction of the river eco system, hundreds of traditional fishermen had lost their livelihood. The mainstream trade unions and political organizations had neglected the local peoples' issues. In 1965, Mayeen Kutty Master organized Chaliyar Kakka Malsya Tozhilali Union to register the local peoples' voices of protest. However, they could not achieve anything significantly.

In 1968, the government of Kerala appointed a committee to study the pollution problem of Mavoor. The committee submitted its report in 1972 recommending the setting up of an effluent treatment plant (ETP). During the early 1970s, Under the leadership of K.A. Rahman and B.P. Unnyayin Chaliyar Jala Vayu Sudheekarana Committee was organized. In December 1974 a meeting of the representatives of the local action committee, factory management and Kerala State Pollution Control Board was held at Ramanilayam Guest House Trissur. The company management agreed to shift the existing effluent treatment plant from Elamaram to Chungappally. It also agreed to follow the directions of the KSPCB in making arrangements for the effluent discharging outlet. The company would lay pipeline to the outlet point in order to ensure a saif discharge of the effluents. However, this decision was not acceptable to all sections of the local population and those who opposed the agreement had formed the Chaliyar Malineekarana Virudha Samiti (CMVS). The CMVS had conducted several agitations against the water and air pollution during the 1970s and 1980s.

However, the 39 months long closure of the company during the period 1985-89 changed the total situation in Mavoor. As the closure went on and 13 workers committed suicide, miseries of the workers became the concern of the public. The mass movement demanding the reopening of the company resulted in a realignment of the social forces in favor of the management. But, the reopened factory unleashed unparalleled pollution in such a dangerous fashion. The effluent treatment plant virtually brock down due to the lack of proper maintenance. The level of air pollution, particularly in Vazhakkad region reached far above the normal limits. It was found in the Vazhakkad Panchayat Health Survey of 1994 that, there were about 199 people died of cancer in the Panchayat area alone, with in a period of five years prior to the survey. It was in this context that, the Chaliyar Samyukta Samara Samiti convened a meeting at the Darussallam Arabic College Vazhakkad in November 1996. The meeting decided to give up the 30 year old demand of an effective pollution control system. They adopted the slogan "close down Grasm".

This declaration proved to be an important landmark in the Chaliyar movement. A series of demonstrations were held all over the state in favor of the cause of Chaliyar. On the human rights day (10<sup>th</sup> December) of 1997, there took place a massive demonstration

in front of the factory gate shouting slogans against the factory management. When political leadership in general abstained from the movement, people from all walks of life having different political affiliations had participated in it. K.A. Rahman, leader of the Chaliyar movement inaugurated the public meeting. Social activists like Mukundan C. Menon, P.A. Pouran, Nazrudheen Elamaram, P.K.N. Chekku, K.A. Khader, K.P. Iqbal, E.N. Peethambaran Master, A.M. Ahammedkutty and N. Ahemmad addressed the gathering. Out of the deliberations, emerged a new association Chaliyar Samara Samiti was formed with Dr. K.V. Hameed as chairman and P.K.M. Chekku as generalconvener.

On 11<sup>th</sup> January 1999, K.A. Rahman, the pioneering leader of the Chaliyar movement had died of cancer. His death became a sudden reason for the relay hunger strike started on January 26<sup>th</sup> 1999. Environmental activists and other social workers from different parts of the country had participated in the strike. Different NGOs also extended support to the strike. The relay hunger strike continued upto the final closure of the factory in October 1999.

### **Endosulfan Problem in Kasargod:**

Endosulfan is an off-patent organic insecticide which is being terminated globally. Endosulfan became a highly controversial agrichemical due to its high toxicity potential for bioaccumulation. It is also dangerous as an endocrine disrupter in the living organisms. Because of the adverse impacts on human health and environment, a global ban on its manufacturing and use was negotiated under the Stockholm Convention in April 2011. Even though, more than 80 countries in the world have banned it, many countries like India and China are still using it.

During 1976-2000, the Plantation Corporation of Kerala aerielly sprayed endosulfan over an area of 4500 hectares spread over 15 villages in the Kasargod district. This was to eradicate tea mosquitoes in the cashew plantations. The aerial spraying of endosulfan using helicopters was recommended by the government scientific bodies in order to cut cost of manual labour.

The Plantation Corporation had 4696 hectares of cashew plantations in Kasargod district which include the Kasargod plantations (2190 hectares), Rajapuram plantations (1526 hectares) and the Cheemeni plantations (980 hectares). The Pirla division of Kasargod plantations has the Padre village in the Enmakaje Panchayt which has remained at the center of the endosulfan controversy for the last 3 decades. The landscape of these villages were biodiversity rich. Topographically, the mid land hills in the regions draining into wet-land, river and sea. People of this region have a rich and peaceful cultural heritage and traditions. Most of the people were farmers and farm labourers. The people have evolved their own unique techniques of farming and water management.

Soon after the spraying of endosulfan had started, change began to appear in the social and natural ecology of the region. Initially, the local communities noticed such perceptible changes in the ecology as calves were born with deformities, many animals died unnaturally, and snakes and bees disappeared etc. as early 1979, there were reports of endosulfan harmfully affecting human life in the media. Socially conscious individuals like the one Leelakumari Amma, herself a victim and an employee of the Kerala Agricultural Department took initiatives in bringing the matter into the attention of the judiciary. She filed suits in the Muncif Court Hosdurg to stop aerial spray. Plantation Corporation was the chief accused in the court. It is said that, she has to face several difficulties from the PCK including a police case. However, considering the merit of her plea, the local court had ordered staying of the endosulfan spraying activity. Case moved to the highcourt. At this stage, several environmental groups intervened in the matter.

In 1999, there was a health survey conducted by local environmental groups in the region. In the survey, it was found that, more than 80 percent of the families in the region have at least two seriously affected cases. The survey report was submitted to the Highcourt, the District Collector and the Government. This helped to spread awareness about the ground situation to other areas. Health problems such as mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, hydrocephalus, suicidal tendencies, cancer, infertility etc. have been widely noticed. Apart from all these, several kinds of skin, and respiratory diseases, rheumatisms, paralysis, parkinsons etc. are also widely seen as attested by the survey report.

Two local doctors, Dr. Y.S. Mohankumar and Dr. Shripati identify about 250 cancer, mentally challenged and physically deformed people from their villages. They joined with the local communities to get the spraying stopped. The endosulfan Spray Protection Action Committee was formed. both doctors were from the local community and they knew firsthand all their patients and families. School annual meeting records reveal that the teachers of the locale observed, peupol coming from a particular direction of the school are poor in studies, their physical and mendal developments have been seriously affected.

In February 2001, Center for Science and Environment released its study report produced after conducting chemical analysis of blood, milk, water, soil and leaves sambles and find massive contamination in the area. National Human Rights Commission took case and ordered Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) to investigate the matter. ICMR report came in July 2002. Meanwhile, the state Agricultural Department made attempt at its own (February 2001 Dr. A. Achyutan Committee) to confirm the findings of the CSE. All their analysis confirmed the presents of endosulfan, but not categorically asserted endosulfan as the causal agent of the local

health hazards. Industry sponsored studies found no contamination at all. However, there was a large scale media support for the local communities.

Meanwhile, many international NGOs like the Pesticide Action Network Asia and Pacific conducted community-pesticide monitoring attempts and affirmed that the occurrences of illness was due to endosulfan. Following this, the district chapter of Indian Medical Association (IMA) also confirmed poison due to endosulfan, recommended remediation and relief. Both government and independent studies pointed to the absence of any regulations and remedial measures while carrying out the spraying operations. The spraying had occurred at a height of about 50 meters above the canopy and this aided wind drift and wide spread of chemical into villages. The communities were not informed before the spraying. Protection of water bodies was never implemented. Children in the fields and schools and cattle were worst affected by the spraying. Workers never used any precaution and were forced to be exposed. The insecticides act and the rules failed to protect the people from exposure.

Both the national and the state governments failed to follow the regulatory recommendations and monitor contamination. Even though several government committees during the 1990s had recommended that endosulfan should not be used near any water bodies and proposed that it should not be sold in small packets, these recommendations were never followed.

The District Panchayat recognized local ground realities and took action. It setup endosulfan victims relief cell. Several NGOs along with National Institute of Occupation and Health (NIOH) prepared remediation and relief plans for local governments.

Local health issues and the local initiatives were widely publicized through the media. In response to the public outcry on the issue, the Kerala government banned the use of endosulfan on all kinds of crops and plantations in August 2001. In 2002, on a public interest litigation filed by the Tiruvankulam Nature Lovers' Movement, Peoples' Council for Social Justice and the Samatha Law Society seeking a ban on the deadly pesticide, the Kerala Highcourt banned the complete use of endosulfan. In 2003 report of the high powered committee appointed by the Kerala government under the chairmanship of Dr. P.K. Sivaraman came out. This report clearly identified the role of endosulfan behind the health hazards of Kasargod area. Along with suggesting the total ban on its use, the committee also recommended the enhancing of medical facilities in the affected area.

In December 2003, Environment Health Perspectives (EHP) an American journal of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences affiliated to the US Department of Health and Human Service uphold the findings of the India's National Institute of Occupation and Health (NIOH). However, the two committees appointed by the central government O.P. Dube Committee (February 2002) and C.D. Mayee

Committee (September 2004) were hesitant towards accepting endosulfan as a causal agent for the health hazards at Kasargod. It may not be untrue in supposing that there was a powerful section in the government and bureaucracy both at the central and state levels who were quite inclined to endorse the interests of the pesticides manufacturing lobby. Still, the public opinion in Kerala was so powerful that the Kerala State Pollution Control Board was pressurized to issue an order suspending the further use of endosulfan in Kasargod.

In the meanwhile, there had been taking numerous popular agitations at the local levels on various occasions for arousing public opinion in favor of the victims. A march of thousands of protesters was held in August 2004 in front of the Kasargod Collectorate raising the slogan 'Endosulfan Quit India'. The school and college students of Kasargod district remembered the endosulfan victims on 16<sup>th</sup> August, the Hiroshima Commemoration Day. The Kasargod District Panchayat organized a march in front of the Kerala Legislative Assembly demanding to provide relief measures to the victims.

For a while, endosulfan issue remained marginalized in the public discourses. It was on the occasion of India opposing the move to ban endosulfan globally, the Kasargod situation once again emerged on to the public attention. The central government's soft stand on the endosulfan question was widely criticized and there was a fresh demand for its nation wide ban.

In November 2010, Down To Earth an NGO visited the districts of Kasargod, Palakkad and Idukki to assess the current situation of the areas affected by the incessant use of endosulfan despite being banned in the state. In Kasargod, the victims have spread to villages in over 11 Panchayats in the district. Mutalamada in Palakkad district known by Mango City has easy access to endosulfan through the porous Tamilnadu boarder. It is being sprayed in the mango plantations and the health impacts similar to that Kasargod was beginning to appear in Palakkad as well. In Idukki, the problem was with the overuse of many pesticides including endosulfan. Down To Earth also travelled to Dakshin Kannada where the Karnataka Cashew Development Corporation (KCDC) sprayed endosulfan over the cashew plantations in the district and the situation was similar to that of Kasargod. Stories bringing out the plight of the victims were published in the fortnightly and received huge response.

National Human Rights Commission issued notices to the central and state governments seeking explanation on the reports that aerial spraying of endosulfan in Kasargod affected people severely. NHRC compared the situation at Kasargod to that of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy. At its instance, the central government constituted an Inter Ministerial Committee under the chairmanship of V.M. Katoch to study the health impacts. Meanwhile, the Pollution Control Board of Kerala once again issued a ban on any kind of use of endosulfan. On 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2011, a delegation of MLAs and ministers



from Kerala met the prime minister and urged the central government to ban endosulfan. Even though, the government was reluctant to issue an outright ban, environmental activism over the past several decades yielded pressure on it to change its stand on the issue. It was reflected in India's position in the fifth Conference of the Parties to Stockholm Convention held at Geneva in April 2011(COP 5). India did not object the inclusion of endosulfan in the Annex A of UN's Stockholm Convention, a move which eventually will lead to the global ban of the pesticide. On 13<sup>th</sup> May 2011, the Supreme Court of India banned the use, production and sale of endosulfan in any parts of India on a petition filed in this regard by the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI).

Meanwhile, efforts went on to provide rehabilitation services to the victims. As mentioned earlier, it was the Kasargod District Panchayat that gave the lead in organizing relief and remedial measures. Following its recommendations, government of Kerala constituted an organization Endosulfan Victims Relief and Remedial Measures Cell and allotted rs. 50 lakhs in its annual budget 2006-2007 for the treatment of the living victims of the tragedy. Also the government distributed another rs. 89 lakhs to the dependents of the 178 deceased persons in the endosulfan tragedy. This amount is being spent by the cell and district Panchayat for providing relief measures to the victims. A vision document for the comprehensive relief and remedial measures to the victims has been drawn up. Now, the District Panchayat, Government of Kerala, its different Departments and NGOs are organizing relief and remedial measures to the victims. They organize medical checkup camps in the affected villages and superspeciality referral camps at district level. The Panchayat supply medicines at free of cost to the needy people. The Department of Health issue health cards and disability certificates to the identified victims in the medical camps.

### **Plachimada Struggle:**

The Plachimada Struggle is often cited as a prime example for corporate aggression of the natural resources and the resultant emergence of a highly problematic predicament where the very natural rights of the people for survival has been seriously challenged. It involves the questions of the local peoples' rights to drinking water and the rights to basic livelihood.

Plachimada is a small village in the Palakkad district. It belongs to the Perumatty Panchayat in the Chittur block. The Palakkad district in general is an important agricultural zone in Kerala. the region is entirely dependent on canal irrigation and ground water for its agricultural requirements. Palakkad is in the rain shadow area of the Western Ghats and therefore is a drought prone area. In 2000, the Perumatty Panchayat gave license for the Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages Private Limited (HCBPL) to manufacture coca-cola and similar soft drink products such as Thums-up, Fanda, Limka, Sprite, Kinley etc. but very soon, due to the contamination of ground water in that



locality by the chemical discharge of the company, local people started a small scale protest against the company. Later this protest was supported by the Panchayat authorities. In due course of time, with national as well as international support to the struggle against a multy-national company (MNC), the movement became an icon for many such popular initiatives against the corporate aggression and control of natural resources.

In 1998, the HCBPL acquired 34.64 acres, mostly paddy fields in Plachimada. Naturally, the region was surrounded by several canals and reservoirs meant for irrigation purposes. On 27 January 2000, the Company obtained license to start the project. In March, the manufacturing unit started functioning.

The Plachimada Village of Perumatty Panchayat is a small hamlet of Palakkad district. It is also home to several scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population. The villagers are predominantly landless, illiterate agricultural labourers. Almost, 80 percent of the population were dependent on agriculture for their livelyhood. Hence, it was obvious that the location of an industrial unit which consumes water on a large scale in a socially and economically backward region with agriculture as the chief occupation of the people, but belonged to a drought prone zone would entail serious environmental consequences.

People began to suffer with in six months after the company started operations. It was reported that, the salinity and hardness of the water had risen. Water from some open wells and the near by shallow bore wells were alleged to have some extremely unpleasant bitter taist. The company site is situated barely 3 kilometers north of the Meenakkara dam reservoir, and a few hundred meters West of the Kambalattara and Venkalakkayam water storage reservoirs the Moolattara main canal of the Moolattara barrage passes less than 10 meters of the factory compound and the main Chittur river runs vary close to the Coca-cola plant. The people who use these brackish bitter water complained of a variety of illness such as a bearing sensation in the skin of the face, greasy sticky hair, stomach disorders, skin deformities etc. it was also reported that, due to the over-extraction by the company, many wells in the adjacent area became dry. The insufficiency of water also caused the decline of agricultural production. Consequently the local economy and life in the area was alleged to have been ruined.

With in a short period itself, the adverse impact arising out of the over extraction of ground water by the coca-cola plant began to be felt acutely. As an initial reaction, on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2002, the Coca-cola Virudha Janakeeya Samiti (Anti-Coca-cola Peoples Committee) started the protest movement. On the eve of the first anniversary of the protest movement, the Perumatty Panchayat passed a resolution to the effect that no renewal of the license be granted to the coca-cola company. The Panchayat also issued a show-cause notice to the company on ground of ground water depletion and the resultant

drought like situation in the region. On 15<sup>th</sup> May 2003, the Perumatty Panchayat issued order declaring the cancellation of the license of the company.

In July 2003, the BBC Radio reported as the substances of carcinogens are found in the waste discharged by the company. Later the Kerala State Pollution Control Board also confirmed this report. KSPCB ordered the coke to stop supplying the waste, recover all the waste transported outside and store them safely in the plant site. Following this, in February 2004, by evoking the Kerala Ground Water Control and Regulation Act of 2002, the government banned the use of ground water by the company till the mid-June when the next Monsoon commences. Later this order was upheld by the Kerala High Court and the company had to stop its functioning on account of it.

In January 2004, a three day water conference was held in Plachimada. It was attended by activists like Maude Barlow, Jose Bow, Vandana Shiva etc. the Plachimada declaration took place with its proclamations like 'water is the basis of life; it is the gift of nature'. It is not a private property, but a common resource for the sustenance of all.

In August 2004, the Supreme Court Monitoring Committee on Hazardous Waste has been constituted. This Committee indicted Coke for discharging the waste having harmful substances with out a regard to the consequences it could have on the life and environment of the people. In the meanwhile, many scientific inquiries into the pollution caused by the Coca-cola Company came out, all endorsing the local peoples' anxiety for the severe degradation of water quality and the depletion of the underground water level. In November 2005, the Kerala government declared the Chittur block as a notified area on account of the over-exploitation of water resources under the Kerala Groundwater Act of 2002. On account of this declaration, the Panchayat passed a resolution to the effect that, the streams and similar ground water resources laying in the area that falls under ward 1 to 8 and 11 to 17 that were held both publically and privately shall be used only for domestic and irrigation purposes. In 2007, the Environmental Committee of the Kerala Legislature visited Plachimada. Based on its report and the report of the Kerala Ground Water Authority (KGWA) in 2009 the Kerala Government established a High Power Committee to study the nature and extend of the losses created by the working of the Coca-cola company. The High Power Committee after conducting public hearing at Plachimada submitted its report in March 2010. In the same year, the Kerala government decided to constitute a tribunal for assessing and realizing the compensation from Coca-cola for the damage caused by its bottling plant in Plachimada. On February 24<sup>th</sup> 2011, the Plachimada Coca-cola Victims Relief and Compensation Claims Special Tribunal Bill was passed by the Kerala Legislative Assembly.

In 2004, during the Plachimada declaration, there was an immense unity among the participants. But later on, there was a split in the movement with one section projecting Mylamma, a tribal woman as the leader of the movement and the other

Vilayodi Venugopal, a non-tribal humanrights activist as their leader. Adivasi Samrakshana Sangham was the movement led by Mylamma. The other faction is Plachimada Anti-cola Committee led by Vilayodi Venugopal. The other organizations active in the Plachimada struggle are the 'Plachimada Solidarity Committee' with its district convener Armughan Pathicara, state level convener Vijaya Raghavan Chelliya and the National Alliance for Peoples' Movement (NAPM).

Mylamma: Mylamma led the campaign against the Coca-cola company at Plachimada. She belonged to a native tribal community. She received the Speak Out Award constituted by the Outlook Magazine and the Stree Sakti Award. Mylamma was directly affected by the functioning of the Coca-cola company at Palakkad. Mylamma belonged to the Eravalar tribe. She was the founder member of the Coca-cola Virudha Samiti. The Anti-Coca-cola Struggle Committee held a continuous vigil in front of the Coca-cola plant since April 2002 demanding its permanent closure. She died on January 6<sup>th</sup> 2007.

### **National Highway Expansion and Peoples' Protests:**

Kerala is a narrow strip of land covering only 1.18 percent of the total land mass of India, but has a three percent of share in the population of the country. It has a population density of 819 per square kilometers which is three times that of the country. Kerala is also having high road density as compared to the national average.

Kerala has 8 national highways which run about 1811 kilometers. Kerala has narrower national highways compared to other parts of India. National Highway Authority of India upgrades highways to a minimum 4-lane 60 meters wide, a grade separated highway or a better standard across India. But in Kerala, national highways are being upgraded to 45 meters wide highways. Unlike the neighboring states of Tamilnadu and Karnataka, the public opinion in Kerala is strongly committed to restricting the width of national highway to 45 meters. The major hurdle in the way of national highway expansion in Kerala is the difficulty in land acquisition. NHAI has stopped working on many highway widening/ upgrade projects since there are protests in different parts of the state against such projects.

Following the NHAI's decision to expand about 700 kilometers of highway in the state at an estimate of over 10000 crors, the question of national highway expansion has emerged as an important debate in the Kerala society. Arguments in favor of and against the expansion projects have been put forward. The proposed expansion project include two national highways (NH17 and NH47) passing through Kerala. NH 47 enters Palakkad in the North and exits to Kanyakumari through Parasala in Thiruvananthapuram. NH 17 enters Kerala through Kasargod and meets NH47 in Ernakulam district. Thus running through the entire length and breadth of the state, both these roads are arterial in every sense.

The main contentions of those who oppose the NH expansion are that around 10 lakhs of people would be displaced as part of this scheme. Besides, it has been pointed out that, about 840 kilometers of these highways put together will cease to be public roads since the project is conceived under the Build Operate Transfer (BOT) scheme. The agitation has been spearheaded by the NH-47 NH-17 Joint Action Council. They have pointed out that, the land required for the 4-laning of NH47 with a width of 35 kilometers have been completed decades ago, but the implementation has been too tardy. 4-laning has been done only for 100 kilometers that too as in different stretches. Several by-passes of busy towns had been envisaged, but only a few could be completed. Similar was the case with the NH17 too. The existing road alignment was declared to be a national highway with big fanfare in 1972 and land acquisition procedure commenced for 4-laning with a width of about 35 meters. By 2007, the process was completed except in the Northern districts. But, now, the NHAI has been insisting on expanding highways with the minimum 45 meters width. According to the new scheme, consultants have completed the survey, projects prepared and pre-qualification tenders have been floated. Simultaneously, notices have been issued to those who living on the highway side for land acquisition, majority of whom were those who had lost land during the first round.

Since the early 2000s, NHAI has been insisting on accepting the BOT scheme for road construction for which the state government initially was not very enthusiastic. On this issue, the stand off became so severe that, the NHAI has neglected the routine maintenance for several years. The state PWD had to step in for patching up the potholes. Besides, the provision for compensation to those who lost land according to the existing legal regimes was very meager. That too complicated the issue of national highway expansion.

However, powerful arguments have been advanced in favor of the highway expansion. It has been pointed out that, the highway connecting the two ends of Kerala would accelerate the development of the state by reducing few hours journey from the capital to the other end. The expansion would benefit tourism and several local industries by facilitating faster movement of the people, goods and services. The project is expected to reduce the productivity loss in the state. The productivity loss and increased fuel consumption in Trivandrum-Kochi highway is estimated about 2700 crore annually due to congestion and lower speeds of vehicles. Kerala is having the highest vehicle density 1:6 (one vehicle for every 6 people) which is four times over the national average. Kerala is also having the average annual traffic growth (13 %) as well. Therefore, Kerala needs more roads to accommodate these vehicles.

Further it has been pointed out that, the state has an average of 11 deaths and 120 grievous injuries every day, pedestrian accidents being the majority one. Studies indicate

that, the average speed of the vehicles in the state would become 15 kilometers per hour in place of the present average of 43 kilometers per hour in the next 20 years. The number of families, especially those belonging to the weaker sections of the society getting devastated by road accidents every year is alarmingly high. A study point out that, the number of families victimized by accidents every year is three times over the total number of families affected by the land acquisition for the national highway development project.

The congestion and other issues arising from the small highways will inevitably increase the transportation costs and this will further increase the cost of the essential commodities. The common people will also be adversely affected by poor and inadequate connectivity.

However, the critiques point out that, if the national highway expansion project happens, there will be serious issues related to the land acquisition. The widening of a one kilometer stretch will adversely affect about 310 families, 1076 people and 51 buildings. For a densely populated state like Kerala, the NH expansion project will lead to the loss of many settled houses, industries and firms.

Initially, there was a strong resistance among the political leadership against the national highway expansion at 45 meters width. In 2010, an all-party delegation under the leadership of the then chief minister submitted a memorandum before the Central Government demanding exemption for the state in expanding the national highways at 30 meters width. However, serious concerns were raised by the chambers of commerce, industrialists, and similar developmentalists about the long-term feasibility of the plan of expansion at 30 meters width. Consequently, there was a reconsideration of the earlier position at the level of the political leadership.

Both the ruling front and the opposition unanimously accepted the NHAI proposal of 45 meters expansion. But the government demanded an elaborate rehabilitation project (worth about rs. 40000 crores) puts the more conservative estimates from the central government. It include realistic market value plus 10 percent thereof as compensation for the victims, rs. 10000 as shifting charges, substitution costs plus 10 percent thereof for structures, one lakh additional compensation for traders, six months rent for those who lose their homesteads, rehabilitation of the squatters on government-owned lands, shopping complexes in every Panchayats etc. The central government accepted most of these demands. It offered market value plus 10 percent as compensation and based on that, the Kerala government decided to give approval to the expansion project at 45 meters in 2014. Following this, surveying and acquisition process is going on in different parts of Kerala.



**Western Ghats- Madhav Gadgil and Kastoorirangan Reports:**

Western Ghats is an extensive region spanning over 6 states, 44 districts and 142 Taluks. It is the home of many endangered plants and animals. Western Ghats host India's richest wilderness in 13 national parks and several sanctuaries. Recognized by the Unesco as one of the worlds' eight most important biodiversity hotspots, these forested hills are also source to several rivers such as Gotavari, Krishna and Kaveri.

Western Ghats also acts as a huge water tank supplying water to 6 states. Now there are many leakages and there is water shortage. All the rivers are running dry now. And where ever there is water, it is highly polluted. Western Ghats needs high attention in the sustainable aspect of the whole India, especially South India. Ministry of Environment and Forests of India appointed a commission under Professor Madhav Gadgil in March 2010 to find a strategy for conserving the Ghats. This Commission is known by Gadgil Commission. It is formally known as Western Ghats' Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP). The commission submitted its study report in August 2011.

Gadgil Committee consisted of eminent ecologists and therefor its recommendations reflect an emphasis for the ecology conservation aspect. Following are the major recommendations of the Gadgil Committee.

- A. The Committee designated the entire hill range as Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA).
- B. It classified the 142 Taluks in the Western Ghat boundary into Ecologically Sensitive Zones (ESZ) 1, 2 and 3.
- C. ESZ 1 being of high priority, almost all developmental activities like mining, thermal power plants etc. are restricted in it.
- D. The Commission recommended that no new dams based on large scale storage of water be permitted in the ecologically sensitive zone 1. Since the Atirappilly of Kerala and Gundur of Karnataka hydel power project sites falls in the ESZ1, no environmental clearance be accorded for that. \
- E. The Gadgil Committee Report specifies that the present system of the governance of environment should be changed. It asked for a bottom to tope approach in place of the present tope to bottom approach and suggested that more powers would be given to the Gramsabhas. It also stood for decentralization of powers.
- F. The Gadgil Commission also recommended constitution of a Western Ghat Eccology Authority (WGEA) as a statutory authority under the Ministry of Environment and Forests with the powers under section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act 1986.

Gadgil Committee Report invited criticisms from several quarters. One of the major point of criticism was its environmental bias. It was pointed out that, many of the recommendations were impractical. Besides, the recommendation to declare



the entire Western ghat region as Ecologically Sensitive Zone would adversely affect various states in terms of their energy and development needs. Further, it has also been pointed out that, the Committee's recommendations did not include any solutions for the revenue losses due to the implementation of its recommendations.

Most importantly, the Gadgil recommendations, if implemented would adversely affect the various mafia interests. Lot of protests by the sand mining and quarrying lobbies followed in Goa when the Committee Report was first published. In Kerala, there were reports to the effect that the quarry mafia and similar vested interest groups deliberately trying to create panic among farmers by propagating that the Gadgil Report is anti-farmer; and if implemented, the farmers would be evicted. Persuaded by the propaganda, the people organized protests against the Gadgil Committee Report. They burned the report and the effigy of the well known environmentalist Madhav Gadgil. The sad plight of the situation was that, most of the protesters did not possess a first hand information of the report. No initiative was taken by the government too to popularize the report by translating the 522 page English report into regional languages. The mining lobby took advantage of this situation. They very often manufactured protest movements. It was in this background that the government appointed another committee the Kasturirangan Committee to study the Gadgil Committee Report, review and suggest measures for implementation.

Kasturirangan Committee is otherwise called HLWG denoting the 10 member High Level Working Group under the chairmanship of Kasturirangan. Its recommendations are:

- A. Instead of the entire Western Ghat region, only 37 percent of the area i.e. 60000 square kilometers of the total area be declared as Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA).
- B. Complete ban on mining, quarrying and sand mining on ESA.
- C. Distinction between the cultural landscape (58 percent of Western Ghats is occupied in the forms of agricultural fields, plantations, human settlements etc.) and natural landscape (90 percent of it) should be included in the ESA was made.
- D. Current mining area in the ESA should be phased out within the next 5 years or at the expiry of the mining lease, whichever is the earliest.
- E. No thermal power projects be allowed and hydropower projects will be allowed only after careful scrutiny.
- F. Red industries i.e. which are highly polluting are to be strictly prohibited in the region.
- G. The exclusion of plantations and agricultural fields from the Ecologically Sensitive Area. Accordingly, 123 villages will come under this category.

If Gadgil Report lade too much importance to environment, Kasturirangan Report was biased towards development. Kasturirangan Report was criticized by many as that it provided loopholes for mining which if allowed would be detrimental to environment that affect development as well in the long run. Kasturirangan Report got the tag of anti-environmental soon after its release. But it was also criticized as anti-developmental by those who feared that its recommendations, if implemented would be threatening to their interests and lielyhoods.

In November 2013, the centre government issued an order to implement the five recommendations of the Kasturirangan Committee Report. Consequently, opposition to Kasturirangan Committee became wide spread in certain pockets of Kerala. In order to address the peoples' concerns, the Kerala Government appointed another Committee to reconsider the recommendations of the Kasturirangan Committee Report. This Committee was chaired by Oommen V. Oommen. Following are its recommendations.

- A. The Committee recommended the government to make changes in the clauses relating to Ecologically Fragile Land (EFL) in Western Ghats.
- B. It found out that, serious lapses happened in determining the EFL. The Kasturirangan Committee used satellite surveys to determine EFL and even plantations and estates were included in it.
- C. It also recommended to stop land acquisition proceedings according to the Kasturirangan Committee Report.
- D. The pannal made several pro-farmer recommendations such as the exclusion of inhabited zones and plantations from the purview of ESA.
- E. The Committee recommended that a field survey will be conducted in the areas where the Gadgil and Kastrurirangan Committee have determined ESA to identify the human habitational zones and separate them from forest lands.
- F. It also recommended that farmers should not be stopped from rearing the hybrid varieties of milking animals and suggested that the grace period given to shift to organic farming be extended from the present 5 years to 10 years.
- G. The forest areas should be fenced so as to prevent the grazing animals from straying into it.

Social Issues- Gender Issues: Women in Public Space and Women in Child Trafficking:

As compared to the other parts of India, in terms of women's social development, Kerala has attained remarkable achievements. Despite this, till recently, there has been a lesser participation of women in the public space and increase in social problems such as violence against women, suicide etc. This challenges the liberal assumption that formal equality in terms of women's high status produces changes in the power relations between women and men.

It has been observed that, the political field has remained inaccessible to Malayali women despite their social developmental achievements in the twentieth century. Being sensitive to this reality, there has been attempts to mainstream gender concerns into local government. In 2010, the Kerala Legislature has raised the number of seats reserved for women in the local self-governments from 33 percent to 50 percent. This had accelerated the already developing political presents of women at the local levels since the days of political decentralization of the mid-1990s. However, this increasing public presents of women at the local levels has not yet translated into a situation characterized by the emergence of women political leaders wielding considerable social influence and the greater political articulation of women's interests.

Since mid-90s, the feminists have been demanding gender justice from the state and battling the major political parties over a series of well-publicised cases of rape, trafficking and sexual harassment in which some of the leading political figures were implicated. Vary little support to this cause came from the women who were inducted into the political process through political decentralization. Thus, the gender equality lobby in Kerala is represented by the feminist networks (Kerala Stree Vedi) had been engaged in a continuous combat with the state and political parties. Large number of women in the local bodies have not become a part of the gender equality lobby and senior male leaders in the respective political parties still hold the power and control to influence decision making.

Historical Background: Recently, the development experience of Kerala has been subjected to a critical analysis from a feminist historical perspective. Accordingly, politics of Kerala, typical of all patriarchal societies had conventionally been a male preserve. The community reform movements and the nationalist-left political movements of 20<sup>th</sup> century had projected an enlightened female subjectivity as a desirable attainment for Malayali women. It has been pointed out that women were accorded a new role and social space shaped by and serving modern patriarchy that limited female agency to the sphere of domesticity and ultimately tied to the welfare of the collective- be it community, locality or nation. During 1930s, there were attempts to expand women's social space. Rationales were put forward to ensure the increasing presence of women in the public. It has been argued that, women were naturally endowed with such qualities as compassion, patients and gentleness which were necessary for the smooth running of the public space. However, this claim had never been really effective in politics. The political society of 20<sup>th</sup> century Kerala implicitly or explicitly endorsed the public/domestic divide and carefully relegated female agency to the domestic space. This continued to be so during the decades of left hegemony that lasted till the mid-1980s. The gains of the dominant left politics during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century were essentially gendered, according to feminist critiques.

The civil social associations of women which had been in existence since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, according to the feminist scholarship, were more concerned with the moulding of women as ideal home managers. They were less preoccupied with resolving women question in favor of women's autonomy and equal participation in community life and citizenship in equal status with men. In the state-sponsored development programmes of the 1950s and 1960s, women were organized at the local levels. The focus of such attempts had been on the intersection points of social development and rationalizing and modernizing forms of family life. The issue of patriarchy was raised in the Peoples' Science movement and the Fish Workers' movement of the 1980s. However, questions of patriarchy were effectively raised in the political discourses with the advent of feminist groups by the close of 1980s. However, the feminist groups were treated with hostility, suspicion and palpable caution in the civil/political society. The 1990s witnessed the expansion of mass media, the spaces of which came to be established as a major site for the discussion on gender equality. Consequently, public debates over gender inequity and injustice became ever more pronounced. Now, it seems that, there has been all-round support for women's associational initiatives which defines women's empowerment as the women acquiring economic strength with in the patriarchal framework. Those who are subscribed to a perspective that equates the questions of gender equity and gender justice with the economic empowerment of women, believe that, once economically empowered, women's life choices will naturally be expanded.

Even though, the Peoples' Planning Campaign tried to address the issue of mainstreaming gender in the local governance, for several reasons, womens' political participation at local levels have failed itself to get transformed into a movement for gender equity and justice. One reason pointed out for such a predicament was the failure of the feminist network in popularizing the ideals of gender equity and justice on account of their conflict with the mainstream political society. It may be noted that PPC had been initiated at a time when the feminist networks of Kerala were fighting with the political parties both on the right and left against their insensitivity towards gender violence.

The Peoples' Planning Campaign (PPC) tried to integrate gender priorities into the general planning process structurally through a provision for gender budgeting. Womens' Component Plan (WCP) made it mandatory to set apart 10 percent of the total plan budget for gender specific socioeconomic developmental programmes. As part of this, need-based neighborhood women groups were formed and their conveners were included in the village councils. As part of the government's poverty alleviation programmes, the local self-help group initiative 'Kudumba Sree' has been constituted in May 1998.

Kudumba Sree is a female-oriented community based poverty reduction programme by the Kerala government financed by the central government. The Kudumba Sree project has been conceived as an offshoot of the Suvarna Jayanti Shahari Rosgar Yochana of the central government. About 75 percent of the project is funded by the central government and 25 percent by the state. The mission aims at the empowerment of women through the formation of self-help groups and encouraging the womens' entrepreneurial initiatives. The purpose of Kudumba Sree mission is to ensure that women should not remain as passive recipients of public assistance, but active leaders in women involved development initiatives. Kudumba Sree operates through local Neighborhood Groups (NHGs), Area Development Societies (ADS) working at the Panchayat/Municipality ward levels and Community Development Societies (CDS) working at the Panchayat/Municipality levels.

With the integration of Kudumba Sree Units with the local self-government institutions, the participation of women in the village councils have been considerably improved.

### **Gender Issues- Child Trafficking:**

Despite the better statistics reflecting the high gender parity, in several respects, Kerala presents certain paradoxes relating to gender relations. Several indicators of status of women in Kerala reveal that, women in Kerala is in a relatively disadvantaged position as compared to men. These include:

- \*Low participation and representation of women in politics.
- \*Gender Differences in professional education.
- \*Low work participation of women.
- \*Gender differentials in wage structure.
- \*Relatively unequal property rights.
- \*High workload and household responsibilities on women.
- \*Lack of autonomy or decision making power.
- \*Increasing violence against women at home, in public places and in work places.

**Child Trafficking:** Child trafficking means any illegal movement of children, typically for the purposes of forced labour or sexual exploitation. Unicef defines child trafficking as the recruiting, transporting or transferring of a person below 18 years of age for purposes of exploitation with in or outside a country. Children are trafficked for domestic work, begging, work on construction sites and plantations, but most children are trafficked for sexual exploitation.

In India, there are a large number of children trafficked for labour, begging and sexual exploitation. According to the statistics of National Crimes Record Bureau, in every eight minutes, two children are taken from their homes to be bought and sold in the markets. The potential reasons pointed out for child trafficking are economic



deprivation conditions, lack of employment opportunities, social status and political apprisings. Families in India are unable to meet their basic needs, so the parents are forced to cell their children off to gangs and the gangs to exploit them.

Kerala being placed in a better social development scale, instances of child trafficking outside to the state are vary rare. However, child trafficking to the various orphanages of Kerala are recently reported in the press. In June 2013, the Kerala State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights has been constituted as an autonomous body in accordance with the provisions of the Commission for the Protection of Child Rights Act 2005. The Commission aims to protect, promote and defend child rights in the state. Protection of rights of children under 18 is the responsibility of the Commission. Even though, the fundamental rights envisaged by the constitution are same for adults and the children, there are some rights specifically defined for children. The United Nations Convension on the Rights of Child to which India is a signatory also has specific articles on the rights of child. There are also special laws for children in India. All children irrespective of caste, color or creed are entitled to the full enjoyment of their rights. Some children, however in need of protection, like those who are marginalized due to socioeconomic exclusion, those who are subjected to physical, mental or sexual abuse, thos who need special care and protection and victims of natural or man-made disasters etc.

There are about 1800 orphanages recognized by the State Orphanage Control Board in Kerala. Many of these institutions, especially in North Kerala have several North Indian children as their inmates. Though, these institutions functioning as charitable institutions, most of them have been conceived as business concerns. Many of them receive foreign aid apart from incurring grands-in-aid from the government.

Over the years, the number of orphans have dwindled where as the number of orphanage institutions increased. For these orphanages to stay in business, they need more children and hence bring more children from other states. When children are brought down from other states, there are certain legal steps to be followed. The Child Welfair Committees of the concerned states have to be informed. But in most cases, such legal measures are not followed.

In May 2014, over 500 children from the states like Jharkhand, Bihar and West Bengal have been brought to Kerala with out proper legal transfer documents. They were arrested under suspicious circumstances from the train. It has been alleged that, these children travelled all the way from their home states with out tickets or food. Some of them even complained of having subjected to sexual abuses.

Later under the direction of the High Court, CBI investigation has been going on to the incident.



Suryanelli Case: Suryanelli Case is an infamous sex scandal which involved the kidnapping and subsequent rape of a 16 year old girl from Suryanelli in Idukki District of Kerala in 1996. The girl had been forcefully kept in abduction for about 41 days and had been cruelly raped by around 37 men. One of the accused include the politician P. J. Kurian. After he was named, the issue evoked political interest in the context of the then upcoming general election.

Several women's rights activists like K. Ajita and Suja Susan George and women organizations like NFIW and Anveshi had taken an active interest in the case. In September 2000, a special court at Kottayam found 35 of 39 of those who faced trial to be guilty of various charges. In July 2002, the prime accused, one Dharmarajan was found guilty of various charges and sentenced to life imprisonment. However, he left jail on bail in October 2002 and then disappeared. In January 2005, the High Court of Kerala acquitted all 35 convicts except the prime accused on account of the lack of evidence corroborating the victim's statement. The court found her to be untrust worthy. The verdict was criticized by women's rights activists.

In April 2007, Kurian was acquitted by the Kerala High Court.

In January 2013, on an appeal by the state government, the Supreme Court repealed the acquittal granted by the High Court and ordered for a hearing of the case afresh. In February 2013, the prime accused appeared in a TV interview and said that P. J. Kurian was involved and the police covered it up. This stirred up a controversy and politicians began demanding Kurian's resignation (by now, Kurian has become the Rajyasabha MP). Soon afterwards, the prime accused was arrested and in May 2013 he retracted his previous statements. In April 2014, the Kerala High Court upheld Dharmarajan's life sentence and acquitted 7 of the 35 surviving accused. As of in October 2015, the case is in appeal at the Supreme Court.

The Suryanelli case is an example for how the society at large and power balance in the legal system is insensitive to the issues of gender violence. The whole judicial process was vary slow. It took nearly 18 years to get the offenders convicted by the High Court in a convincing manner. The Prosecution appeal challenging the High Court's mass acquittal of all the accused except the one in 2005 lay before the Supreme Court with out a hearing about 9 years. It was only in the context of the 2012 Delhi Gang rape case that on the plea by the Democratic Women's Association the Supreme Court had looked into it and asked the High Court to reconsider the case afresh.

### **Politicisation of Caste: SRP and NDP:**

Ever since the mid 1960s, there has been a decline of national parties in Kerala politics. In 1964, both Indian National Congress (the Kerala Unit) and the Communist Party of India underwent a split. Kerala Congress with the support of the Catholic Church and the NSS had emerged from INC. The split in the Communis ranks

substantially weakened its political stature. During the 1965 general elections, none of the political parties could secure a majority in the legislature. In 1967, there had been attempts under the leadership of CPI(M) and CPI to forge an alliance of 7 parties including Muslim League (a party with open religious orientations).

The Muslim League is a strong regional party of Kerala. It occupies a strategic position in the evenly poised two rival alliances, the UDF and the LDF and it is in a position to tilt the balance of electoral politics in Kerala. In Kerala, Muslim League is not only more secular than the rest of India, but also it enjoys an important position in the political coalition making.

The regional parties in Kerala linger on Kerala politics. Most of them have no definite ideology or programme. Many of them depend on community vote banks. With the decline of national parties, secular image of both the Congress and the Communist parties have considerably eroded. Communist Parties now facing the challenge of declining support base owing to the shrinking of the traditional manual working population and the ever-increase of service sector professionals. For decades, the political attitude of the middle class hold the balance of Kerala politics.

In electoral politics, parties are only interested to capture power through elections. The conception of political parties in power as engines of meaningful social changes often fell into disuse in actual practice. Compulsions of electoral politics force the political parties to seek support from caste and communal bodies. Despite, the left ideological commitments to class analysis and class politics, caste, community, religion and region have remained as potent factors to reckoned with in Kerala politics.

During the 1970s, Kerala's political landscape witnessed the formation of two communal parties the N.S.S. sponsored National Democratic Party (NDP) and the S.N.D.P. sponsored Socialist Republican Party (SRP). The 1970s was a torrid time period in Kerala politics. The decade witnessed the first ministry under CPI- Congress alliance to complete the constitutional term of five years. The other major parties in the ruling front were the Kerala Congress and the Indian Union Muslim League. It was in this background that, the two well-organized community organizations forged up their own political parties as political pressure groups. The NDP was formed in 1974 followed by the SRP in 1976.

The genesis of these caste-based political formations has to be situated in the aftermath of the successful resistance by the three powerful community bodies viz. the Catholic church, the NSS and the SNDP against the government's education bill which aims to end corruption and bring parity in the appointment of teachers to the government-aided colleges. In the post-emergency period, political instability prevailed. In the ensuing governments, both these political factions shared power. On the eve of the 1980 elections, there was a reorientation in the political fronts with the CPI(M) and CPI

combined together to form the Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the Congress, IUML, Kerala Congress and the newly formed SRP and NDP to constitute the United Democratic Front (UDF). Towards the end of 1980s, the political importance of both these parties (SRP and NDP) became irrelevant. Their support base has been considerably eroded and both of them gradually became extinct in Kerala politics.

**Adivasi Land Rights- the Mutanga Incident:**

Independent India has a poor record in ensuring the land rights to Adivasis. In 1961, the U. N. Dhebar Commission had recommended the government to take necessary actions to restore the alienated tribal land to the Adivasis by considering 26<sup>th</sup> January 1950, when the constitution of India came into force as the cut-of date. However, for a long time, this recommendation remained on paper. It was revisited by the government during the early 1970s in the backdrop of the rising revolutionary fervor among the Adivasis. In 1975, a meeting of the state revenue ministers was convened by the then prime minister and asked the states to promulgate legislations for the restoration of alienated tribal lands in line with the recommendations of the Dhebar Commission. In response, the Kerala legislature passed the Kerala Scheduled Tribes (Restriction on Transfer of Land and Restoration of Alienated Lands) Act within a few months. This act provided legislative clauses for the restoration of all lands alienated from the tribal households since 1<sup>st</sup> January 1960. However, there was a serious lapse in the implementation of this act. The necessary regulatory framework required for its implementation was laid out only in 1986. In 1988, Dr. Nallatambi Thera, a social activist of Mananthavadi filed a public interest litigation in the High Court seeking a judicial intervention to speed up the implementation of the act. In 1993, the High Court directed the government to implement the act within 6 months. Still government was not firm on the implementation. It repeatedly sought extensions for implementation in every six months.

The state government openly acknowledged its inability to implement the act due to the opposition of the settlers and encroachers. In 1996 the Kerala Legislature passed the Kerala Scheduled Tribes (Restriction on Transfer of land and Restoration of Alienated Land) Amendment Bill in order to legalize the tribal land alienations between 1960 and 1986. However, the 1975 Act being included in the 9<sup>th</sup> schedule of the Constitution, could not be amended by a state government. On the failure to receive the Presidential assent, the act became a dead letter. Consequently, the state Legislature passed the Kerala Restriction on Transfer by and Restoration of Alienated Lands to Tribals Act under the state subject- 'agricultural land' in order to bypass the necessity of procuring the Presidential assent. According to the new Act, all land held by encroachers upto two hectares will be validated. In the remaining cases, it proposed to provide the original owners with the alternative lands. In order to achieve this objective, a Scheduled

Tribe Rehabilitation and Welfare Fund was initiated. Thus, while the 1975 Act aimed to restore Adivasi lands to original owners, the new piece of legislation legalized land grabbing and uprooted indigenous people from their lands.

The social reality of Adivasis in postcolonial Kerala is characterized by poverty, mal-nutrition, illiteracy, socioeconomic and sexual exploitation by the settlers, depletion of their traditional resource base and state restrictions. On most indicators of well-being, the Adivasis fall well short of the positive state averages. Starvation deaths, deaths resulting from the lack of health care etc. among the Adivasi communities are frequently reported in the media. Such reports would evoke public displays of concern and anxiety. The continued sexual exploitation of Adivasi women by settlers and its traumatic consequences for the victims as well as their communities have become issues of wider concern. The massive depletion of forests led to the shrinking of the traditional resource base of the Adivasis and the loss of their livelihood. Expansion of plantations, timber extractions, forest-based industries, river valley hydel projects, land grabbing by the settler communities, all contributed to the loss of land by the Adivasi communities.

Official statistics testify to the fact that, landlessness among these communities has enormously increased during the postcolonial period. Depletion of forests and excessive restrictions imposed on the use of forest produce jeopardized the Adivasi's existence. When confronted with financial crises, the Adivasis were often forced to sell their land, their sole source of livelihood to outsiders at nominal benefits. According to recent statistics, In Wayanad, the district with the largest Adivasi population, about 40 percent of Adivasis are landless. While over 12 percent own more than one acre, holdings of over 16 percent are as small as 0.5 to 1 acre. About 9 percent households have ownership rights over 0.2 to 0.5 cents of land. There are about 20 percent households which enjoy meager holdings as small as below 0.2 cents.

Following the nationalization of forests with the promulgation of the Kerala Private Forests (Vesting and Assignment) Act of 1972, about 11,69,412 hectares of land were taken over by the government. Though 29,000 hectares of these lands were set apart for redistribution among the Adivasis, this part of the plan was never implemented. Moreover, this act banned hunting and handed over the collection of non-timber forest products to non-Adivasi private contractors. However, in 1978, in the place of private contractors, cooperatives were introduced. Most of the welfare schemes initiated by the government for the Adivasis remained as ineffective due to a variety of factors such as the designing of unviable projects, inefficient management and leakage of money owing to corruption. Most programmes of state financial assistance were accessible only to those who have land as to present as collateral security.

The 1980s witnessed the formation of Adivasi organizations dedicated to fight for the Adivasi rights. The earliest ones were the Solidarity in Wayanad (1982) and High

Land Development Association HILDA in Battery (1987). Following this, a number of organization with a mix of Adivasi and non-Adivasi leadership like the Adivasi Aikya Samiti (AAS) and Adivasi Vikasana Pravarttaka Samiti (AVPS). These splinters were later joined to form the Adivasi Samrakshana Samiti (ASS). The ASS became more broad based with the induction of Kerala Paniya Samajam (KPS) and Kuruma Samutaya Samrakshana Samiti (KSSS). Under its, leadership, a conference of the Adivasis of South India was convened on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1993. The organizing committee was chaired by C. K. Janu, a landless labourer and woman activist belonging to the Adiya community, one of the most oppressed sections among the Adivasis. The major outcome of this convention was the emergence of South zone Adivasi Forum (SZAF) which spearheaded the massive agitation for the implementation of the KST Act of 1975. The forum established connections with the various national and international organizations working for the rights of indigenous people. Thus, it helped to brought the Adivasi land question of Kerala to a wider audience.

In 1995, a series of agitations began with the Adivasis forcefully occupying about 128 hectares of vested forest lands in Manantavadi. The police force came heavily on the agitators. In October 1996, the Ayyankali Pada held the Palakkad District Collector on hostage for 9 hours at gun point demanding the withdrawal of the KST Amendment Bill. Meanwhile, starvation deaths among Adivasis began to be reported from different parts of the state. As a measure of attracting public opinion on the issues of starvation death, in August 2001, a group of Adivasis supported by a number of radical Naxalite outfits waylaid the mobile store of the Civil Supplys Corporation and distributed the food stuffs to the Adivasis.

The Adivasi Dalit Action Council was formed and it started pitching huts in front of the Secretariat. The agitation continued for 40 days. C. K. Janu, the leader of the Council finally succeeded to negotiate a settlement with the government which agreed to distribute two to five hectares of land to landless Adivasis. The Council has not withdrawn the demand for the implementation of the 1975 act. The government had identified 42,000 hectares for distribution in the first phase. It was decided to start the distribution of land to Adivasis from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2002. Additionally, Adivasi families were agreed to provide with special developmental assistance for the next five years in order to ensure productive and sustainable utilization of the assigned lands. The state government also agreed to pass a resolution in the legislature requesting the central government to declare the scheduled tribal concentration regions of Kerala as Scheduled V Area. However, to the disappointment of the agitators, the government was not willing to reject the manipulative legislation of 1999 completely.

Muttanga Incident: Muttanga incident refers to a situation in which the police fired on the Adivasis in the Muttanga village of Wayanad on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2003. The Adivasis



under Adivasi Gotra Mahasabha had gathered at Muttanga wild life sanctuary from where the Adivasis had been evicted during the 1970s and 80s as part of setting up of a eucalyptus plantations in order to protest against the government's undue delay in allotting lands to them as had been agreed upon in October 2001. During the protest, the police fired 18 rounds resulting two immediate deaths one of which is a police man. In a subsequent statement, the government placed the official death toll at five. A video of the firing was aired on several news programmes.

After the police action on 19<sup>th</sup> February, many agitators were arrested. On 20<sup>th</sup>, 132 tribal activists were remanded to 15 days judicial custody. This include 99 women members as well. On 21<sup>st</sup>, the ADMS leaders C. K. Janu and Geetanandan were arrested.

The bloodstained incident at Muttanga attracted international condemnation. The National Humanrights Commission dismissed the reports of both the police and the state government on the incident and demanded the enquiry by an independent agency like the CBI. Accordingly, a CBI enquiry has been ordered.

The police action at Muttanga has created enormous physical and psychological wounds to the Adivasi communities. To be worse, the government and many sections of the mainstream media portrayed the Adivasi insurgency as externally motivated. It has been argued that, the tribal agitation is connected to such militant outfits like the LTTE and even to Naxal groups. But none of these allegations have not yet been proved. The government had attempted to defend the police action by describing the tribal action as armed struggle.

### **Dalit Struggles:**

The social reality of the Dalit communities in Kerala continue to be a problematic one. Dalits in Kerala are economically discriminated. Ending the severe forms of casteism as had once been in existence in the society did not meant the eclipse of the upper caste dominance in the society and politics at large. There are no inter-marriages taking place on a large scale. Caste abuses, both psychological and some times physical still prevail. Education does not provide spectacular social mobility and jobs for Dalits in society. Thus, Kerala's much celebrated social achievements do have a highly problematic legacy as far as the Dalits are concerned.

Despite the social reform movements of the colonial era and the left-led peasant and working class movements, the Dalits of Kerala have continued to remain as largely landless. The land reforms of postcolonial Kerala had generally failed to promote agriculture. The worst sufferers of agricultural stagnation, especially that of the food crop cultivation are the Dalit Communities. The land reforms were essentially tenancy reforms. The Dalit communities had benefited at best from them the right to have hutment sites. They were not given an entitlement to agricultural lands. This was chiefly due to the inadequacy in the implementation of the reforms. Even though there were



provision for redistribution of the surplus land, little progress has been made in this respect. Besides, the exemption of plantation land and land held by the industrial establishments from the purview of land reforms proved to be factors responsible for the dwindling of surplus land surrendered for government take over. Inevitably, this adversely affected the originally envisaged land redistribution programme.

Now scholars have argued that land which has remained underutilized in the possession of large plantations that had exhausted the lease term and the industrial houses which possess thousands of unaccounted acres should be recovered and redistributed to the landless people. The postcolonial land reforms have successfully transferred power, influence, wealth and opportunities from the highest levels of the former agrarian hierarchies to the middle levels. But this redistribution did not happen in the same manner further down. Thus, Kerala has been witnessing such incessant land struggles like that of the Changara struggle.

The historic Kerala land reforms Act 1963 with its land to the tiller policy turned out negative for the Dalits and Adivasis. According to this law, the tenurial peasants, mostly belonging to the upper and middle caste groups became the owners and Dalits and the Adivasis were mostly left landless. As of September 2010, only 2 percent of Dalits and 2.2 percent of Adivasis were provided with a livelihood on a satisfactory manner. It has been estimated that, in Kerala over 56 percent of the 6 million Dalits and Adivasis are landless. The rest, even though are recorded as landed ones in the official records, only tiny plots of land form their property holdings. This factor remains as a major reason for a problematic predicament in which the Dalits and Adivasis despite their continued role in agriculture, could not emerge as a land owning peasantry.

**The Changara Land Struggle:** In September 2006, in connection with the golden jubilee celebrations of the formation of the Kerala state, the then chief minister declared that the government would allot agricultural land to a substantial number of landless within the end of the year. However, these promises were not met. Consequently, under Sadhujana Vimochana Samyukta Vedi (SJVSV), a strike has been launched to reclaim land. They chose an estate of Harrisons Malayalam Limited. The struggle was led by the Dalit activist Laha Gopalan. This struggle was called off due to the assurance given by the government that it would look into their demands and do the needful. Months went by, but there was no sign of any positive move from the state government. Therefore, as response to these broken promises, on August 4 2007, the SJVSV led 300 landless families to the Kumbazha estate of the Harrisons Malayalam plantation company near the Changara village and thus began the Changara land struggle.

In the initial phase, the protesters occupied about 125 acres of land, then proceeded to spread on to a larger area covering all the four hills with each family

occupying 1 acre of land. Afterwards, they reclaimed the whole estate over 6000 acres which is spread out over seven hills. In due course, the number of protesters swelled up to over 7,500 families numbering about 29,000 people belonging to different places of Kerala.

They pitched tents on the occupied lands and started tapping the rubber trees in the estate eking out a living in due course. They demand land and labour to live. Unlike the movements against the forceful displacement, the Changara struggle has been conceived as a direct claim on land by the landless.

The Dalits and Adivasis are demanding, the government should distribute lands among them. They initially demanded permanent ownership over 5 acres of land for organizing farming and the working capital of 50,000 for meeting the initial farming expenses to each of the landless family. The demand was later reduced to one acre of land. They demanded that, the government should take over the land illegally held by the Harrisons Malayalam plantations and distribute to the landless. They point out that, the lease of the Changara Estate has long expired. The plantation company did not pay the rent for a long period. Even if there would be a lease, the company occupy much more land than the lease would allow.

The legal machinery as well as the government perceived the movement as illegal encroachment. The High Court on the plea by the Plantation Company asked the government to evict the encroachers with out violence. Trade Unions were also reluctant to the cause of the protesters. They organized blockades which has led to the deliberate cutting off of food and other necessary supplies to the agitators. This caused immense hardships to the protesters. Families with new born babies and even over 85 year old men and women were denied not only food and medicine, but also even drinking water. Medical professionals, media personals and even humanrights activists were prevented from meeting them.

The political leadership in general had followed a neglectful approach towards the struggle. However, many socio-political figures like Medha Padkar, Arundhati Roy and V. M. Sudheeran visited the place and extended their support to the movement.

After 790 days of struggle, the struggle came to an end according the Changara Package arrived at between the protesters' leaders and government in October 2009. According to the agreement, the government has decided to allot land to about 1432 landless protesting families in various parts of the state. They will be provided with financial assistance to build houses. These will be distributed with in three months. Wide spread poverty and the sufferings in the days of agitation is believed to be the factor that compelled the protesters to accept the unsatisfactory agreement, as has been described by Laha Gopalan.

## MODULE IV

### KERALA CULTURE

**Institutionalization of Kerala Culture- Kerala Kalamandalam, Malayalam Literature in National Stage- G. Sankara Kurupp, S. K. Pottakkad, Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, M. T. Vasudevan Nair, O. N. V. Kurupp. Developments in Cinema- Neelakkuyil, Chemmeen, Nirmalyam, Ramu Kariyat, Aravindan, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Padmarajan. Development of Electronic Media- News Channels.**

#### **onalization of Culture- Kerala Kalamandalam**

Kerala Kalamandalam, deemed as University of Art and Culture by the Government of India, is a major center for learning in Indian performing arts, especially those that developed in the Southern states of India, with the special emphasis on Kerala. It is situated in the small town of Cheruthuruthy in Thrissur on the banks of the Bharathapuzha river.

The inception of Kalamandalam gave a second life to three major classical performing arts of Kerala as Kathakali, Kudiattam and Mohiniyattam were, by the turn of 20th century, facing the threat of extinction under various regulations of the colonial authorities. It was at this juncture, in 1927, that Vallathol Narayana Menon, Mukunda Raja and Kunjikuttan Thampuran came forward and formed a society called Kerala Kalamandalam. They solicited donations from the public and conducted a lottery in order to raise funds for this society. Kerala Kalamandalam was inaugurated in November 1930 at Kunnankulam, Kakkad, and was later shifted to the village of Cheruthuruthy, just south of Shoranur in 1933. The Maharaja of Cochin donated land and a building. Subsequently, a dance department was started to revive Mohiniyattam. Kerala Kalamandalam has been functioning as a grant-in-aid institution under the Cultural Affairs Department, Government of Kerala. In 2006, the Kalamandalam was accorded the status of 'Deemed University for Art and Culture' by the Government of India. In 2010, University Grants Commission (India) has given 'A' category status for Kerala Kalamandalam. Kalamandalam is the only deemed university in Kerala state accorded the prestigious status.

Kalamandalam is strictly a residential center of learning. Veteran teachers and talented students are its inestimable wealth. For art-recitals, demonstrations and workshops held in Kalamandalam and outside, artiste-teachers and students participate.

Cheruthuruthy is the seat of Kerala Kalamandalam, renowned the world over for its Kathakali training centre. Besides a major centre for Kathakali training, Kalamandalam also imparts training in other performing art forms like Mohiniyattam, Koodiyattam, Thullal and Nangiarkoothu Panchavadyam, etc, following the ancient gurukula system

of education. Training in vocal and percussion instruments are also conducted here. Many of the internationally renowned artistes of Kerala and India have been trained here.

The Kalamandalam and its surroundings reflect the simple, pure and ethnic atmosphere in which these arts have survived for centuries. The Koothambalam - the traditional dance theatre at Kalamandalam is the only one in Kerala which is built outside a temple complex. This theatre is 14.62 m long and 7.31m wide and has four wooden pillars supporting it. It has three main parts - the aniyara (green room), the rangam (stage) - the space in front and side of it meant for the audience, and the mridanga-patha (where the drum is kept).

## **Malayalam Literature in National Stage**

### **G. Sankara Kurup**

G. Sankara Kurup, better known as Mahakavi G (The Great Poet G), was the first winner of the Jnanpith Award, India's highest literary award. He won the prize in 1965 for his collection of poems in Malayalam *Odakkuzhal* (The bamboo flute, 1950). With part of the prize money he established the literary award *Odakkuzhal* in 1968. He was also the recipient of the Soviet Land Nehru Award, in 1967, and the Padma Bhushan in 1968.

Mahakavi G was one of the foremost among the Malayalam poets. Born on 05 June 1901, at Naayattode near Kaladi, Sankara Kurup completed his education, and started his career as a Malayalam teacher in a secondary school Tiruvilwamala in 1921. Later he became a teacher in the Government Secondary Teacher Training Institute near Trichur. He worked as the Malayalam Pandit in Maharaja's College, Ernakulam, and retired as Professor of Malayalam from the College in 1956.

Kurup published his first poem, called *Salutation to Nature* in 1918, while still a student. Apart from 25 collections of poetry, Kurup also wrote verse dramas and collections of literary essays—in all about 40 works in Malayalam. He also translated the *Rubáiyát* (1932) of Omar Khayyám, the Sanskrit poem *Meghaduta* (1944) of Kalidas, and the collection of poems *Gitanjali* (1959) of Rabindranath Tagore into Malayalam. Indeed, one often speaks of the influence of Tagore and Gandhi on the humanism and nationalism of Kurup. Interestingly, he has also been described as a “bard of science” who explores the role of science in achieving the human potential.

He also penned the lyrics for P.J.Cherian's *Nirmala*, (1948), the first Malayalam film to incorporate music and songs. Kurup also led an active public life as a member (1968–72) of *Rajya Sabha*, the upper house of the Indian parliament.

G. Sankara Kurup's poetic works include *Suryakaanthi* (Sunflower) (1933) *Nimisham* (The Moment) (1945) *Odakkuzhal* (Flute) (1950) *Padhikante Paattu* (The Traveler's Song)(1955) *Vishwadarshanam* (The Sight of the Universe) (1960) *Moonnaruvium*

Oru Puzhayum (Three Streams and a River) (1963) Jeevana Sangeetham (The Music of Life) (1964) and Sahithya Kauthukam (The Sweetness of Literature), in 3 Volumes (1968) .And his important essays are Gadhyopahaaram (Honouring with Prose) (1947) Mutthum Chippiyum (Pearl and Oyster) (1958) and Ormayude Olangalil (In the Waves of Memory) (1978)

### **S. K. Pottekkatt**

Sankaran Kutty Pottekkatt (14 March 1913 – 6 August 1982), popularly known as S. K. Pottekkatt, is a famous Malayalam writer. He is the author of nearly sixty books which include ten novels, twenty-four collections of short stories, three anthologies of poems, eighteen travelogues, four plays, a collection of essays and a couple of books based on personal reminiscences. Pottekkatt won the Kerala Sahitya Academy award of 1961 for the novel Oru Theruvinte Katha (The Story of a Street) and the Jnanpith Award in 1980 for the novel Oru Desathinte Katha (The Story of a Locale), which was made into an award winning film. His works have been translated into English, Italian, Russian, German and Czech, besides all major Indian languages.

S. K. Pottekkatt was born in Kozhikode as the son of Kunchiraman Pottekkatt, an English school teacher. He had his early education at the Hindu School and Zamorin's High School in Kozhikode. He graduated from Zamorin's College, Kozhikode in 1934. He did not find an employment for three years following his graduation and devoted his time to the study of Indian and Western classics. From 1937 to 1939, he worked as a teacher at Calicut Gujarati School. He quit the job to attend the Tripura Congress in 1939. He then went to Bombay (now Mumbai) and took up several jobs only to develop an aversion for any white-collared jobs. He returned to Kerala in 1945. He died on 6 August 1982. He was in the works of North Avenue, a novel describing his experiences in Delhi as a member of the Indian Parliament (1962–1967) but the novel could not be completed.

Pottekkatt made his mark in literature with a few short stories in the 1930s. His first story "Rajaneethi" was published in the Zamorin's College magazine in 1928. Makane Konna Madyam (poem published in Athmavidya Kahalam) and Hindu Muslim Maithri (story published in Deepam) were some of his notable early works. The story "Vydyutha Shakthi" came in the February 1934 issue of Mathrubhumi Illustrated Weekly. Many of his early short stories were published by the weekly. By the 40s, he had established himself as a leading writer of fiction in Malayalam. The trip to Bombay is described in his travelogue and memoir Ente Vazhiyambalangal which also broadened his horizons and was a turning point in his literary life. While in Bombay, he was involved in India's freedom struggle and worked alongside freedom fighters like Mathai Manjooran. Here, Pottekkatt wrote his first novel Naadanpremam (1941), a romantic short novel mainly set in Mukkam, a small village in Kozhikode district. It was followed by Yavanikakku Pinnil (a collection of short stories) in 1940 and by a second novel Vishakanyaka. The latter received a prize from the Madras government in 1949. In 1945 he travelled to Kashmir and in 1946 embarked on an eighteen-month tour to Africa and Europe. This



resulted in the publication of Kappirikalude Naattil (In the Land of the Negroes) and Innathe Europe (Europe Today). In 1952, Pottekkatt travelled to Ceylon, Malaysia and Indonesia. Five years later he visited Finland, Czechoslovakia and Russia.

Pottekkatt was a writer of strong social commitment and ideals, possessing an individualistic vision. He was not interested in purely symbolic or allegorical mode of writing as practised by Franz Kafka or D. H. Lawrence. He was adept in weaving plots of chilling suspense akin to the writings of Alexandre Dumas, père and O. Henry. Pottekkatt's stories are characterised by a plot that carries an element of surprise, a few suggestive incidences that heighten its dramatic quality and a style that easily mediates between realism and lyricism. The plot is characterised by an Aristotelian peripeteia (a sudden reversal of situation) or an O. Henry twist. Love is also a dominant motif in several of his stories. This usually takes the form of betrayal of women or the capricious nature of man. At times it is the tragedy wrought by fate itself. These can be seen in "Pulliman" ("The Spotted Deer"), "Sthree" ("Woman"), and "Vadhu" ("Bride").

Pottekkatt has been translated into English, Italian, Russian, German and Czech, besides all major Indian languages. An Italian anthology of The Best Short Stories of the World published from Milan in 1971 included his "Braanthan Naaya" ("Mad Dog"). A collection of eleven of his short stories in Russian had a sensational sales of one hundred thousand copies in two weeks.

Besides his extensive travels and literary works, Pottekkatt also dabbled in politics. In 1957, he contested the parliamentary election from Tellicherry but lost by 1000 votes. In 1962, he won the parliamentary election from the same constituency with a majority of 66,000 votes against his fellow littérateur Sukumar Azhikode.

Oru Theruvinte Katha (The Story of a Street), written based on the story of Mittai Theruvu (S. M. Street) in Kozhikode, won the Kerala Sahithya Academy Award. His biographical novel Oru Desattinte Katha won the Kerala Sahithya Academy Award in 1972, the Kendra Sahithya Academy Award in 1977, and the Jnanpith Award in 1980. An honorary degree (Doctor of Letters) was bestowed on him by University of Calicut on 25 March 1982.

### **Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai**

Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai was a novelist and short story writer of Malayalam language. He is popularly known as Thakazhi, after his place of birth. Born in the village of Thakazhy, in Kuttanad, Alappuzha district of Kerala, he started to write stories when he was a schoolboy. His literary taste was nurtured by his high school headmaster Kainikkara Kumara Pillai who exposed him to Indian literature. He met Kesari A Balakrishna Pillai while pursuing his law studies in Tiruvananthapuram. Kesari introduced Thakazhi to modern European literature and thought. He focused on the oppressed classes as the subject of his works, which are known for their attention to historic detail. He has written several novels and over 600 short stories. His most famous

works are *Kayar* (1978) and *Chemmeen* (1956; film adaptation, 1965). He was awarded India's highest literary award, the Jnanpith in 1984.

His novels and short stories addressed various facets of society in Kerala in the mid-20th century. His novel *Thottiyude Makan* (*Scavenger's Son*, 1947) is considered a pioneer work in Malayalam realistic novel. The novel portrays three generations of a working-class family engaged in Alleppey as scavengers. The novel challenges the rationale of the caste system, that one's profession should depend on pedigree.

His political novel, *Randidangazhi* (*Two Measures*, 1948), projected the evils of the feudal system that prevailed in Kerala then, especially in Kuttanad. The film adaptation, directed and produced by P. Subramaniam from a screenplay by Thakazhi himself, received a certificate of merit at the National Film Awards in 1958.

His love epic *Chemmeen* (*Prawns*, 1956), which was a departure from his earlier line of realism, met with immense popularity. It told a tragic love story against the backdrop of a fishing village in Alappuzha. The novel and its film adaptation, also titled *Chemmeen* (1965), earned him national and international fame. *Chemmeen* was translated into 19 world languages and adapted into film in 15 countries. *Chemmeen* won for Thakazhi the Kendra Sahitya Academy Award in 1958. The film adaptation, directed by Ramu Kariat, won the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in 1965.

Despite the popularity of *Chemmeen*, his novel *Kayar* (*Coir*, 1978) is quite widely considered his masterpiece. The novel extends to over 1000 densely printed pages and deals with hundreds of characters over four generations, bringing back to life an axial period (1885–1971) during which feudalism, matriliney, and bonded labour gave way to conjugal life and to universal access to land ownership, and later, to decolonisation and the industrial revolution of the 1960s.

Another famous novel, *Enippadikal* (*Rungs of the Ladder*, 1964), traces the careerism of an ambitious bureaucrat whose lust for power and position becomes his own undoing. The novel was adapted into a movie in 1973 by Thoppil Bhasi. He is also known as 'Kerala Maupassant'.

### **M. T. Vasudevan Nair:**

M. T. Vasudevan Nair was born on 15th July 1933 in Kudallur, a small village in Palakkad district, Kerala. He rose to eminence through his well-crafted novels and short stories in Malayalam whose romantic poignancy and tender portrayal of the human condition endeared the author to his readers. He captured in subtle detail the pain and anguish that marked the ebb of feudalism in Kerala in many of his novels. A master storyteller, M.T made his way up to be honored with the highest literary award the nation confers on a writer, the Jnanpith in 1995. Prior to that, he had received many awards and accolades like both state and Kendra Sahitya Akademi Awards. He occupied many important and powerful positions in various literary bodies including the presidentship of Kerala Sahitya Akademi and the chairmanship of Tunchan Memorial

Trust.

The essence of his work is self-suffering and its emotional intensity and rhythms of love hold the readers sticking to him. The story of Koodalloor village and Bharathapuzha are the most repeated and favourite themes of M.T. Most of his stories show the wretched state of the Nair families 'Nalukettu', 'Kaalam', 'Asuravithu', 'Manju', 'Randamoozham', 'Vilapayathra', 'Arabipponnu'(written with N.P. Muhammed), 'Pathiravum Pakal Velichavum' are his novels. Around 18 short story collections are in his name of which the most important are 'Olavum Theeravum', 'Kutyedathi', 'Ninte Ormakku', 'Nashtapetta Dinangal', 'Iruttinte Aatmavu', 'Varikkuzhi', 'Dar-s-Salaam', 'Swargam Thurakkunna Samayam'. He acted as the Chief Editor of the weekly Mathrubhumi and as the editor of the Mathrubhumi periodicals. He won the Jnanapeedam award in 1996. On the 2nd of June 1996 he was bestowed with honorary D.Lit degree by the Calicut University. 'Randamoozham' bagged the Vayalar award in 1985. 'Swargam Thurakkunna Samayam' bagged the Kerala Sahithya Academy award in 1986. 'Kalam' gained the Kendra Sahithya Academy in 1970 and 'Nalukettu' the Kerala Sahithya Academy award. M.T. also gained the Padmarajan prize for short story. The films 'Nirmalyam', 'Bandhanam', 'Varikkuzhi', 'Manju' and 'Kadavu' were written and directed by him. Of these 'Nirmalyam' had gained the national award for best film. The other four movies bagged the state awards. He got the award for best screenplay writer several times.

### **O. N. V. Kurupp:**

Ottaplakkal Neelakandan Velu Kurup (27 May 1931 – 13 February 2016), popularly known as O. N. V. Kurup or simply and endearingly O. N. V., was a renowned Malayalam poet and lyricist who won the Jnanpith Award, the highest literary award in India for the year 2007. He received the awards Padma Shri in 1998 and Padma Vibhushan in 2011, the fourth and second highest civilian honours from the Government of India. In 2007 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by University of Kerala, Trivandrum. O. N. V. is known for his leftist leaning. He was a former leader of All India Students Federation (AISF) He died on 13 February 2016.

O.N.V Kurup was born to O. N. Krishna Kurup and K. Lakshmikutty Amma, on 27 May 1931 at Chavara, Kollam (Quilon) in Kerala. He lost his father when he was eight. His childhood days were spent in Chavara where he attended the government school. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in Economics from SN College, Kollam, he moved to Thiruvananthapuram city (Trivandrum) where he joined Travancore University (now Kerala University) and pursued Master of Arts in Malayalam literature.

O.N.V. was a lecturer at Maharajas College – Ernakulam, University College – Trivandrum, Arts and Science College – Kozhikode, and Brennen College – Thalassery. He joined Government Women's College – Trivandrum as the Head of Malayalam Department. He was also a visiting professor at Calicut University. He retired from service in 1986.

He received the Jnanpith Award, India's highest literary award, for the year 2007. He is the fifth Jnanpith laureate from Kerala and the second Malayalam poet to win the prestigious award. According to a statement by Bharatiya Jnanpith, the trust which presents the award, Kurup began his career as a "progressive writer and matured into a humanist though he never gave up his commitment to socialist ideology".

O. N. V.'s first published poem was 'Munnottu' (Forward) which appeared in a local weekly in 1946. His first poetry collection, *Porutunna Soundaryam*, came out in 1949. He published a book named *Dahikunna Panapatram* (The Thirsty Chalice) which was a collection of his early poems during 1946–1956.

In addition to the valuable contributions he had given to the Malayalam literature, he was one of the leading lyricists in Malayalam film/drama/album industry. He was the part of many dramas by Kerala People's Arts Club (KPAC) which has a major remark in the revolutionary movements of Kerala. *Kalam Marunnu* (1956) was his first film which was also the first film by the famous Malayalam composer G. Devarajan. Since then he has been active in film until his death in 2016 and was honoured with one national award and thirteen state awards (the most by a Malayalee). He has penned about 900 songs in about 232 films and numerous songs for plays and albums. His partnerships with Salil Chowdhury and M. B. Sreenivasan was so popular in Malayalam film industry. He has made many hit songs with popular music directors, including G. Devarajan, V. Dakshinamoorthy, M. S. Baburaj, Raveendran, M. K. Arjunan, K. Raghavan, Shyam, Johnson, Mohan Sithara, M. G. Radhakrishnan, S. P. Venkatesh, Ouseppachan, Vidhyadharan and M. Jayachandran.

### **Development in Cinema**

The history of cinema in Kerala starts with *Vikadakumaran*, the first silent film in Malayalam directed by J. C. Daniel. It was shown to the public in 1928. In 1933 the second silent film was produced in Malayalam. It was based on the historical novel 'Martanda Varma' by C. V. Raman Pillai. Sundar Raj of Nagarkoil was the producer. The first sound feature film produced in Malayalam was 'Balan' produced by T. R. Sundaram of Modern Theaters of Selam in 1938. In 1948 a film by name 'Nirmala' was produced by the Kerala Talkies Company. The writers like Puthuezath Raman Menon and G. Sankara Kurupp had collaborated in this venture. In 1948, the first film studio the Udaya was setup at Alapuzha by Kunchakko where the Malayalam film 'Vellinakshatram' was shot. Most of the early Malayalam cinemas were the imitations of the Tamil and Hindi popular films. The first major break through came with such productions as 'Jeevita Nougā' (1951) and 'Neelakkuyil' (1954). 'Jeevita Nougā' produced by Koshi and Kunchakko Production Company in Udaya studio was directed by K. Vempu based on the screen play written by Mudukulam Raghavan Pillai. It was the first commercially successful cinema in Malayalam. With 'Neelakkuyil' began the phase of Malayalam cinema embracing social subjects as its themes. It was followed by such productions as 'News Paper Boy', 'Rarichan Enna Powran', 'Mutiyānaya Putran' and 'Randidangazhi'. The 1960s witnessed the flourishing of Malayalam cinema with

large number of literary works got cinematized. The works of Topil Bhasi, P. Kesavadev, Vaikom Muhammed Basheer, Parappuram, Takazhi, Urub, M. T. Vasudevan Nair, K. T. Muhammed and many other were successfully adapted to Malayalam cinema.

The 1970s witnessed the development of parallel cinema. The names of G. Aravindan and Adoor Gopalakrishnan were firmly established in the Malayalam cinema industry. The figures like John Abraham, K. G. George, K. R. Mohanan, Shaji N. Karun, P. Padmarajan, Bharatan etc. were also made their debut. Infrastructure for film production was considerably augmented with the setting up of the Chitrlekha Studeo in the cooperative sector and the Chitranjali Studeo of the Kerala State Film Development Corporation. The state government began to provide subsidies for film making from 1977 onwards. The decade also began to show signs of the Gulf money getting invested in Malayalam film making.

1980s was the decade of popular cinema with middle class oriented subjects. There was a boom of the pulp literature in the 1980s and stories serialized through such journals like Manorama and Mankalam found a ready market in cinema. Adaptations mixing melodrama with violence set in the background of middleclass family stories were well received in the boxoffice. Such cinemas had a pronounced sexist bias and gender use became offensive to women. The names of I. V. Sasi and Hariharan were firmly established. Majority of popular films were dealt with predictable themes. A few explored alternative subjects like tribal life, pollution, gulf migration, performing art biography, womens' issues, and film making itself. A novel and idealistic method of film making and distribution was attempted under John Abraham and his Odessa movies. Their production 'Amma Ariyan' was made with contributions from general public and the film was screened on a non-commercial basis through out the state. Odessa also screened film classics and independent documentaries on topical issues and arranged discussions on such unexplored areas as fishermen colonies, mental hospital and the like. The General Pictures which produced the early cinemas of G. Aravindan and Adoor continued to remain as an exceptional as a group movement like Odessa.

During the 1990s, cinema industry had to face competition from the television serials. Theaters fell into loss.

### **Adoor Gopalakrishnan**

Adoor Gopalakrishnan is a renowned film director, script writer, and producer in Malayalam cinema field. Adoor Gopalakrishnan had a major role in revolutionizing Malayalam cinema during the 1970s and is regarded as one of the notable film makers of India. Adoor's first film Swayamvaram (1972, script by K.P Kumaran pioneered the new wave cinema movement in Kerala along with " Olavum Theeravum " (1970) and " Athidhi "(1974). Most of his films go to festivals around the world, and are released in Kerala. All the eleven films he directed, from Swayamvaram to Pinneyum (2016), were screened at several international film festivals and won him several national and



international awards. He won National Film Awards 16 times, Kerala State Film Awards 17 times and also won several international film awards. He won the prestigious British Film Institute award for *Elippathayam* (1981). Adoor received the Padma Shri in 1984 and the Padma Vibhushan in 2006. The Nation honoured Adoor for his valuable contributions to Indian cinema by awarding him the highest cinema award of India, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2004.

Gopalakrishnan was born on 3 July 1941 in the village of Pallickal (Medayil Bungalow) near Adoor, as the son of Madhavan Unnithan and Mouttathu Gauri Kunjamma. He started his artistic life as an actor in amateur plays when he was 8. Later he shifted his base to writing and direction and wrote and directed a few plays. After securing a degree in Economics, Political Science and Public Administration in 1961 from the Gandhigram Rural Institute, he worked as a Government officer near Dindigul in Tamil Nadu. In 1962, he left his job to study screenwriting and direction from the Pune Film Institute. He completed his course from there with a scholarship from the Government of India. With his classmates and friends, Adoor established Chithralekha Film Society and Chalachithra Sahakarana Sangham; the organization was the first film society in Kerala and it aimed at production, distribution and exhibition of films in the co-operative sector.

Adoor has scripted and directed eleven feature films and about thirty short films and documentaries. Notable amongst the non-feature films are those on Kerala's performing arts.

Adoor's debut film, the national award winning *Swayamvaram* (1972) was a milestone in Malayalam film history. The film was exhibited widely in various international film festivals including those held in Moscow, Melbourne, London and Paris. The films that followed namely *Kodiyettam*, *Elippathayam*, *Mukhamukham*, *Anantaram*, *Mathilukal*, *Vidheyan* and *Kathapurushan* lived up to the reputation of his first film and were well received by critics at various film festivals and fetched him many awards. However, *Mukhamukham* was criticized in Kerala while *Vidheyan* was at the centre of a debate due to the differences in opinion between the writer of story of the film *Sakhariya* and Adoor.

Adoor's later films are *Nizhalkuthu*, narrating the experiences of an executioner who comes to know that one of his subjects was innocent, and *Naalu Penungal*, a film adaptation of four short stories by Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai.

All his films have won national and international awards (National award for best film twice, best director five times, and best script two times. His films have also won his actors and technicians several national awards). Adoor's third feature, *Elippathayam* won him the coveted British Film Institute Award for 'the most original and imaginative film' of 1982. The International Film Critics Prize (FIPRESCI) has gone to him six times successively for *Mukhamukham*, *Anantharam*, *Mathilukal*, *Vidheyan*, *Kathapurushan* and *Nizhalkuthu*. Winner of several international awards like the UNICEF film prize (Venice), OCIC film prize (Amiens), INTERFILM Prize (Mannheim) etc., his films

have been shown in Cannes, Venice, Berlin, Toronto, London, Rotterdam and every important festival around the world.

In consideration of his contribution to Indian cinema, the nation honoured him with the title of Padma Shri(India's fourth highest civilian award) in 1984 and Padma Vibhushan(India's second highest civilian award) in 2006.

Apart from nine feature films, he has over 30 short films and documentaries to his credit. The Helsinki Film Festival was the first film festival to have a retrospective of his films. He has headed the jury at the National Film Awards and many international film festivals.

Apart from his films, Adoor's major contribution towards introducing a new cinema culture in Kerala was the constitution of the first Film Society in Kerala, "Chitralkha Film Society". He also took active part in the constitution of "Chitralkha," Kerala's first Film Co-operative Society for film production. These movements triggered a fresh wave of films, called "art films," by directors like G Aravindan, P.A Becker, KG George, Pavithran, and Raveendran. At a time this movement was so strong that even popular cinema synthesised with art cinema to create a new genre of films.

### **G. Aravindan:**

Govindan Aravindan (21 January 1935 – 15 March 1991), better known as G. Aravindan was a film director, screenwriter, musician, cartoonist and painter. He was one of the pioneers of Parallel Cinema in Malayalam and is considered as one of the greatest filmmakers in India. He was known for his unorthodox way of filmmaking; he changed his cinematic forms consistently and experimented in storytelling without regular narrative styles. Before venturing into the film field, he was an established cartoonist. He had also worked with documentaries and theatre. He also occasionally directed music for other filmmakers. The Government of India awarded him the fourth highest civilian award of Padma Shri in 1990.

G. Aravindan was the son of famous comedy writer M. N. Govindan Nair. Aravindan started his professional life as a cartoonist for the journal Mathrubhumi. He established himself as a noted cartoonist in the early 1960s with his cartoon series Cheriya Manushyarum Valiya Lokavum which dealt with the adventures of the central characters Ramu and Guruji, mingled with political and social satire. The series was preceded by two more cartoon series, Ramuvinte Sahasika Yathrakal and Guruji, featuring the central characters of Cheriya Manushyarum Valiya Lokavum. He also worked for other journals as a cartoonist. At one point, Aravindan diverted his attention to theatre and music. He played a major role in establishing theatre and music clubs Navarangam and Sopanam. He became associated with eminent theatre figure Kavalam Narayana Panicker which accelerated his activities in the field of professional play. They created several plays like Kaali and Avanavan Kadamba. Aravindan was working as an officer in revenue board when he got associated with artist Devan, playwright Thikkodiyam and writer Pattathuvila Karunakaran.

The first film directed by Aravindan, *Uttarayanam* (1974), came out as a product from this group; the film was produced by Karunakaran and the story was written by Thikkodiyan. The early works of Aravindan were influenced by the group; for example, the spiritualism factor which can be seen in his early works can be attributed to satirist Sanjayan and mystic paintings of K. C. S. Paniker. Aravindan's second film *Kanchanasita* was released three years later in 1977. It was a retake on the *Ramayana*. This film is credited with formation of a new stream called independent filmmaking. While *Kanchana Sita* dealt with mythology, Aravindan's next film *Thampu* (1978) dealt with realism and told the story of suffering in a circus troupe. His 1979 films *Kummatty* and *Esthappan* also ran through different streams. His next film *Pokkuveyil* (1981) starred poet Balachandran Chulikkad. From this to his next film there was a gap of four years.

The 1985 film *Chidambaram* was produced by Aravindan under the banner *Suryakanthi*. In 1986 *Oridathu* came which handled the problems faced by the people of a hamlet with no electricity, when electric supply finally reaches them. In this period Aravindan did a number of documentaries and short films. He composed music for films like *Aaro Oral*, *Piravi* and *Ore Thooval Pakshikal*. Aravindan's 1989 film *Unni* had a starcast mainly consisting of foreigners. Aravindan's final project *Vastuhara* (1991) about refugees in Bengal was based on C. V. Sreeraman's short story in the same name. The film had Mohanlal and Neena Gupta in major roles. Aravindan died on 15 March 1991, before the release of *Vastuhara*.

## **P Padmarajan**

Padmarajan (23 May 1945 – 24 January 1991) was a renowned screenwriter, and film director. His stories deal with deceit, murder, romance, mystery, passion, jealousy, libertinism, anarchism, individualism, and the life of peripheral elements of society. Some of them are considered as among the best in Malayalam literature. He entered the world of Malayalam films by writing the screenplay for Bharathan's directorial debut *Prayanam* (1975) to take first steps to be one of the most talented scriptwriters to have graced Malayalam cinema. He later began to direct films based on his own screenplays, beginning with *Peruvazhiyambalam* (*The Street as a Choultry*) (1979), which are greatly popular among the common people as well as intellectuals and film critics, while maintaining richness in artistic and thematic originality and excellence. Padmarajan was noted for his fine and detailed screenwriting and expressive direction style. He was the founder of a new school of film making in Malayalam, along with Bharathan, in the 1980s, which created films that were widely received while also being critically acclaimed.

Padmarajan was born on 23 May 1946 in Muthukulam near Haripad in Alappuzha district as the sixth son of Thundathil Anantha Padmanabha Pillai and Njavarakkal Devaki Amma. After early schooling at Muthukulam, he studied at M. G. College and University College Trivandrum, graduating with a BSc in chemistry (1963). Subsequently, he learned Sanskrit from the scholar Cheppad Achyutha Warriar at

Muthukulam. He then joined All India Radio, Trichur (1965), starting as a programme announcer, and later settled at Poojappura, Trivandrum (1968); he would remain at All India Radio until 1986, when his busy involvement in films would prompt him to retire voluntarily.

The news of his untimely death was a shock to Keralites and was widely mourned, and the feeling of loss among the people of Kerala lingers to this day.

Padmarajan was a great experimenter who explored all walks of life in his works. His screenplays had such hitherto-unheard of features and subjects – such as casting rain as a character in *Thoovanthumbikal* (Dragonflies in the Spraying Rain), friendship between two young school girls in *Desadanakili Karayarilla* (Migratory Birds Don't Cry), unusual climax (By traditional standards) in *Namukku Parkkan Munthiri Thoppukal* (Vineyards for us to dwell) and *Oridaththoru Phayalvaan* (There Lived a Wrestler). Many of his films bear the mark of his romanticism. He is celebrated for his possibly unparalleled attention to detail in his screenplays. Some of his scripts are arguably the smoothest narratives ever penned in the Malayalam language. They are also ample proof for his keen observation, acute perception, and astute portrayal of human relationships and emotions. Many of his films have stunning and haunting climaxes, most of them not commonly portrayed in Malayalam movies. His characters were portrayed with great sensitivity and intensity on the screen and many of the scenes are generously sprinkled with humour. The dialogues of characters are quite natural, in the language of the common man, and yet have a subtle lyrical quality. Indeed, a just case may be made that his directorial merit flowed easily from his exquisitely crafted screenplays: he never directed a film based on a script written by someone else (unlike other Malayalam film directors of comparable stature, say, Bharathan and K. G. George), and rarely adapted his script from a story not his own. Consequently, he had an unusually intimate knowledge of the characters in his films in combination with his mastery of the script.

Together with Bharathan and K. G. George, he successfully laid the foundation for a school of Malayalam cinema that strove to tread a middle ground by striking a fine balance between intellectual and commercial appeal, without sacrificing the strong points of either approach; this was accomplished by portraying brilliant stories with “next door” men and women as characters, steering clear of artificial characters, stereotypes and pedantic inclinations allegedly typical of critically acclaimed films. The term “Parallel film” is usually used to describe his style of filmmaking. Along with Bharathan, he displayed mastery in handling sexuality on the screen, hitherto less known in Malayalam cinema.

He was quite adept in spotting talent, and introduced many fresh faces who would later make their mark in Indian cinema, including Ashokan (Peruvazhiyambalam), Rasheed (Oridathoru Phayalvaan), Rahman (Koodevide ?), Jayaram (Aparan), Ramachandran (Novemberinte Nashtam), Ajayan (Moonnam Pakkam). Also artists like Nitish

Bharadwaj(Njan Gandharvan), Suhasini (Koodevide); Shaari (Namukku Parkkan Munthirithoppukal) were introduced to Malayalam screen by him. He coaxed sparkling and inspired performances from many actors, such as Bharath Gopi, Mammooty, Mohanlal, Karamana Janardanan Nair, Rahman, Jagathy Sreekumar, Suresh Gopi (in Innale), Shobhana, Sumalatha, Thilakan, and Nedumudi Venu; indeed, Thilakan's rendition in Moonnam Pakkam is one of the best performances of the thespian's career. His association with Mohanlal was well noted especially because their films broke the conventional concepts prevailing during that time. He also aided in establishing, to a fair degree, the fame of other directors such as Bharathan, I. V. Sasi, and Mohan, through his association with them; his collaboration with Bharathan as a script writer is considered to have produced remarkable works in Malayalam cinema. His assistants who went on to direct films independently include Thoppil Ajayan (Perumthachchan), Suresh Unnithan (Jaathakam,.) and Blessy (Kaazhcha)

His important novels include Itha Ivide Vare ,Jalajwala ,Manju Kaalam Notta Kuthira Nakshathrangale Kaaval,Nanmakalude Sooryan ,Onnu Randu Moonnu ,Peruvazhiyambalam Prathimayum Rajakumariyum ,Rathinirvedam ,Rithubhedhangalude Paarithoshikam Shavavahanangalum Thedi ,Udakappola ,Vadakakku Oru Hridayam ,Vikramakaaleeswaram .And his famous Short Stories Prahelika, Ma tullavarude Venal, Pukakkannada, Aparan, Kaivariyude Thekkeyattam

**Ramu Kariat** ( 1927 –1979) was a legendary Malayali director for almost three decades from the 1950s to the 1970s. He directed many acclaimed films in Malayalam. His noted films include Neelakkuyil (1954), Minnaminungu (1957), Mudiyanaya Puthran (1961), Moodupadam (1963) and the National Award winning Chemmeen (1965)

He started his career through the Kerala People's Arts Club (K.P.A.C.), a leftist theatre group. He debuted in films by co-directing Thiramala (1953) with Vimal Kumar/P.R.S Pillai and the path-breaking film Neelakkuyil in 1954 along with P. Bhaskaran. Neelakuyil was written by Uroob and starred Sathyan and Miss Kumari was a major commercial success. It was also the first Malayalam film to shoot outdoors, though the number of scenes shot outdoors was very less. This film is considered as the first mature film in Malayalam due to the professional approach it had in direction, script, performances and music. Ramu Kariat's co-director of the film P. Bhaskaran and cameraman A. Vincent went on to have illustrious careers themselves.

After Neelakkuyil, he directed Minnaminungu (1957), another noted film. His next film was the film version of veteran playwright Thoppil Bhasi's highly successful play Mudiyanaya Puthran (1961). After directing another noted film Moodupadam (1963), he went on to direct Chemmeen (1965). Chemmeen is considered as the turning point in Malayalam cinema. The film, an adaptation of Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai's novel in the same name was the first Malayalam film to win the National Film Award for Best



Feature Film. The tragic love story starring Madhu, Sathyan and Sheela went on to become major commercial success as well.

In 1975 he was a member of the jury at the 9th Moscow International Film Festival. He directed fifteen films during his career. He was elected as Member of Legislative Assembly from Nattika in 1965 as a left independent.

Neelakuyil with its neo-realistic style was the first Malayalam movie to capture national recognition, bringing the first national award to Kerala. Till its advent Malayalam movies were aping Tamil cinema. The film was jointly directed by Ramu Kariat and P Bhaskaran, based on a story by a titan of Malayalam letters, Uroob. The love between a romantic pair, divided by caste, played by Sathyan and Miss Kumari had the ethnic touch of Malayalee life. K Raghavan Master's folk, traditional and devotional tunes set to P Bhaskaran's lyrics and rendered by Kozhikode Abdul Khader, Mehbood, Janamma David, Kozhikode Pushpa & Shanta P Nair made for immortal music.

Neelakuyil tells the story of the love affair of a Dalit girl and an educated, high caste school teacher. It stars Sathyan, Miss Kumari, Prema, P. Bhaskaran and Master Vipin. Many of the actors including Sathyan debuted through this film.

Neelakuyil was a landmark film in Malayalam cinema history that paved a new path for Malayalam cinema by breaking away from the earlier tradition of adapting plots from Hindi films for making Malayalam films, of which the story or the characters could never be identified with the culture of Kerala. Based on a story by famous Malayalam writer Uroob, Neelakuyil had dialogues with local accent, and the script's hard-hitting dialogues flay social evils such as untouchability, feudalism, and injustice towards women. It features an acclaimed cinematography by A. Vincent and a successful musical score by K. Raghavan. It won the All India Certificate of Merit for Best Feature Film, and the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Malayalam, thus becoming the first nationally recognized Malayalam film. The lead performances and the narrative style was also noted.

Most of its shooting was done outdoors and it captured images of the rural, agrarian Kerala, its vast paddy fields, the life of the peasants and the feudal society.

The plot revolves around rustic life in a small village. Neeli (Miss Kumari), a Dalit peasant girl, falls in love with Sreedharan Nair (Sathyan), a school teacher. Neeli becomes pregnant. Sreedharan Nair refuses to marry Neeli as he fears being ostracized by a conservative society. Neeli becomes an outcaste and dies in child birth. Sankaran Nair (P. Bhaskaran), the village postman, adopts the child ignoring the protests of society. Sreedharan Nair marries Nalini (Prema), a member of an aristocratic family. Neeli's son Mohan (Master Vipin) is brought up by the postman. The film ends with Sreedharan Nair and Nalini accepting the boy as their own child.

**Chemmeen** is a 1965 Malayalam romantic drama film, based on the novel of the same name by Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai. It was adapted into a screenplay by S. L. Puram Sadanandan, directed by Ramu Kariat, and produced by Babu Ismail Sait.

The film tells the story of a pre-marital and later extra-marital relationship between Karuthamma, the daughter of an ambitious Hindu fisherman, and Pareekutty, the son of a Muslim trader. The theme of the film is a popular legend among the fishermen communities along the coastal Kerala State in southern India regarding chastity. If a married fisher woman was faithless when her husband was out in the sea, the Sea Goddess (Kadalamma literally meaning Mother Sea) would consume him. The film's cast includes Sheela as Karuthamma, Madhu as Pareekutty, Kottarakkara Sreedharan Nair as Chembankunju, and Sathyan as Palani. Produced by Babu Ismail Sait under the banner of Kanmani Films, it features cinematography by Marcus Bartley and U. Rajagopal, and editing by Hrishikesh Mukherjee and K. D. George. The original score and songs were composed by Salil Chowdhury, with lyrics by Vayalar, and featuring the voices of K. J. Yesudas, P. Leela, Manna Dey and Santha P. Nair.

The film released on 19 August 1965. It received strongly positive critical reviews and was recognized as a technically and artistically brilliant film. It is usually cited as the first notable creative film in South India. It was also the first South Indian film to win the Indian President's Gold Medal for the Best Film, which it did so in 1965. It was screened at various international film festivals and won awards at the Cannes and Chicago festivals. The film was included in the list of 100 greatest Indian films by IBN Live. Chemmeen was dubbed and released in Hindi as Chemmeen Lahren and in English as The Anger of the Sea.

The plot of the film goes like this. Karuthamma (Sheela) is the daughter of an ambitious lower caste Hindu fisherman, Chembankunju (Kottarakkara Sreedharan Nair). She is in love with a young Muslim fish trader, Pareekutty (Madhu). Chembankunju's only aim in life is to own a boat and net. Pareekutty finances Chembankunju to realise this dream. This is on a condition that the haul by the boat will be sold only to him. Karuthamma's mother Chakki (Adoor Bhavani) comes to know about the love affair of her daughter with Pareekutty, and reminds her daughter about the life they lead within the boundaries of strict social tradition and warns her to keep away from such a relationship. The fisherfolks believe that a fisherwoman has to lead a life within the boundaries of strict social traditions and an affair or marriage with a person of another religion will subject the entire community to the wrath of the sea.

Karuthamma sacrifices her love for Pareekutty and marries Palani (Sathyan), an orphan discovered by Chembankunju in the course of one of his fishing expeditions. Following the marriage, Karuthamma accompanies her husband to his village, despite her mother's sudden illness and her father's requests to stay. In his fury, Chembankunju disowns her. On acquiring a boat and a net and subsequently adding one more, Chembankunju becomes more greedy and heartless. With his dishonesty, he drives Pareekutty to bankruptcy. After the death of his wife, Chembankunju marries Pappikunju (C. R. Rajakumari), the widow of the man from whom he had bought his first boat. Panchami (Lata), Chembankunju's younger daughter, leaves home to join Karuthama, on arrival of

her step mother. Chembankunju's savings is manipulated by his second wife. The setbacks in life turns Chembankunju mad.

Meanwhile, Karuthamma has endeavoured to be a good wife and mother, but scandal about her old love for Pareekutty spreads in the village. Palani's friends ostracize him and refuse to take him fishing with them. By a stroke of fate, Karuthamma and Pareekutty meet one night and their old love is awakened. Palani, at sea alone and baiting a shark, is caught in a huge whirlpool and is swallowed by the sea. Next morning, Karuthamma and Pareekutty, are also found dead hand in hand, washed ashore. At a distance, there lies a baited dead shark and Palani.

Kariat bought the rights from Thakazhi for 8000, a comparatively large sum for a Malayalam novel then. With adapting the novel, Ramu Kariat was taking a big risk as everybody in the film circle was almost certain that the film would be no patch on the novel.

Once Ramu Kariat had decided to make a film based on the novel, he approached several people including the Kerala State Government for funds to produce the film. On one of these journeys, he met Babu Ismail Sait (Kanmani Babu). Then in his early twenties, Kanmani Babu agreed to finance the film. Although the novel was set in the coastal area of Alappuzha, The film was completely shot from Nattika beach, located about 25 km from Thrissur. Ramu Kariat wanted to shoot the film in the exact locations mentioned in Thakazhi's novel. But some people at Purakkad demanded rent for their boats, forcing Kariat to shift the location to Nattika, a place he was familiar with. In the 40th anniversary of the release of the film, Madhu described how the fisherfolk of Nattika cooperated by offering their homes and clothing for the filming. He also described how Sathyan escaped being drowned in the sea during the shooting. After the outdoor shoot was done Marcus Bartley had to leave as he had to complete a Dilip Kumar film. Rajagopal gave the finishing touches to the film.

The film won awards like National Film Award for Best Feature Film, Certificate of Merit at the Chicago International Film Festival and Gold Medal at the Cannes Film Festival for Best Cinematography.

**Nirmalyam:** Nirmalyam is a 1973 film written and directed by M. T. Vasudevan Nair, and starring P. J. Antony and Shanta Devi. Malayalam actor P. J. Antony won the National Film Award for Best Actor in 1974 for his performance as a velichappadu (an oracle or a medium between the Goddess and the worshipper in a Hindu temple) in this movie. The film received the National Film Award for Best Feature Film and Kerala State Film Award for Best Film in 1974. It is one of the classics in Malayalam cinema.

It is the debut of M. T. Vasudevan Nair as director and also the debut of Sukumaran and Sumithra as actors. It is the second movie of Ravi Menon, who acted earlier in a Hindi movie. This movie was a breakthrough in Ravi Menon's acting career.

The movie is an adaptation of the short story "Pallivalum Kalchilambum" by M. T. Vasudevan Nair.

The movie revolves around a neglected temple and the people dependent on the temple. P. J. Antony (Velichapdu or oracle) is the caretaker of the temple. The Velichapadu's wife Narayani (Kaviyoor Ponnamma) runs the household with the meager income from temple. His son Appu (Sukumaran) is educated but is unemployed as a result he loses faith in the temple and goddess. Velichapadu's daughter Ammini helps him in temple rituals. The temple priest quits and starts a tea shop. A new priest from neighboring village Brahmattan Nambothiri (Ravi Menon) now takes care of the temple. He is eager to get a government job as his situation at home is not good and younger sisters not yet married. He seduces Ammini, daughter of Velichapdu and leaves the village. Because of extreme poverty Velichapdu starts to beg. One day his son Appu tries to sell the holy sword to a pawn seller and Velichapadu finds it. He asks his son Appu to leave the house immediately.

Meanwhile, there is a smallpox outbreak in the village, first affected is Variyar's (Kottarakkara Sreedharan Nair) wife. Due to the outbreak of smallpox people become serious about the temple and its ritual. The villagers decide to conduct the festival in temple for the Goddess and started collecting money from all. On the day of festival Velichapadu found that his wife was selling her body to a local moneylender for a living. The Velichapadu was totally devastated. The film ends with a devastating scene. The oracle dances before the goddess, spits at her face with his blood, strikes his forehead with the sacred sword, till he falls down dead.

The film's major shooting location was a small village near Edappal called Mukkola (Mukuthala). The film is produced by M. T. Vasudevan Nair under the banner of Novel Films. Cinematographer Ramachandra Babu says, "There was full co-operation from the villagers and they always were there to help us with properties for the scenes and also acting in minor and crowd scenes. In fact they got so attached to the unit, many children were in tears when it was time for us to depart after the shooting was over. Except for the Sreekovil portion all other scenes were completed in one schedule. We had erected a set in Calicut where the Sreekovil with the idol where close up shots were taken. It was because in the temple which was used for our shooting there were no regular Poojas taking place and more over it was such a cramped place and customs prevent you from entering it too for placing lights etc. For other outdoor locations, we used the steps on the riverside at Thirumittakode temple for the parting song and a cave nearby for the rain sequence which was done with the help of fire engines." Post production was done in Madras

Veteran actor Sankaradi was originally cast for the role of Velichapad. But he rejected the offer saying that his physique wouldn't suit the role. He himself suggested P. J. Antony, whose performance is still regarded as one of the finest onscreen performances ever.

## **Development of Electronic media- News Channels**

Mass media influence our daily life more than any other cultural institution. They are our main sources of news and entertainment. They define our purchase decision, voting behavior, academic achievement and so on. Because of this all-encompassing impact of mass media, politicians, businessmen and government agencies depend on media to influence people. During election time, we witness politicians spending millions of rupees for political campaigns through mass media. Business firms across the world spend billions of dollars to market their products with the help of mass media advertisements. We are informed of the policies of our governments through newspapers and electronic media. Likewise, we people need mass media to express our needs, complaints and wishes to the authorities. In short, role of mass media in our society is omnipresent.

### **Types of Mass Communication**

Considering the characteristics and forms, mass media has been categorized as print media, Electronic media and New media

#### **Print Media**

Johannes Gutenberg's invention of the moveable metallic type in the fifteenth century paved the way for proliferation of the print media. The printing press using movable types introduced the method for mass production of texts. Before the invention of the printing press, books were expensive materials affordable only for the aristocrats and royal families. Printing reduced the cost of books and made them available to the common men also. Rapid duplication of multiple copies of handy texts led to the innovation of modern newspapers. Print Media include

Newspapers

Magazines

books

other textual documents

#### **Electronic Media**

The history of electronic mass media starts with the invention of radio by Marconi. The first radio station was set up in Pittsburg, New York and Chicago in the 1920s. Following the USA, European countries also started radio stations for broadcasting news and entertainment content. The colonial powers like Briton and France set up radio stations in Asian and African countries in the early years of 20th century. The next step in electronic communication media history was the invention of cinema. Following cinema, television broadcasting was initiated in the US on experimental basis during 1920s. But, the dramatic impact of television as a mass medium began in 1950s. Parallel to these, recording industry also boomed in the western countries. In short, the term electronic media mainly include:

Radio

Movies



Television

Audio and Video records

New Media

Online and digital means of producing, transmitting and receiving messages are called new media. The term encompasses computer mediated communication technology. It implies the use of desktop and portable computers as well as wireless and handheld devices. Every company in the computer industry is involved with new media in some manner. The forms of communicating in the digital world include

CD-RoMs

DVDs

Internet facilities like World Wide Web, bulletin boards, email etc.

### **Social Media**

Social Media or social networking media is a popular media emerged recently. The social media has changed the existing flow of mass communication that is from “few to many” communication. Social media has become a many to many communication process where anyone who has a social media account can communicate the rest of the world. Unlike all the other media social media has worldwide reach. It is also the most democratic media in which anyone can communicate to the world and immediate feedback is possible in social networking media. But communication scholars see the lack of gate keeping as a problem which challenges the credibility of social media. Social networking sites such as Face book, Whatsapp, Myspace,Hi5, Friendster, etc and blogging sites such as Blogger and wordpress, micro blogging sites such as twitter are examples of social networking media.

The Kerala Scenario: Media in Kerala are widely accessible and cater to a wide variety of audiences. Visual Media is quite strong in Kerala with a number of channels that broadcast general entertainment programmes. There are few dedicated news channels in Malayalam. The contemporary scenario is that, these news channels are playing a vital part in shaping the public opinion in the Malayali society.

News channels

- Asianet News - Malayalam news channel from Asianet News Network Pvt Ltd
- Media One-Malayalam news channel from Madhyamam Broadcasting Limited
- Manorama News - Malayalam news channel from Malayala Manorama
- Mathrubhumi News - news channel from Mathrubhumi printing & publishing Ltd
- People TV - Malayalam news channel from Kairali
- Reporter TV - Malayalam news channel from Indo-Asian News channel Pvt Limited

- News 18 Kerala - Malayalam news channel from the Network 18  
Following the national pattern, Doordarshan is the state-owned television broadcaster in Kerala too. Multi system operators provide a mix of Malayalam, English, and international channels. The first group to enter the television field was Asianet in 1993, followed by Surya TV in 1998. Kairali TV started broadcast in the year 2000.[7] Multiple channels then started broadcasting including general entertainment channels like Jeevan, Amrita, Jai Hind, Asianet plus, Kiran TV, Kairali We, news channels like Indiavision, Asianet News, Reporter TV, Manorama News, Kairali People, Mathrubhumi News, Media One TV and religious channels like Harvest TV, Harvest USA TV, Harvest Arabia, Harvest India, Shalom, PowerVision TV etc. Apart from Doordarshan, the only government owned channel in Malayalam is VICTERS Educational channel- Versatile ICT Enabled Resource for Students which is working under IT@School Project of General Education department, Kerala.