

HISTORY OF MODERN KERALA

CORE COURSE

For

B A HISTORY

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UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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

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UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

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STUDY MATERIAL

B A HISTORY

VI Semester

HISTORY OF MODERN KERALA

Prepared by : **Dr. Sreevidhya Vattarambath**
Assistant Professor
Department of history
K K T M Govt. College, Pullut

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MODULE -1

EARLY RESISTANCE AGAINST BRITISH EAST INDIA COMPANY AND CONSOLIDATION OF POWER BY THE COMPANY

Resistance Movements against the company rule

Pazhassiraja

Veluthampi Dalawa

Kurichiya Revolt

Agrarian unrest of 19th century in Malabar

Colonel Munroe as Resident-Diwan in Travancore and Cochin

Reforms of H. V. Canolly in Malabar

RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS AGAINST THE COMPANY RULE

A resistance movement is an organized effort by some portion of the civil population of a country to resist the legally established government or an occupying power and to disrupt civil order and stability. It may seek to achieve its objectives through either the use of nonviolent resistance or the use of force, whether armed or unarmed. In many cases a resistance movement may employ both violent and non-violent methods, usually operating under different organizations and acting in different phases or geographical areas within a country. The term resistance is generally used to designate a movement considered legitimate. Resistance movements can include any irregular armed force that rises up against an enforced or established authority, government, or administration. Such resistance Movements can be visible in every part of the world where the government or the powerful one used authoritative measures against government without considering the welfare of both the people and the existing political power. From the entrance of the European powers in the soil of Kerala onwards, the native powers began to resist the foreigners who were trying to be the masters of the land.

With the establishment of British supremacy, the history of Kerala subjected to changes. The period after this can be considered as a period of challenge and response. The British challenge of domination had an equal response from the native chieftains and people. When the British tried to establish their supremacy over the land, resistance against their domination broke out in various parts. The early native resistances were mainly led by the disposed local princes, feudal chieftains, aggrieved peasants, tribal communities and others. The revolts of Pazhassi Raja in Malabar,

Paliath Achan in Kochi, the Kurichiyas in Wayanad and the Moplahs in Eranad and Valluvanad are examples of such resistance movements.

The early recorded such native resistance against foreigners was against the Portuguese by the native Mappilas and Nairs of Calicut in 1500 AD. In this brawl the natives killed many Portuguese and destroyed their factory. Even though the Portuguese under Cabral retaliated by killing many natives on the high seas, they were compelled to leave Calicut and they moved and settled Cochin which caused for clashes between Cochin and Calicut.

REVOLT OF PATINJARE KOVILAM RAJAS.

During the British period, lot of such violent resistance took place. One of the most striking one among these was taken place at Anjengo in 1695, at Tellichery in 1704 and again at Anjengo in 1721. The Patinjare Kovilakam Rajas of the Zamorin's family also raised their arms against the British. It was an attempt of the dispossessed princes to regain their lost status and privileges. At the time of Mysorian invasions, the Zamorin of Calicut and family left Calicut and took asylum in other places. After the withdrawal of Tippu, the Zamorin returned to Calicut in 1792. When the Zamorin made a compromise with the British resulting in the loss of status and territories, the Western branch protested demanding restoration of the territories. But the British rejected this which frustrated the Prince of Patinjare Kovilakam and raised revolt against them. The Raja was supported by local population and was joined by Unni Muppan, a Moplah chief, Poliugar chiefs of Coimbatore, Palakkad Raja (Kunji Achan) and others. The British forces under Captain Burnell pursued the Princes who escaped to Thiruvitamkur and arrested his nephew and brother. Later the Prince returned to Calicut and came to an agreement with the British. He agreed to live in peace at Calicut accepting a nominal pension from the company. Even though almost all these early attempts against the British were failed, it created a new history of resistance against the foreigners.

THE ANJENGO AND THE BRITISH- THE ATTINGAL OUTBREAK (1695-1721)

When the British under Captain Keeling reached Calicut with three vessels in 1615, the Zamorin gave them wholehearted support and concluded a treaty with them according to which the English were to assist Calicut in expelling the Portuguese from Crangannur and Cochin. The Zamorin gave the English freedom of trade in his dominions. But the English didn't help the Zamorin against the Portuguese in accordance with the treaty signed with them. Instead they left the coast leaving ten men to open warehouses at Ponnani and Calicut. In 1634-35 the English East India Company entered into an agreement with the Portuguese through which they got access to all Portuguese ports in Kerala. In accordance with this, the British merchants exported pepper to England for the first time from Cochin in 1636. In 1664 the Zamorin

gave the English permission to build a factory at Calicut, but as he was suspicious of the motives of all foreign traders he was not inclined to give them further sites in his territory.

Due to such difficulties at Calicut, English turned their attention to other parts of Kerala. In 1684 AD, they obtained from the Rani of Attingal, a sandy plot of land at Anjengo for the construction of a factory. In 1690, they also obtained permission to build a fort at Anjengo and its construction was completed in 1695. A depot for military stores was also opened there. They mainly constructed this factory here for breaking the Dutch monopoly in pepper trade. Alexander Hamilton who visited the place in 1721 expressed a poor opinion of Anjengo, particularly scarcity of water. But, at the same time, it had strategic importance also. It had water communication by the Vamanapuram River, the largest producer of pepper in South Kerala and also water connection with Kathinakulam, the southern terminal of the water way enabled it to be an ideal location for a trading factory. Soon Anjengo developed in to the most important British possession on the West Coast, next only to Bombay. It also provided a convenient grip from where the English East India Company could extend its sphere of influence in South and Central Kerala.

Under pressure from the English, Rani of Attingal was compelled to grant them the monopoly of pepper. After getting this, the English manipulated the price of pepper against the interest of the local cultivators, which provoked the wrath of the local population. In November 1697 the factory at Anjengo was subjected to a violent attack by the local people. They attacked English factories there and massacred Englishmen. Their attempt to capture the fort failed and the rebels were forced to retreat in the face of the superior military power of the British. The Rani of Attingal was forced to sign a fresh treaty by which Rani agreed to rebuild the factory and to pay 80,000 *panams* as compensation.

Attingal Outbreak of 1721.

In 1721 a crisis occurred in the functioning of the Anjengo factory. The British continued their policy of economic exploitation at Attingal. The local people were antagonized by realizing this kind of exploitation and corrupt practices of the British. At the same time the British followed a completely different policy towards Rani and they tried to please her by providing costly presents every year. The immediate provocation for the revolt was the Easter Dinner given by the Company. In course of the celebrations a mistress of the company's interpreter insulted a Muslim merchant by throwing colored water or powder to him. When this was reported to the chief factor Mr. Gyfford, instead of punishing the real culprit, he ordered to punish the Muslim which provoked the Muslim and he was looking an opportunity to wreck the vengeance on the chief factor for this inhuman deed. The situation was aggravated by the policy of British government to give costly presents to the Rani of Attingal to win

more concessions. In 1721 the gents of the Pillamar (Nair chieftains) demanded that the presents to the Rani should be handed over to them for transmission to her. Gyfford turned down the demand and proceeded to Attingal along with 140 (or 14) English men to hand over the price to Rani in person. Actually he tried to show the strength of the English, but it turned against them itself. On their return, they were attacked by the provoked local people. In this attack almost all the English men except two or three were murdered including Gyfford. The hostile mob then turned against Rani. They proceeded towards Anjengo fort which was defended by Gunner Ince. The siege lasted for six months and it ended with the arrival of reinforcements from Tellichery. Canter Vischer observed this event as “in the course of the night, the inhabitation fell upon their unfortunate guests and massacred them and this so thoroughly that not a single English man escaped”. Following the failure of the revolt, the English and Rani entered into an agreement under which the Company was compensated for all the losses sustained during the attack on Anjengo and were also given the sole monopoly of trade in pepper as well as the right to erect factories in places of its choice.

Results of the Anjengo Revolt

This revolt was the first organized revolt against British authority in Kerala. The immediate result of the Anjengo revolt was that the pepper supply from Anjengo fell down. Rani compensated the British loss by giving two gardens to the English. The most important result was that it paved way for Marthanda Varma's alliance with the English. It paved the trend in Travancore political development, resulting in the consolidation of royal power and its extension over kingdoms in the North. In his wars of conquest, Marthanda Varma made use of the military assistance provided by the Anjengo factors. But there is no evidence in *Mathilakom records* in connection with the help given by the company.

PAZHASSI REVOLT (1793-97)

The most serious and widest revolt against the British in South India was of Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja who is pictured by the British as Cotiate Raja and is popularly known as *Kerala Simham*. As he belonged to the Patinjare Kovilakam branch of the Kottayam royal family (Purakizhnad) which had its headquarters at Pazhassi, the rebellion is called as the Pazhassi revolt. The most important source material to study the revolt of Pazhassi Raja was the Thalsseri *Rekhakal* (Thalasseri consultations) of the English East India Company. In addition to this, there are lot of secondary sources also to study the revolt of pazhassi. William Logan's *Malabar Manual* gives a detailed description of the rebellion in the British point of view and his *A collection of treaties, engagements and other papers of importance relating to British affairs in Malabar 1841-1914* gives the original documents such as proclamations and declarations of Pazhassi. KKN Kurup's *Pazhassi Samarangal*, T P Sankaran Kutty Nair's *A Tragic Decade in Kerala History*, P K K Menon's *Freedom*

Movement in Kerala and also novel *Kerala Simham* by K M Panikkar and play *Pazhassi Raja* by Kappana Krishna Menon are some of the Secondary sources that can be used for studying on Pazhassi Raja. In addition to all these, we have diaries, revenue reports, political and military collections, Confidential Records etc. in the Archives and India office library.

Relations of Pazhassi with East India Company

In the early days Pazhassi had maintained cordial relations with the company. During the second Anglo-Mysorian War when Mysoreans attacked Tellichery. Pazhassi sent 2000 Nair soldiers against Sirdar Khan in order to help the English. They even captured an outpost at Muttungal(Badgara). By 1782, Kottayam, Eravinad and Kadathanad became free from Mysorean authority. By the Treaty of Mangalore in 1784, all territories were given back to them by the English. But, afterwards Kottayam Ravi Varma, the elder brother of Pazhassi Raja contacted Tippu and agreed to pay Rs.65000/- as tax to Mysore. But Mysore demanded Rs.81000/- which was heavy burden to the peasants. Thus the peasants opposed this and started struggle. In this struggle Pazhassi was with the peasants and he gave leadership to the struggle and organized the natives. The most important event which exasperated Pazhassi even more was that his brother who paid visit to Tipu in 1786 for peace talks and compelled to sign in a treaty with him which caused for ceding Wynad to Tipu Sultan. Pazhassi was not ready to leave Tipu to enjoy Wynad and decided to make problems to Tipu. He started a guerilla warfare that constantly harassed Mysore troops in Wynad and neighborhood. In this time, he entered in to a treaty with the English against Tippu and by 1790 he assumed the leadership of Kottayam. In 1790, the British recognized Pazhassi Raja as the head of Kottayam instead of the original Raja who was in refuge at Travancore. But by the Treaty of Seringapattanam signed between British and Tipu in 1792, Malabar was ceded to the British. Afterwards British began to work for establishment of their supremacy in Malabar. From here onwards a completely different relations had started in between Pazhassi and the British and he started to resist British imperialism from 1793 onwards till his death in 1805. He fought two wars to resist British intervention in the domestic affairs of his kingdom.

The First Pazhassi Revolt (1793-1797)

The primary cause of the first revolt organized by the Pazhassi Raja was the mistaken revenue policy of the British. The Mysoreans had collected their revenue directly from the cultivators through their officials. But the British reversed this policy and framed out the collection of revenue to the different Rajas for lump sums. This policy of the British had lot of implications. The assessments of the local Rajas were harsh and beyond the capacity of the peasants to pay. Pazhassi was not on good terms with his uncle Vira Varma, Raja of Kurumbranad. In 1793, Vira Varma surrendered Kottayam to British and convinced the British commissioners to let him collect tax in

Kottayam. At this time, British had adopted a hostile approach to Pazhassi Raja who had consistently refused to accept British suzerainty and decide to make the obedient Vira Varma as the head of Kottayam. Vira Varma, on the one hand undertook to collect tax in Kottayam directly, and on the other hand instigated Pazhassi to oppose the British. Early the lease was for one year, but in 1794 it was renewed for a period of five years. More than all these, the British assessment of revenue was more callous and beyond the capacity of the peasants to pay. The peasants resisted its forcible collection by the agents of the British and thus challenged British authority. Pazhassi Raja took up their cause and opposed the extortion of the peasantry.

Pazhassi decided to challenge the British by organizing an open rebellion. He prevented the British from collecting revenue in Kottayam and threatened to cut down the pepper vines. He stopped all collection of revenue from Kottayam on 28th June 1795 and openly challenged the British authority. He gave asylum to one of the Iruvazhinad Nambiar whom the Supervisor had declared a rebel. Two Mappilas who had committed robbery in the house of a Chetti were at this time sentenced to death by the Raja. The Company's officials ordered the Raja's arrest on a charge of murder. But they failed to carry out the order. The Company decided to collect tax in a more serious way. British troops were stationed at Kottayam bazaar and Manathana in 1795 to help the Kurumbranad tax collectors. But the officials could not carry out the work of revenue collection due to the resistance and tactics of Pazhassi Raja and his men. In April 1795 a contingent of British troops under Lt. Gordon made an attempt to seize the Raja in his palace at Pazhassi, but on entering the palace they found that "the bird had flown away". So they plundered the palace of Pazhassi and carried away all the valuables. The Raja sought asylum in the Puralimalai jungles in Wynad and adopted guerilla system of warfare. The British troops stationed at Wynad were forced to withdraw. In June 1796 he stopped all traffic on the Kuttiadi Ghat.

The British now entered into negotiations with the Raja and permitted him to return to this palace at Pazhassi. But due to a misunderstanding between the officials of the Company and the Raja, Pazhassi Raja withdrew again to the Wynad jungles along with his followers. On 18th December 1796 the British Commissioners issued a proclamation forbidding the people to co-operate with the Pazhassi Raja. At the same time, Raja established contacts with Tipu's men beyond the border and sought the help of Mysore in driving the English out of Wynad. Some of the Kurumbranad Raja's men also crossed over to the Raja's side. In January 1797 a series of revolts took place in which several Englishmen lost their lives. The British forces were overpowered by the Kurichias and Nairs. They assembled in groups, erected barriers, cut off British communications and refused to pay taxes. The Rajas of Kurumbranad and Parappanad, who were loyal to the Company joined hands with Pazhassi. The eastern branch of Zamorin's family too allied itself with Pazhassi Raja. The Moplahs of Malabar led by Chempan Pokker and the Gounders of Coimbatore joined the rebels. Pazhassi Raja also

sought help of Mysoreans driving out the English from Wynad. The geographical peculiarities of Wynad and the strong support he received from the tribals prevented the British to take any effective action against the Raja. The situation was so critical that Duncan, the Governor of Bombay, was forced to admit that the 'great evil in this unhappy contest arises principally out of Pazhassi Raja's extra ordinary success which renders it dangerous to the company's interests and disgraceful to our national character'.

In March 1797, a British force under Col. Dow marched without opposition to the Periya Pass and he was to be joined by another contingent under Lt.Mealey. In battles fought on three consecutive days from 9th to the 11th March, British forces were overpowered by thousands of Nairs and Kurichias who had rallied under the banner of the Pazhassi Raja. Col.Dow decided to withdraw his forces from Wynad, but on their way they were attacked by the Pazhassi troops. On March 18, 1797, a contingent of 1,100 men under Major Cameron was ambushed and cut into pieces while making their way through the Periya Pass. The situation was thus so difficult to the British. Jonathan Duncan, the Governor of Bombay came to Malabar and worked out a compromise with the Raja. As per the agreement signed in 1797, the agreement with the Kurumbranad Raja was cancelled and the rebellion was brought to an end through the mediation of the Chirakkal Raja and Parappand Raja. By the agreement, the British decided to withdraw their forces from Wynad. Pazhassi called off the rebellion and he accepted a pension of Rs. 8000/ per annum and agreed to live in peace with the Company. The company also agreed to restore the treasure captured from the Pazhassi palace. As per the treaty Company has given back the confiscated Pazhassi palace. Peace was thus restored for the time being, but it was only a truce. It was only a temporary settlement and did not last long and soon to be violated.

Pazhassi Revolt II(1800-1805)

The peace agreement between Pazhassi and the British East India Company only had a short life. Pazhassi was provoked by the British move to take possession of Wayanad which had been ceded to them by the treaty of Srirangapattanam. Wayanad was a traditional possession of Kottayam Raja and that Pazhassi is in control of this region since 1793. Pazhassi saw this move of Company as an encroachment on his country's ancient provinces. The Raja retaliated by collecting a large force of Nairs and Kurichias which was now supplemented by Mappilas and Pathanas, later being ex-soldiers of Tipu who became unemployed after Tipu's death. Raja was served by several loyal lieutenants as Kunnath Sankaran Nambiar, Kaitheri Ambu Nair, Edachenna Kungan Nair and the Kurichia leader Thalakkal Chandu. Raja himself was a brilliant strategist and he gave special training to these troops in the technique of guerilla warfare so as to carry on the fight effectively against the English in the jungles of Wynad.

British Government at Madras appointed Major General Arthur Wellesley as British army commandant of Mysore, South Canara and Malabar. He planned a double pronged move from Malabar Coast and Mysore into Wynad and began preparations for it. General Wellesley came to Tellicheri and planned his military strategy against Raja. Wellesley devised minute plans of operations. Net works of roads were constructed. Military outposts were set up at strategic places to counter the guerrilla tactics and from these outposts he could send light detachments in all directions to hunt out the guerillas.

But raja realized the fact that Wellesly had left to Deccan on a military mission and marched across Kuttiyadi pass and below he made a junction with Unni Mootha Mooppan, a Walluvanad Mappila leader and his men. Soon several great nobles like Kampuratt Nambiar of Iruvazhinad, Peruvayal Nambiar and Kannavath Sankaran Nambiar also joined Raja with their men. Pazhassi started his resistance in the monsoon of June-July 1800. His troops came down the Ghats and attacked Mr. Brown's spice plantations at Anjarakandi and some of the British outposts. Wellesley send a large force under Colonel Sartorius to recapture rebel held Kottayam, but the plan could not be carried out as there were not enough troops in Malabar. Wellesley advised Commissioners to stop all communications with Wayanad so as to starve Raja of supplied. But shortage of troops made all his plans in vein. In 1801, a large British troops of over 10,000 men under Col. Stevenson entered Wynad from Mysore. They blocked all passes that linked Wynad with Malabar and then converge on the Raja's palace at Pazhassi. By that time the rebel went underground. The British troops achieved a large measure of success in their hands. Raja became a wanderer in the jungles accompanied by his wife and close followers. His followers were hunted down and prominent leaders like Chuzhali Nambiar and Peruvayyal Nambiar were captured. Peruvayal Nambiar was hanged at Kannavam. British also threatened brutal penalty and confiscation of property for all those rebels who failed to surrender in six weeks time. But a pardon was also issued for surrendered rebels. Most of Raja's chief supporters including Kannavath Sankaran Nambiar were arrested. British troops under Lt. Edward captured him on the hill near his house at Kannavanam. Kannavath Sankaran Nambiar and his son were hanged and their property was confiscated. (The tree on which Nambiar and his son hanged was preserved until recent past and then the tree fell away. It stood at Chittariparambu junction near Koothuparamba).

The murder of Sanakaran Nambiar was a serious blow to the Pazhassi struggle. The British believed that war was over and went ahead with exploitation program. In January 1802 Major Macleod, the Collector issued orders disarming the district and threatened those who kept arms with death penalty. He also doubled the rate of tax and ordered a reassessment of tax of whole Malabar in a mere forty days. In October 1802 the rebels under the leadership of Edachena Kungan Nair and Thalakkal Chandu captured Panamaram fort and massacred its seventy strong garrisons. Wellesley was

enraged at this rebel attack and dispatched 500 men to retaliate. But by then the victory at Panamaram thrilled the rebels and they afterwards controlled all passes in Wynad. Edachena Kungan went to Pulpally shrine and issued a proclamation to people to join Raja's war and volunteered 3000 men. They were posted at Valliurkavu at Mananthavadi, Edappally etc. . 100 men under Kungan's brother were posted at Periya Pass and 25 men at Kottiyur Pass. Rebel outposts were setup at the route from Dindimal to Valliurkav. Edachena Kungan led an attack on a British detachment headed from Mysore to Mananthavadi, but unfortunately a British troop detached one of the block made by the rebels and many of the rebels were caught as prisoners and many of them were murdered.

Afterwards, the rebels concentrated in Kottayam and in 1802 they raided a supplies convoy near Kottiyur. The British were frustrated by Kottayam people's total lack of co-operation. Soon the rebellion spread into Chirakkal. Raja's army by the end of 1803 was ranging as far as Kannur and Thalasseri. In March 1803, a rebel force marched to Calicut and captured Sub-Jail and killed all guards and seized their firearms and ammunition. They also released prisoners, many of whom were joined with the rebels. Following this incident Major Macleod resigned from his post.

Martyrdom of Pazhassi raja

In 1803, Wellesley left for Europe after three years of inconclusive war with Raja and accept the post of Duke of Wellington. In 1804, Thomas Harvey Baber, a young and energetic British officer was appointed as the Sub-Collector of Tellichery and he was entrusted with the responsibility of crushing the Pazhassi forces. The Company officials organized a new body of 1,200 policemen called *Kolkars* to deal with the small body of Pazhassi troops in the various parts of the country. With the help of Kolkars Baber could suppress several local uprisings in the Chirakkal area. In April 1804 he ordered the people in each locality to be non cooperation with the rebels and told to give full information about the movements of the rebels. In this situation, Raja was forced to withdraw all the men into jungles of Wynad. The Madras army under Col. Macleod pursued them into the jungles and crushed all opposition. On 16th June a proclamation was issued offering rewards for the apprehension of the Pazhassi Raja and his close lieutenants. The *Kolkars* were entrusted with the task of capturing the rebels. Many encounters took place in between Pazhassi's troops and the *Kolkars*. Thalakkal Chandu, the Kurichiya hero was captured in one such encounter.

The British made a strict blockade to Pazhassi in the jungle. Baber chased the Raja to the Jungles. On 30th November 1805, the British troops surrounded Raja and his men on the Banks of Mavilaythodu (Kangarapuzha). After a severe battle of 15 hours, Pazhassi forces were routed and the Raja was shot dead. Local tradition says that the Raja committed suicide by swallowing the diamond in his ring. It has been also said that Pazhassi emptied his pistol to his own chest in order to escape capture by the

British. Baber was so touched by the gallantry of the Raja that he carried the dead body of Raja in his own palanquin to Manathavady and cremated it with customary honor. Baber wrote” thus terminated the career of a man who has been enabled to preserve in hostilities against the company for nine years...”. He reported to the principal Collector of Malabar in his letter dated 31st December 1805,” although a rebel, he was one of the natural chieftains of the country and might be considered on that account rather a fallen enemy”. The death of Pazhassi Raja symbolized the collapse of the resistance movement. The other leaders either committed suicide or were killed in encounters or deported.

In true sense Pazhassi revolt was a popular struggle or people’s war for national liberation. In this struggle all classes of people irrespective of caste of religion took an active part in it. Baber characterized Pazhassi Raja as ‘an extra ordinary and singular character’. The revolt of Pazhassi marks an important stage in the history of resistance movements against the foreigner’s domination in Kerala. This struggle was for defense of freedom and the object of resistance was liquidation of foreign rule and nothing else. The Pazhassi episode marked the beginning of an era of resistance against the British in Kerala.

REVOLT OF VELUTHAMPI DALAWA

Kerala history is dotted with the heroic deeds of great patriots. A man living all comforts and luxuries offered by the top post as commercial minister to the King, revolting against an empire where the sun never sets is a rarity. One such personality in the decades of Kerala history is Veluthampi Dalawa, the Diwan of Travancore. Champakaraman Velayudhan, popularly known as Veluthampi Dalawa is a rare version of heroism in the history of Kerala. The revolt of Veluthampi, the Dalawa of Travancore, is a significant episode in the annals of Indian resistance movements against the British.

In the end of eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Travancore was ruled by Sri Balarama Varma of Travancore dynasty who was although a good hearted was weak and inexperienced. Thus the administration of Travancore State was controlled by the trio consisting of Jayanthan Sankaran Namboothiri, Sankaranaranayanan Chetty and Mathu Tharakan. They were doing all kinds of inhuman deeds and corruption in the State which created discontent among the poor populace of Travancore. Veluthampi, as the champion of the oppressed organized a large force, marched to the capital and persuaded the Raja to dismiss the unpopular ministers. Veluthampi was elevated to the high office of Dalawa on the advice of Macaulay in 1801. As per the agreement with Raja, Jayanthan Sanakaran Namboothiri was exiled and his cronies, Mathew Tharakan and Sankaranarayan Chetty were whipped, their ears were cut and they were dismissed from serice. He was raised to the status of Minister for Finance and Commerce.

Velayudhan Thampi was the son of Sri Kunjumayitti Pillai and his wife Valliyammai Pillai Thankachi. He was born on 6th May 1765 in the village of Kalkulam, in Thalakkulan Valiyaveedu, around 16 kilometres from the town of Nagercoil in the present day Tamilnadu, then a Southern district of Travancore State. He came from a family that held a high title of *Champakaraman* for their services to the state by Maharaja Marthanda Varma. During the initial years of the reign of Maharaja Balarama Varma, Velu Thampi was appointed as *Kariakkar* or Tahsildar of Mavelikkara.

The new Dalawa, Veluthampi introduced lot of new reforms to strengthen the government and to improve the finances of the State. Expenditure of the State was curtailed down and income was increased. Veluthampi administered the State with the support of, Col. Macaulay, the British Resident of Travancore and Cochin..

His period as the minister (1801-1809) was a glaring example to how a debt and corruption ridden state can be led to prosperity. To increase revenue, he carried out a systematic resurvey of all garden and paddy lands in 1802 and assessed the revenue taking into consideration the produce of the land. Title deeds (*kandezhuth*) were given to the cultivators. A new Revenue code was framed and a novel system of keeping accounts was started. This resulted in a great increase of revenue. His system of *Nalvazhi* was the fore runner of the modern feature of revenue administration. Velu Thampi supplemented the land revenue with higher returns from trade and commerce. Corrupt officials were executed, maimed or exiled. The story of an officer who went to assessing tax is a glaring example for his commitment to justice. The officer deputed to assess property-income assessed much less than the actual property of Veluthampi's own. When Veluthampi came to know about it, he was furious and ordered to cut off the thumb of the officer as punishment. He had done lot of measures for the developments of trade in the State. He made attempts to improve trade in the Ambalappuzha town, which was constructed by Raja Kesavadas, the former Diwan of Travancore and developed Kollam as a great trading centre. He took great interest to open markets (*chanthas*) and roads in various corners of the State. Markets were opened at Vaikkom and Changanassery and it was he who constructed Kollam-Chengotta road. He made Pathiramanal of Vembanattukayal as suitable for human life. The increased revenue was spent to clear the debts. He also introduced criminal code which was 'barbarously severe'. Thus within a short span of time, Veluthampi evolved order out of chaos, placed the administration on a sound footing, improved the financial conditions of the state and proved his mettle as an administrator.

But the later life of Veluthampi was in trouble and he faced a tragic end. He had done the affairs of the Govt. firmly and strictly without fear or favor. This alarmed his enemies who plotted to dismiss the Dalawa. But the Resident always supported him and due to his intervention that Veluthampi was reinstated as Dalawa. There was also a

mutiny of the Nair militia when Thampi attempted to stop their double allowance. He suppressed the mutiny with the help of Company's forces. The price of this help was a new treaty with the company. The revised treaty of perpetual friendship and Alliance which signed on 12th June 1805 gave the British specific power to keep a subsidiary force in Travancore and to interfere in its internal affairs. It also increased the tribute to be paid to the Company. The treaty virtually sounded the death knell of Travancore as an independent kingdom.

But the time of staining of the relationship of Travancore and Company has come within a short span of time when Veluthampi found that the Resident was interfering in the internal affairs of the state using the treaty as a pretext. When the tribute to the company fell in to arrears, Macaulay insisted on its payment worsened the relationship of Travancore with the Company. Further the Resident cancelled an order issued by the Dalawa attaching the landed properties of Mathu Tharakan who owned an enormous amount of the State. This activity of the Resident infuriated the Dalawa. Now each of them attempted to get rid of the other- Dalawas appealed to the Madras Governor to recall the Resident and the Resident asking the Raja to dismiss Velu Thampi.

Direct and indirect clashes between the Company soldiers and king's soldiers took place here and there. Veluthampi who had only a ragtag army and so it found difficult to go war with the army of the company. Veluthampi decided to organize an open armed insurrection with the help of anti-British elements against the British. He therefore reached into an agreement with Mc. Cauley ignoring the advice of the King. This agreement was later used by the resident officer to create rift between the King and the Minister. The Company was gearing up for an open confrontation. This time he approached Paliathachan of Cochin who had similar grievances with the Company and Zamorin of Calicut. They collected men and arms on a large scale. All these made an open war inevitable.

The revolt began with the night attack on the Residency at Kochi (Boghatty palace) under the leadership of Paliath Achan. But the attack on the residency failed to capture Macaulay as he had already managed to escape to a British ship anchored in the harbor. The rebels consisting of 600 men plundered the Residency, broke open the jails at Kochi and set all prisoners free. In an outbreak at Alappuzha, 636 Englishmen were killed. But the attempt at Kollam failed to achieve its desired results. The situation had become desperate for Velu Thampi who staged a strategic retreat to Kundara where he set up his headquarters and issued a call to arms. He camped at Kundara with his army and there he declared open war against the Company. He described the presence of British harmful to the cultural integrity and self pride of Kerala. This declaration which he made on 1st Makaram 984ME (Jan 11, 1809) has been known in the history of Kerala as the famous '**Kundara Proclamation**'. Through

this declaration he exhorted the people to rally under his banner for a patriotic struggle against the British. It has show the concern for the maintenance of social forms in general and the caste system in particular. The document reads: “it is the nature of the English nation to get possession of countries by treacherous means. And should they obtain ascendancy in Thiruvitamkur, they will practice all unjust and unlawful things”. He raised the following arguments against the British in his proclamation:

1. They would put their own guards in the palace, Sarkar buildings, for gates, destroy the royal seal, and do away with honorific palanquins and other distinguishing marks.
2. They will suppress the Brahmins and prohibit worship in temples
3. They will make sale and every other thing a monopoly of the state. They may measure up and assess themselves as absolute owners of waste lands, impose exorbitant taxes on paddy lands, coconuts etc.
4. Low castes people will be inflicted with heavy punishments for slight offences.
5. They will put up crosses and flags of Christianity in temples, compel intermarriages with Brahmin women without reverence to caste or creed.
6. And practice all the unjust and unlawful things which characterize Kaliyuga.

He proclaimed: “Let us therefore exert ourselves to keep off impending calamities sketched above and Endeavour that no disparagement may be imputed to us in guarding our homes, the charitable institutions and the manners and customs of our land”. This proclamation was the first one in this kind which called to the people at large too unites against the oppressors. It provided the motivation for a mass upsurge of unprecedented dimension. The proclamation had made great impact and motivated the mass for an unprecedented upsurge against the English.

The mass rose against the British. With 3000 men and 18 guns Velu Thambi renewed the war. He sends part of his forces to Kochi to help Paliath Achan and with the rest he proceeded against the British. But both Paliath Achan and Veluthampi failed miserably and the tide of the revolt decisively turned against Veluthampi. In this time the British army under Col. La=edger entered Travancore through Aruvamozhi and thrust in to the interior. They captured the old fort of Udayagiri and the old capital Padmanabhapuram and advanced towards Trivandrum, the new capital. The Raja, feared of all these events, sued for peace. Under pressure from Macaulay, Veluthampi was dismissed and the new Dalawa Ummini Thampi ordered for the arrest of Veluthampi.

The responsibility for the losses was taken personally by Veluthampi in his personal meeting with the King following which fled to the jungles with the British in

pursuit. The British then issued orders for the arrest of Veluthampi with a reward of Rs. 50,000/-. Veluthampi left the capital, reached Kilimanur where he gifted his sword to the local chief, preceded to the north and took refuge in the house of the Potti of the Mannadi temple. Velu Thampi who needed money sent out his servant to sell his gold and silver and this man was caught by the British. Upon interrogation, he revealed to them Thampi's hiding place. The enemies surrounded his hiding place. He then fled to the Bhagavati temple along with his brother Padmanabhan Thambi and decided to end his life. He asked his brother to stab him, but his brother refused. Then he stabbed the knife himself, seriously wounded Thampi didn't die and cried out to his brother to cut his neck and his brother had done it. The British seized his brother and the body of Thampi removed to Trivandrum where it was exposed to the public on a gibbet at Kannanmoola. Padmanabhan Thampi was also hanged. His house was razed to the ground and plantain and castor trees planted thereon. Most of his relatives were transported to Maldives and some appear to have committed suicide, some died in prison. The rest were flogged and banished elsewhere. All these activities were carried out by Veluthampi's successor Ummini Thampi who proved to be as unreliable as the others from whom Veluthampi took over and he was too intent on enriching himself. The same situation continued with Macaulay, but this time Macaulay chose to complain about the Elaya Raja and not the minister. In this time too the palace intrigues continued with the Elaya Raja challenging the old one. The British wanted him out, but Macaulay retired from service in 1801 and went back to England. Col, Munro, his follower was a tough man and took tough measures. Ummini Thampi was caught when he plotted against Munro. He was imprisoned at Chingeput. He reinstated the Nair brigade of Travancore.

KURICHIA REVOLT-1812

The Kurichia Revolt of 1812 is one of the most important and distinctive of resistance movements against the British rule in Malabar. The Kurichias were the tribal folk who lived in the mountain ranges of Wayanad. They were leading their own way of life without outside disturbances for centuries. The advent of the colonialists made interventions into the tribal life of the high ranges of Wynad and the rhythm of the tribal life was shattered. This interference forced the Kurichias to take arms against the oppressors and intruders. The Pazhassi revolt gave them inspiration to take arms against the British. The Kurichias and other tribal people under the leadership of Thalakkal Chanthu had fought against the British during the Pazhassi revolt. Their support was a great source to Pazhassi and it was with their support that Pazhassi could find out the remote areas of the jungles to hide. It was their guerilla wars with traditional weapons that Pazhassi could gain decisive victories.

After the suppression of the Pazhassi revolts, Wayanad was kept under the strict surveillance of the Company army. The atrocities of the British in the Wynad

jungles were unbearable to the tribals. The British subjected them to utter miseries. The company official denied freedom to the tribal people and forcibly made them the mere slaves of the British. The unscientific revenue reform introduced by the Malabar Collector, Thomas Warden in Wynad was the major reason behind the outburst of the revolt. The revolt was started not against the increased rate of tax, but as a protest against the British Governments policy of collecting revenue from them in cash rather than in kind. As they money exchange system was unknown to them, they were not having cash to pay the tax, but the British Government strictly enforced them to pay the tax in cash which made them debtors of the Company. Their tax was became arrears and the Government authorities began to confiscate properties of the tribals, attacking their residences, looting their belongings and evicting them from their property. In front of the poor tribal nothing was there other than revolt.

The Kurichia Revolt began in 25th March 1812 under the leadership of their chief Rama Namby. The revolt was not a spontaneous one. After making elaborate preparations for a final fight with the British that they started the revolt. The Kurumbras also joined with their fellow being in the fight. The low grade official of the Company like the Nairs and Thiyyas had got information of the preparations of the tribals for an upsurge against the British, but they didn't inform this to the Company due to the fact that basically they were also against the rule of the British. They were working in the revenue and police departments of the Company and were thoroughly dissatisfied by the treatment of the Company. It has been reported that in the later stage of the revolt, these native officials indirectly helped the Kurichias to make their struggle against the British a more popular one. Some of the Kurichias were working in the *Kolakkarans* of the Company and almost all of them resigned from their job prior to the revolt and joined with the rebels.

The Kurichias attacked the Company forces with their traditional weapons like the bow and arrows in their own guerilla method. T.H. Baber has noted that the aim of the rebels was to expel the **watta Thoppikkar** (Round Heads or Europeans) from the country. The revolt spread to all parts of Wynad. Their priests accelerated the rebellion by declaring it to be sanctified by the blessings of the tribal gods. In course of the revolt it assumed the character of a mass upheaval. The revolt actually started on 25th March when the Company police tried to disperse a meeting of the tribals at Mallur. Within a short span of time the rebellion spread to the whole of Wynad. The key passes were come under their control. They attacked police stations and persecuted the English policemen. They cut down the reinforcements to the British troops in the valley. They besieged British military posts at Sulthan Bathery and Mananthavady. For a few days at least, the British flag ceased to fly in Wynad.

The British forces reacted very severely against the tribal group. They brought new forces from the coastal areas and from Mysore to Wynad to suppress the Kurichia

revolt, but all these were in futile. Then the Sub-Collector of North Malabar, Baber requested the higher authorities for further military help. The fresh Company forces with modern weapons moved to Wynad, but were attacked by the Kurichias at the Kuttiadi Pass. Many of the Company soldiers were wounded and they had no other way except retreat. The army came from Mysore established many new military centers from Sultan's Battery to Panamaram. The British armed forces with the then modern weapons entered in to the interior areas of the jungles could send many of the Kurichias into death. The British forces could suppress the Kurichia revolt completely by May 1812.

The Kurichia revolt was one of the most important episodes in the history of resistance movements against the British. It was basically a peasant revolt and not a feudal uprising. With the Kurichia revolt a new episode has been opened in Indian history. It was the resistance of the ancient traditional culture against the modern imperialism in economic and political realms.

AGRARIAN UNREST OF 19TH CENTURY IN MALABAR

The economic reforms introduced by the British in Malabar caused for the agrarian problems in Malabar. The oppressed tenants and subtenants, majority of whom were Mappilas peasantry repeatedly in revolt against the existing system of the exploitation from the very beginning of the 19th century onwards. The revolts, deacoits, thefts and social banditry, which occurred regularly, were essentially as expression of protests of the rural poor against oppression and exploitation. This oppressed peasantry mainly included the Mappilas holding land either directly from a Hindu Jenmy or from an intermediately. The land was exclusively held by Hindus. Hence, these conflicts between Mappila peasantry and the Hindu land owning class were characterized as the results of communal tensions. These violent insurrections by the Mappilas broke out frequently in the 19th century and a never ending source of horrified fascination for British officials. These British authorities termed these outbreaks as "Mappila Outrages". A series of violent disturbances occurred in Malabar against the British during the 19th century. These upsurges occurred throughout Malabar, but its main centers were in Ernad and Valluvanad Taluks of South Malabar. The main participants of these upsurges were the peasants, small-scale farmers, agrarian workers, petty traders and artisans of the Mappila community. The British officials, Innes and Evans had reported that twenty two agrarian revolts took place in Malabar during the period between 1836 and 1853. Truly these upsurges were against the existing systems in the society like evictions and the implementation of law and order through the Hindu *adhikaris*. These high officials also followed repressive attitude towards the poor sections of the society.

During the earlier times, the Mappilas had been staying in the port cities like Calicut as assistants and helpers of the Arab traders. When the Portuguese came and

ousted the Arab traders from the Malabar coast, the Mappilas migrated to the hinterlands of the South Malabar and started agriculture and petty trade. By the beginning of the 19th century, the population of the Mappilas increased and they were mainly centered on Wynad, Valluvanad and Ponnani in south Malabar. During the Mysoreans occupation of Malabar, when most of the Hindu landlords fled to Travancore, the Mappilas for the possession of the agrarian lands left by the Hindus. The Mappila farmers cultivated these lands and paid land revenue to the Mysore Sultans.

When Malabar came under the British, the Hindus who had earlier fled to Travancore came back to their native places and the British returned their lands to them. The Joint Commissioners made agreement with the Hindu landlords and entrusted them the right to collect the land revenue from the peasants. The Jenmies extracted high rate of rent from the Mappila peasants in South Malabar with the sanction and support of the Company authorities. According to the revenue settlement of 1803 95% of the total Jenmies of South Malabar were Hindus. The majority of the Mappilas were either tenants of the Hindu Jenmies or agricultural laborers. The Hindu Jenmies exploited the Mappila peasants by extracting high rate of rent, which they never had to pay in the earlier time. This exploitation and the oppression by the Jenmies with the support of the authorities paved way for the discontent among the Mappila peasants of South Malabar during the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The social, political and economic conditions of the Mappilas in the nineteenth century were very pathetic and they were in backward condition. As the British considered them as the helpers of the British, from the very beginning onwards they followed a hostile attitude towards the Mappilas, The Joint Commissioners had assumed that all the Mappilas had helped the Mysoreans and the Mappilas had illegally occupied the landed property of the Hindus. The Hindu landlords exploited this attitude of the Company authorities and extracted the Mappila peasants as much as they could. The only way in front of the Mappilas was nothing other than revolt.

The British Govt. was not ready to give even last grade jobs to the Mappilas in the Company administration. The Mappilas realized the fact that the Company authorities were completely against the interests of the Mappilas. The Muslim religious leaders like Sayyid Alavi Thangal, Sayyid Fazal Pookoya Thangal and Umer Quazi of Veliyamkode helped in kindling the hatred among the people against the British. Some of them even requested the people to conduct 'Jihad' (religious war) against the British. These Mappila priests were working with a deliberate purpose of clouding the vision of the Mappilas. EMS Nambooditipad commented about the action of the religious priests as: "it is their interests of these priests to turn the anti-Jenmy sentiments of peasants into the anti-Hindu sentiments of the *Moplahs*." But it is not possible to accept this version completely due to the fact that the religious priests who

influenced these riots were not preaching anti-Hindu sentiments, but in their preaching, they gave more emphasis to anti-British and anti-landlord sentiments. But unfortunately, some communal atrocities took place in the midst of all these. Sayyid Fazal Thangal of Mamburam Thangal family severely criticized the government and the Jenmy system in Malabar. He is believed to have declared that “it was not a sin, but a merit to kill a Jenmy who evicted a peasant from his land. “The British authorities considered the *fatwas* issued by Sayyid Fazal as a tool causing anti-British attitudes among the Mappilas. It is clear that the teaching of Mamburam Thangals were highly influential in the religious and cultural spectrum of Mappilas. The Mamburam Thangals, especially Fazal, tried their best to create aspirations for freedom and feelings of nationalism among the Mappilas. These traditional intellectuals collectively interpreted, elaborated and propagated the religious ideology and provided an intellectual tone to them by establishing a networking of mosques for prayers and congregation. Their interventions in the social and religious life and their widely believed ability to do miracles, tended to reinforce the popular culture based on religious faith and superstition. It was stated that the religious legitimization of Mappila uprisings was drawn from this cultural context expressed by these traditional intellectuals. In this sense, the Ulemas and other religious leaders became a crucial element in the uprisings, but they did not constitute a formally organized religious, social or political movement as in the case of the Wahabi campaigns in North India in the 19th century.

From the early part of 19th century onwards, there were a large number of uprisings in the Southern Thaluks of Eranad, Valluvanad and Ponnani. Except the Mattannur Revolt of 1852, all most all the outrages took place in these Southern parts of Malabar. According to T L Strange, (the Commissioner appointed in 1852 to enquire into the Mappila revolts in Malabar) the first revolt of the Mappilas of Malabar took place at Pantallur in 1836. But there were riots prior to the Pantalur outrage. The revolts that took place at Pallippuram village of Valluvanad and Mannur village of Ernad in 1841 were basically against the exploitation of the Jennies. The participants of these revolts were Mappila peasants. In the 1841 Pallippuram uprising, the leader was a small tenant with a family of 17, who had been evicted from his land by a court decree. This had been the cause which led to many for the outbreaks. But no doubt that the element of religion was also there which provoked the Mappila tenants to conduct a collective action. But their main targets were not religious attacks, but British officials, Jennies and their dependents. The revolts that began at Thiruramgadi and Pandikkad in 1843 were immediately suppressed by the authorities. These revolts were also directed against the Jennies and the British officials who had come for the help of the Jennies. The largest number of people’s participation was in the Manjeri revolt of 1849. This revolt was under the leadership of Manjer Athan Moyan Kurikkal against the biggest landlord of South Malabar, the Raja of Nilambur. It was against the

demand of the Raja that all his tenants including the Mappilas were to give the rent for one year as donation for the construction of a temple. This demand was resented by the Mappilas who constituted the majority of his tenants. This revolt was brutally suppressed by the British authorities and altogether about sixty five persons were killed in the revolt.

The aim of the participants of the Kulathur rebellion of 1851 was the Jenmy brothers, Mankada Komu Menon and Ittunni Raman Menon, who were the assistant of the Raja of Valluvanad. The rebels of the upsurge were the Mappilas peasants who worked under the Menons. The rebels killed the Menons and then went to the residence of the local money lender, Chengar Varier. After killing the money lender, they burnt all the records kept at his residence. Next they murdered another jenmy Kualthur Varier. By this time, the Company army reached on the spot and all the rebels died in fighting. The participants of the Mattannur revolt of 1852, the only one in North Malabar were also Mappilas and the Jenmy was a Hindu. The rebels altogether killed 83 persons in these upsurges. Among them forty three were Jennies, eleven Government officials and other was either the assistants (*Karyasthans*) or the supporters of the Jennies.

All these riots were not against the Hindus as a community as characterized by the imperialists, but were against the Jennies and these Jennies were Hindus. The rebels of Malappuram upsurge of 1855 had travelled a distance of eighty miles to reach their destination, the residence of the Hindu Jenmy, but these rebels did not attack any of the Hindus or their houses on the way. While analyzing the fundamental causes of these riots, it nothing other than economic inequality, poverty, the cruel exploitation of the Jennies, the unfavorable attitudes of the government officials and the blind faiths in their religion.

Almost all these assaults and murders were generally preceded by certain rituals. This made all activity the character of a Jihad from their perception, but actually they have to be considered as 'real social protests carried out in the form of religious acts. The preparation of an outbreak involved the intending participants donning the white clothes of martyr, divorcing their wives, asking those they felt they had wronged for forgiveness and receiving the blessing of a Thangal(as Sayyids) for the success of their great undertaking. The one good that that may be said to have emerged from these meaningless sacrifices was the opening of some eyes to the injustice under which the Mappilas labored. The riots were mainly localized incidents. One or two persons, who were ready to die after killing their enemies, took up arms against their opponents. On the way they used to kill or convert persons who belong to non-Muslim community. They attacked not only their Jennies, but also British offices, courts, railways etc. those stood as symbols of British authority.

British Reactions towards the Riots

The British authorities considered all these outbreaks as a law and order problem arose out of the fanaticism of the Mappilas. The District Collector, Mr. H V Conolly recommended for the appointment of a commission to report on the causes of these unhappy incidents. As a part of this Mr. T L Strange was appointed as the special commission on February 1852, whose report was very significant in the attitude of the British towards the Mappilas. He rejected the view that the disturbances had their origin either in the agrarian discontent or poverty. The commission reported that the outbreaks were due to the most decided fanaticism of the Mappilas stirred by the teachings of ambitious priests. Strange recommended a repressive policy which was enacted into law as the Mappila Outrages Act XXIII & XXIV of 1854 and XXX in 1859.

But after passing these Mappila acts, anti-British attitude among the Mappilas intensified which culminated in the murder of Mr. H.V.Connolly, the District Collector of Malabar, who had ordered for the deportation of Mamburam Thangal, on 12th September 1855 by three Mappilas in the presence of his wife. This provoked the British authorities and they later took severe measures against the Mappilas.

Several atrocities were taken place afterwards in the nook and corners of Southern Malabar. In the post 1854 period, many attempts were made on the lives of landlords and the supporters of the British. On the basis of an anonymous petition, Mr. William Logan, the District Collector was appointed as Special Commissioner in 1881 to inquire into the land tenures and tenant rights in Malabar. The Special Commissioner found that the problem had its root fundamentally in the early British misunderstanding of the traditional relationship of Jenmy to the land and the report of Strange that 'the cause of the riot was not agrarian discontent' was wrong. According to Logan agrarian discontent was the basic cause of the Mappila uprisings. The British resident in Travancore and Cochin, Mr. Mac George forwarded the recommendations.

By fearing the enmity of the Hindu landlords, British authorities did not take any concrete step to protect the rights of the tenants. They again appointed William Logan as a special commissioner generally to inquire into the question of tenure of land and of tenant's rights in Malabar as well as the question of rites for mosques and burial grounds. In his recommendation Logan pointed out that by recognizing Jenmy as the absolute owner of his holdings and therefore free to take a big share of the produce as extort from him, The British had presented him with powers, which were not customary in Malabar. The ultimate result of his proposals was the passing of Malabar Compensation for Tenants Improvement Act of 1887, which was amended in 1900. The Act provided for granting compensation to the evicted tenants for the improvement marked by them on land.

COLONEL MUNROE AS RESIDENT DIWAN IN TRAVANCORE AND COCHIN

Col. Munroe reached Kerala as a servant officer of the East India Company in the early decades of the nineteenth century and became instrumental to modernization efforts of the princely states of Travancore and Cochin. Though he was there to keep the Company interest, he never ignored the cause of these states. On 23rd March 1810 of Common Era [CE], Col. Munroe was appointed the Resident of Travancore and Cochin. In addition to this accountability he was also entrusted with the obligation of being the Diwan of Travancore [1811-1815 CE] and Cochin [1812-1818 CE]. He served as the Diwan (Prime Minister) to the Regents Rani Gouri Lakshmi Bai and Rani Gouri Parvathi Bai of the Kingdom of Travancore and Raja Kerala Varma of the kingdom of Cochin from 1812 to 1818. With this freedom of action, he won the confidence of the rulers and the people as to be able to introduce the practice, in the administration of justice, of having a Christian sitting on the bench as judge beside a Brahmin. He brought tranquility and affluence and introduced a progressive government in both the states. An assortment of administrative as well as social reforms and other procedures made him an unforgettable character amongst the populace of Travancore and Cochin. "The impassable name left in their hearts for justice and integrity made even the ignorant peasant call him 'Munroe Sahib'. He took up the challenge of transformation of Travancore and Cochin on contemporary European appearance, not acknowledged earlier of its inhabitants.

Col. Munroe was a progressive administrator and many of the land mark proclamations done by the Rani Gouri Lakshmi Bai is believed to be based on Manore's advice. When Rani was occupying the throne of Thiruvithamcore, a family member of hers, Kerala Varma came to contest the right to succession. He refused to take the previous decision of his claims as final. It was the interference of Col. Munroe which solved the problem and the throne was given to Rani. Rani placed full confidence in Munroe and the British Government. When Lakshmi Bai assumed the throne, she had no male heir and the country was in the fear of annexation by the British. It is said that, when Rani was pregnant, Col. Munroe took the risk of assuming that the child would be a boy and wrote to Madras saying that a male heir was there and then went to pray in front of the Padmanabha Swami temple to make his prediction come true. He is said to have warned Lord Padmanabha that, in case he wasn't helped out, he would bring cannon and blow up the temple. When Swathi Thirunal was born Munroe was naturally pleased and he made an offering of a decorated umbrella to the temple, which is even today used in the processions inside the temple. Rani's personal relationship with the Resident was of a cordial nature. Rani was ready to listen the good advices of Col. Munroe related to the welfare of the State. But when the Resident went out of his way to interfere in domestic matters she was strong enough to resist the attempt. For instance, when Manore advised that the Koyil Thampuran, Rani's

consort, should live separate for a time she sternly refused to accept the direction. He was always ready to give her the benefit of his advice and his assistance.

It was after removing Ummini Thampi from the Diwanship that with the request of Rani and with the approval of the Government of Madras, Col. Munroe took over the charge of Diwan of Travancore. After assuming the power of Diwan, he began to interfere in state affairs of Travancore. But he was not satisfied with the arrangements for the government of the country. He entertained a very low opinion about the local system of administration and in his report to the Madras Government he has expressed the evils that prevailed in the public service. Col. Munroe wished to help the people of Travancore by taking the charge of the duties of Diwan. The works that was done by Munroe in Travancore was beneficial to the state and some of the reforms introduced by him were of a useful and far-reaching character.

It is possible that the troubles of the rebellion and the subsequent happenings had made the general condition of the people rather hard. Two years had hardly elapsed when Munro took the administration into his own hands. Thampi Iravi, who was the Diwan during that short interval, was admittedly a man of capacity and ambition. He had been appointed Diwan with full concurrence of the British Government. The details of his administration prove that he was an efficient minister with a great deal of statesmanship. It is therefore, difficult to believe that Munro understood and represented the facts correctly when he described the condition of Travancore as chaotic. However, some confusion prevailed in the country as a consequence of the insurrection of Velu Thampi and the disputes of succession. The payment of the subsidy to the British Government according to the increased rate was in arrears for some time. The state was really unable to bear the burden of paying the subsidy. The Maharaja had little faith in Thampi Iravi and this fact must have considerably encouraged the lower officials of the state to disregard the central authority. These temporary evils might have led Munro to think that the government of the country was ever weak and the public service always clogged by corruption. But the happenings in the early part of the reign of Bala Rama Varma show that the people would not put up with the exactions of the officers however high. No wholesale degradation as described by Munro could have occurred in the course of two or three years.

Col. Munroe was a product of English liberalism, utilitarianism and Protestantism. Munro was able to strengthen the central authority by reorganizing the whole machinery of government. It was his desire to introduce into Travancore the system of administration which was in vogue in British India. The agency and the procedure for the transaction of public business were soon modified in order to prevent the officers pulling in different directions. Munro decided to keep the whole authority concentrated in his own hands. With this purpose he formed a group of supporters within

the state. It was ordered that all letters to the Huzur Or Diwan's office should be addressed to the Diwan and that the letters sent out of that office should go under the name of the Diwan and bears his signature. The beginnings of a Secretariat system were laid. Letters received in the Huzur were to be read to the Resident before they were sent to the respective officers. This was only in accordance with the previous practice according to which even in comparatively unimportant matters the measure proposed or initiated by the officers were adopted only with the approval of the Diwan and the specific sanction of the sovereign. The Rayasam branch was made an important annex to the Huzur. Cases of corruption were duly investigated and offenders promptly punished. Men of character and capacity were selected to fill the various offices, and the work of selection was entrusted to a competent Board. A rigid economy was practiced in the fields of expenditure. A retrenchment in salaries was effected by the abolition of certain establishments. The cost of the staff of the Huzur Cutchery which was 6,000 rupees per mensem (per month) was reduced to 1,500 rupees. Changes were effected in the nomenclature of offices by substituting the names of functionaries in British India, as for example Tahsildar for Karyakar.

The arrears of taxes were expeditiously collected and rules were framed to prevent misappropriation by the officers of money which belonged to the Government. An improved system of audit and accounts was introduced. The officers who violated the rules were punished. Munro did not believe in dismissing officers for slight faults. Like Velu Thampi he preferred to chastise them with a view to their improvement. Munro toured the country at frequent intervals and lent his ears freely to representations made by the people. Castes and communities which were kept in a position of inferiority by the force of custom received at the hands of Col. Munro the most sympathetic assistance.

There was a well-defined system of administrative divisions and from the *Mullakkars* to the *Sarvadhikaryakkars* there was a regular gradation of officers. These officers were charged with a variety of duties. They had to look after the assessment of the revenue, the administration of justice, the punishment of offenders, the command of the militia and the defense of the country. The combination of these diverse functions are executives, judicial, military and revenue in the same officer had, to some extent, become inconvenient in their operations and detrimental to efficiency. The *Sarvadhikaryakkars* and *Karyakkars* exercised very great power and influence within their jurisdiction. Most of them were arrogant in their ways and high-handed in their dealings. Munro abolished the posts of Valiya Sarvadhikaryakkar and Sarvadhikaryakkar. The Karyakkars were retained, but their designations were changed into Tahasildars. However, they were deprived of their military and judicial powers and reduced to the positions of collectors of revenue.

The efforts made by Munro to improve the material condition of the people were not less successful. Travancore was then mainly an agricultural country. Ceaseless

cultivation had impoverished the soil in many places. Droughts were not uncommon as the crops depended on the uncertain monsoons. The taxes pressed heavily on the people. Munro made a careful enquiry into the actual conditions of the cultivators. He found that though remissions were allowed from time to time it was often a means of illegal profit to the tax-collectors. With a view to remedy this evil Col. Munro furnished the land-holders with documents called Pattayams. The Pattayams contained the extent, tenure, Government demand etc., of each ryots holding and a land-register called *Pattayapperu* was also compiled.

The accumulation of arrears was the besetting sin of the agriculturists. The punctual payment of the taxes was insisted on as the best means of safeguarding the interests of the state and the people at the same time. Those who would not pay their dues were placed in confinement and the officers responsible for collection were treated in the same manner and their properties attached for failure to realize the moneys due to the Sircar. Lands newly brought under cultivation were favourably assessed. The output of paddy and other produce was sought to be increased by taking away fields and gardens from the possession of indifferent and indolent owners and giving them to others who were ready to apply the requisite quantity of labour.

Considerable relief was given to the people by the abolition of certain taxes which pressed heavily upon them. The succession tax called *Purushantharam* was abolished by royal proclamations. The tax collected from the low caste people like 'Kadavari' and 'Valanikuti' were also stopped. Various fines imposed by public authorities were done away with. No fine was thereafter to be collected without the sanction of the Government. The tax of 1Re. per para of cultivated paddy field and the light sum of a rupee per head imposed on every merchant and holder of property who was not a cultivator was also abolished. The extension of cultivation was encouraged by issuing small loans to the ryots and sanctioning the necessary staff for the destruction of wild animals dangerous to life and property.

Pension scheme on retirement from government service was introduced. He stopped the 'Uzhiyam' in Thiruvithamkur in 1815. He took special interest in establishing indigeneous schools in the state. HE provided all encouragements for the Christian missionaries. He himself was the Vice-President of the Church Mission Society of Thiruvitamkur, which he enjoyed till his death in 1858.

Increased facilities were offered to trade by abolishing the system of farming the customs duties and by establishing a certain number of chowkeys or custom houses in suitable places under the control of responsible officers. Market regulations were strictly enforced. Provisions in common were now exempted from duty when sold in the bazaars. The sale of tobacco, arrack and other intoxicants was regulated in conformity with the rules framed by the government. Prices were fixed week after week in consultation with the merchants and the people in the neighborhood. This had a beneficial effect in preventing dealers from forming combinations to raise the selling price of commodities to the prejudice of the consumers. Labor was made more

effective. The names of the impressed coolies were entered in a register. Those who went away after receiving wages in advance were punished. Improved methods were adopted in the manufacture of salt, which was collected and sold in Sirkar banks halls.

A commercial agent was appointed at Alleppey. Warehouses were established in all centers of trade such as Padmanabhapuram, Trivandrum, Quilon, and Mavelikkara. Each warehouse was managed by a staff of officers and guarded by a detachment of the military. The duty on cotton was reduced to Rs.15 per candy. This change encouraged a larger importation of cotton and larger manufacture. Pepper, tobacco and salt were government monopolies, but their sale was regulated by measure beneficial to the people.

The laboring population was also encouraged to pursue their vocation by the abolition of the poll-tax on the Ehavas, Mukkuvas and Parayas, the tax on nets and certain other imposts. The amelioration of the condition of slaves was another achievement to the credit of the administration. In Travancore the slaves were always treated with more kindness. But they continued to be bought and sold, particularly in times of adversity. By a royal proclamation of 987 M.E. the purchase and sale of all Kuravas, Parayas, Pallas, Malayans and Vedans, were liable to confiscation of their property and banishment from the country. The total abolition of slavery and the enfranchisement of slaves however took place only in 1030 M.E.

Munroe revised the judicial system of the state as per the colonial judicial administrative system. Zilla(district) courts were established at Padmanabhapuram, Trivandrum, Mavelikkara, Vaikam and Alway for the trial of offenders and the decision of civil disputes. A court of Appeal was established at the capital with five judges, one of whom was the Diwan himself. The judges were selected from among the most respectable Nayers, Brahmans and Christians. The district Courts had each of them three judges to hear and decide cases, and a Sasthri learned in the Dharma Sasthra to expound the law. He prepared a statute for the reference of the courts for trial and punishment. This statute was prepared on the basis of the Company Judicial system, the Dharmasastras and the precedents and customs of the land. A Duffadar or Daroga and a party of police men were also attached to each of the courts. The Huzur court was constituted for the trial of public servants who were guilty of acts of omission or commission in the execution of their public duty. The police department was reformed and modernized and put under the direct control of the Diwan. In effect, the Company administration was established in Thiruvitamkur by Munroe, by 1812 itself.

The Government also decided to interfere in temple administration. The gold and ornaments received in the temples as offerings were taken from the temples and kept in the Government treasury and were used to mint coins for the benefit of the State. The revenue officers were directed to supervise the administration of temple affairs, realize the rents and profits remit the collections to the treasury, and disburse the necessary amounts for the daily pujas and special ceremonies. Superior and subordinate officers were alike directed to do the work with the utmost care. It was expressly stated that in cases of misfeasance the officer responsible would be punished with immediate dismissal from service. Shortly afterwards a committee was appointed

to consider and report upon the revision of the pathivus or allotted amounts. Rules were framed to secure the payment of adequate prices to persons who supplied articles. Opportunities for exaction and corruption were thus brought down to a minimum. The result of the reform was that the religious and charitable institutions came under the direct control of government. The Government obtained considerable addition to the revenue. It appears to have been an equally important object of the Government to neutralize and destroy by those steps the influence of the Devaswams over the people and thus check any future commotions.

REFORMS OF H.V.CO NOLLY IN MALABAR

Henry Valentine Conolly (5 December 1806 - 11 September 1855) was an East India Company official in the Madras Presidency who served as a magistrate and collector of Malabar. He took an active role in the establishment of teak plantations to meet the demands for teak in ship-building. He was murdered in Calicut by Mappila - Muslim for the actions he sought to take on their leader Sayid Fasal Pukkoya Tangal of Mambrum.

Henry Conolly was born on 5 December 1806 to Valentine Conolly of 37 Portland Place, London. He was the elder brother of Arthur Conolly and like him was educated at Rugby School, Warwickshire and then moved to Madras, India and became a writer in the Madras Civil Service from 19 May 1824. He later served in Bellary as principal collector. He served as a translator of Kannada, a cashier and as commissioner for settlement of claims in the Carnatic.

The name H.V. Connolly is more notorious than famous in the history of Kerala. As the visible representative of the Government he was the subject for attack by the agitators connected with Mappila riots of the mid 19th century. Connolly's measures might have been oppressive to the peasants and it infuriated them. He was responsible for imprisoning certain leaders of the Mappilas and was imported Sayyid Fazal Pookooya Thangal.

Canolly Canal

In the 19th century, in Malabar, there were no good transportation facilities- no good roads and railways. Travelling and transportation was very difficult especially from calicut and nearby areas. H.V. Conolly, then collector of Malabar, thought that if the rivers of Malabar are connected through canals, it would improve trade as well as mobility of people. It was with this purpose that he began to construct the canal in 1848 connecting Korapuzha or Elathur River in the north with Kallai River in the South. It passes through the city of Calicut and it was planned as a coastal water way in Malabar. Conolly Canal is the part of the West coast canal network of Kerala. The Canoly Canal is 11.4 km (7 mi) long and connects the Korapuzha River in the north and the Kallai River in the south. The width of the canal varies between 6 and 20 metres (20 to 65 ft), and the water depth during the monsoon ranges between 0.5 and 2 metres (1.5 to 6 ft). The sides of most of the canal are lined with dimension stone, but at some locations the lining has collapsed. In a number of places along the canal, trees and bushes and water plants have grown, causing the water flow in the middle stretch of the canal to become weaker.

Plantation of teak trees in Nilambur

As an administrator Conolly had a spirit of dedication and farsightedness. He was a dutiful servant of the English East India Company and was particular in safeguarding the interest of the Company in Malabar. It was he who planted the Canolly's Teak Plantation, the first teak plantation in the world at Nilambur in the South Malabar. He was appointed as the District Collector of Malabar in 1840 and he made great attention to the development of teak forest in Nilambur. Canolly calculated the annual demand of teak from Nilambur by the Bombay dockyard at a rate of one ship a year. It amounted 2230 cubic meters of Teak. For this amount of timber at least 2000 teak trees were needed. And it will take 60 years to get 2000 trees fully grown. It was this that he recommended at least 6700 square kilometers forest lands to be brought up. The government accepted his recommendation. With the help of Dr. Riseberg from England he selected a plot of 1500 acres at Nilambur at the confluence of three rivers- Karimpuzha, Poupuzha and Chaliyar Puzha.

He was aware of the fact that the unscrupulous felling of teak trees from the forest would lead to exhorting of teak trees in the forest. It was his farsightedness that made him think in terms of planting and growing teak trees as a plantation. It was the domestication of trees. It was in the interest of the economic well being of the company that Conolly decided to start this plantation. He was fully aware of the rarities and importance of teak and its usage as a building material in Railway lines and other projects of National importance.

The teak plantation was a pioneering example of systematic forest management. It contained some of the finest pieces of the tropical hardwood teak. The plantations were constructed by the Madras Government for the supply of teak timber to the port of Bombay. He is also remembered for planning a coastal waterway in Malabar — what is known today as the Conolly Canal (although the introduction of railways around the time the canal was being completed had eclipsed its importance). The first Basel Mission church of Calicut city was built during Conolly's collectorship.

End of Canolly

On the evening of 11 September 1855, at around nine o'clock Conolly was attacked at the Collector's Residence at West Hill Bungalow, Calicut by a small group of Mappilas. Conolly was buried in Conolly Park near South Beach Road on 11 September 1855 and the headstone of his tomb was shifted to the premises of the C.S.I. St. Mary's English Church, Calicut in 1997. The murderers, Valassery Emalu, Puliyanunnath Thenu (who had escaped from prison at Calicut a month before) and Haiderman, a hairdresser, were eventually tracked and shot dead by the government forces led by Major Haly and Captain Davis (in an encounter after 6 days at large at Edavannappara in Thiruvambadi). The Mappila rebels were using these escaped prisoners to murder Henry Conolly who suggested the idea of exile of religious leader Sayid Fasal Pukkoya Tangal of Mambrum.

MODULE II

SOCIO RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND REFORMS IN KERALA SOCIETY

- **PRINTING PRESS AND EDUCATION- THE ROLE OF MISSIONARIES**
- **SOCIO-RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS**
 - Nature of movements
 - Spread of education
 - SREENARAYANA GURU**
 - Aruvippuram Prathishta
 - SNDP Movement**
 - Educational Institutions
 - Kumaranansan
- **CHATTAMPISWAMIKAL-Vedadhikara Niroopanan**
- **AYYANKALI- Sadhujana Paripalana Yogam**
- **PANDIT KARUPPAN- Jathikkummi, Valamahasabha**
- **VAGBHATANANATA**
- **POYKAYIL YOHANNAN- Parathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha**
- **MAKTHI THANGAL**
- **VAKKOPM ABDUL KHADER MOULAVI**
- **V.T BHATTATHIRIPPAD-Adukkalayil Ninum Aragathekku**
- **CHAVARA ACHAN-Educational Institutions**
- **ARYA PALLAM-PARVATHI NEMINIMANGALAM**
- **KALLUMALA SAMARAM**
- **P K VARIER AND THE REJUVENATION OF AYURVEDIC TRADITIONS IN KERALA**
- **MEMORIALS**
 - Malayalai Memorial-G K Pillai, C V Raman Pillai
 - Ezhava Memorial-Dr. Palpu
- **O. CHANDU MENON AND K P PADMANABHA MENON-MARUMAKKATHAYAM REPORT**

PRINTING PRESS AND EDUCATION-THE ROLE OF MISSIONARIES

Printing Press was started in Kerala only after the advent of the Europeans. The Jesuit missionaries had arrived in Kerala during the period of the Portuguese itself. The Jesuit missionaries started several educational institutions throughout Kerala which helped the beginning of Western Education. Though the basic aim of the Jesuit priests is the conversion of the local people, they had started many educational institutions. They started printing as part of their religious propaganda.

They used the indigenous script so as to enable the common man of Kerala to understand the religious matters. In Kerala both printing and the Western education helped each other and benefited both. The first printing in Malayalam was done at Goa

by a Spanish missionary Jovanas Gonsalvez. The Portuguese had started printing presses at Vaipin and at Cochin.

As the foreigners had to interact with the common man of Kerala, it was essential for them to study about the lifestyle and traditions of Keralites. The Dutch were the first to accept this fact. The *Hortus Malabaricus* was prepared by the Dutch with the help of the traditional medical practitioners of Kerala. The name of each plant was given in Latin, Arabic, Sanskrit and in the Malayalam script also. This was published from Amsterdam during the period between 1678 and 1703 in twelve volumes.

The Jesuit missionaries' shows interest in preparing grammar and dictionary works in Malayalam language. Apart from *Leelathilakam*, the first grammar work in Malayalam language was prepared by Dr. Anjelos Francis. The first dictionary of Malayalam language was prepared by the Hungarian born missionary.

The first complete printed book in the Malayalam language is the *Samkshepavedartham*. It was written by Father Clement explaining the doctrines of Christianity. Following the footsteps of foreign missionaries some of the local native priests had also written some books in Malayalam language during this period. Father Kariyattil Ousep wrote Malayalam book *Vedatharkkam* in 1768 to find a solution to the internal differences in the church. This book introduced the European style of prose writing. *Varthamanapusthakam* is the first travelogue in Malayalam written by Paramikal Thoma Kathanar published in 1780.

Dr. Herman Gundert and Benjamin Daily had shown so much of interest in the printing and publishing of Malayalam books during the 19th century. Baily started the CMS press in 1821 and he published an English-Malayalam dictionary in 1846. The most famous and important English-Malayalam dictionary was written and published by Herman Gundert, a native of Germany in 1872. He was a Basel Missionary. He had contributed in various fields of knowledge. He has written books in Grammar, history, theology etc.. The first newspaper in Malayalam, *Rajyasamacharam* and *Paschimodayam* were published from Thalasseri by Gundert. The contributions by Gundert to the growth Malayalam language are great.

Education

Kerala had privilege of being the most literate province in the country and experienced a continuous process of educational expansion. The Christian Missionaries did the spade work in the field of education. They were the pioneers in English and female education in Kerala. The rulers of Thiruvitamkur and Cochin also encouraged education. The governments of Thiruvitamkur and Cochin started vernacular schools in their respective states in 1817 and 1818. The motive behind the encouragement of Malayalam education was the creation of a cadre of clerks and accountants in the various Government departments.

The grant-in-aid scheme was introduced by the Thiruvitamkur government in 1868-69 for encouraging private schools. In Kochi, the liberalized grand-in-aid scheme was introduced in 1890s.

The Basel Mission started educational activities in Malabar from 1848 onwards. The Brennan school at Thalasseri in 1862 and the Victoria College at Palakkad and the Zamorin's college at Kozhikkode began as schools in 1866 and 1877 respectively. Compared to Cochin and Thiruvitamkur, in Malabar educational history was relatively uneventful.

Malabar appear to have been less hospitable to educational development than in Tiruvitamkur and Cochin. As far as literature was concerned, Malabar occupied a predominant place in Madras Presidency. In the field of education, thus, Kerala went ahead of all other provinces in the country. However, educational facilities were mainly restricted to the privileged savarnas of Hindus and Christians. Caste prejudices kept backward communities away from Government schools. The orthodox and prejudiced Muslim religious leaders, the 'Mullas' were themselves responsible for their educational backwardness. The Mullas held it as a sin to send their children, particularly girls, to the school. Thus literacy was limited to the upper castes. The backward communities had hardly represented the English knowing people in Kochi. So the reformers who represented the backward communities such as SreeNarayanaguru, Kumaran Asan, Ayyankali, Vaikom Abdul Khadar Moulavi etc. opposed the practice of limiting knowledge only to the upper strata of the society. According to them, the backwardness of Indian society, including religious superstitions and social obscurantism was due to general ignorance of the people. The newly emerged educational middle class among the lower castes realized that the spread of education was essential for overcoming their economic and social backwardness. They petitioned the Government to open all public schools to every caste and community.

The western education started with the work of missionaries. The Western education also hastened the social transformation in Kerala. The foremost contribution of the western education to the society of Kerala was that it gave education to all people irrespective of their caste. The British government gave employment to the educated ones without any consideration of the caste. As the people found that the educated ones would get govt. jobs, more and more went to the western education.

The Nairs and Christians showed much interest in getting modern education. The missionaries played an important role in spreading the western education. The London Mission Society and the Church Mission Society were the two protestant Missions who had initiated the Western education in Kerala especially in Travancore in the beginning of the 19th century.

Another missionary society named Salvation Army had started their missionary activities in and around Nagarcoil during the same period. They started several English schools at Nagarcoil and several other places. Ringle Tab was a Spanish missionary who gave admission to both boys and girls irrespective of their casts. Free education was given to poor students. The first girls school was started at Kottayam in 1821 by the women of CMS.

An English Missionary School was started at a school at Mattancheri in Kochi in 1818 with the assistance of government. It was Basel Evangelical Mission that took the initiative of spreading the English education in the area of Malabar. The first Western education school of Malabar was started at Kannur in 1841. The Basel Mission started a primary school at Kallai in Calicut. Another English school was started at Thalassery by the same mission in 1856.

By starting an English school at Trivandrum in 1934, the govt. also participated in the spread of education in Kerala. Another English school was started at Thrissur after three years of the starting of Trivandrum English School by the Government. The Trivandrum Maharaja's College and Eranamkulam Maharaja's college came into being in 1866 and 1875 respectively. The Basel Mission started the Brennan School at Thalassery in 1862. This school was later taken over by the government and it was developed into the present Brennan College of Thalasseri.

By the second half of the nineteenth century, Western education was wide spread in Kerala. While most of the educational institutions gave general education, a few of them gave education in specific subjects. The emphasis on English, science and technical education suited the social and economic interest of the newly emerging middle class, who were the main beneficiaries of modern education. According to the social reformers, the backwardness of Indian society, including religious superstition and social obscurantism, was due to general ignorance of the people. So dissemination of knowledge became a vital point in their programme of reform. The newly emerged educated middle class among the lower caste realized that the spread of education was essential for overcoming their economic and social backwardness. They knew that those who controlled opportunities also controlled the avenues of economic and bureaucratic spheres. Thus education became the symbol of power and privilege. The attempt, thereafter, was to ensure better facilities for education. They petitioned the government to open all public schools to every caste and community and demanded better grant-in-aid scheme. Ayyankali advocated free and compulsory education. Thus demands were raised by various social reformers to spread education among all sections of the society irrespective of caste and creed.

Due to the pressures from various sectors, the Government of Tiruvitamkur and Kochi started separate schools for backward communities. In 1904 Tiruvitamkur

Government took up the entire cost of primary education of backward communities. In 1911 restrictions on the submission of the Pulaya children to departmental schools were included in the general category. In 1945 Thiruvitamkur government decided to make primary education compulsory. In Kochi, the indigenous school system functioned very well. Thus in 1921, there were two schools for every village in Kochi. Malabar too witnessed considerable development, especially in the field of higher education. SNDP, N.S.S., Sadhu Jana Paripalan Sangham, Yogakshema Sabha and various Christian organizations started educational institutions of their own. So education was comparatively more widespread in Kerala.

SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENTS

The second half of the 19th century witnessed various social reform movements in Kerala. From 1812 until almost the close of the century subversive forces were forming and developing in Kerala society. The Kerala society was awakened by the activities of various social reformers and the society started showing the symptoms of a social renaissance. A number of socio-religious reform movements took shape in Kerala. They were also the earliest democratic mass movements in Kerala.

The co-operation given by the colonial rulers provided a new impetus for the social reform movements in Kerala. Spread of Modern education also helped for the growth of a new social consciousness among the people of Kerala. The current of social transformation gradually led Kerala into the mainstream of political struggle for freedom and responsible government in the 20th century. The mass especially the lower orders in the Hindu society awaked against social injustice and evils. This period marks an important turning point in the history of modern Kerala as it paved way for the revolutionary changes to the social life of the people.

These movements were peaceful and non-violent, though there was an undercurrent of militancy in them. These movements were of the utmost significance because Kerala had, for centuries tolerated caste system in its most oppressive form. The complexity of the caste system of Kerala had made the lower caste people untouchables and unapproachable. The advent of the British separated caste system from the administrative machinery. But social status of person was still determined according to caste hierarchy. The influence of the caste system was more rigid in the states of Cochin and Travancore. Government jobs were not given to the lower casts there up to the beginning of the 20th century. British rule and modern English Education prepared the people to struggle against the caste rigidity and restrictions in the society.

The reform movements in Kerala were initiated and led by the middle class under the influence of both traditional and western ideas. The reformers of Kerala came mainly from intermediate and lower caste background. Their caste perspective

was clear from the nature of the issues they supported. They were the problem of the lower castes, expensive obscurantist social customs and practices, education, temperance etc.

The Colonial domination and the spread of education brought about social change in the 19th century Kerala. The colonial rule introduced a new economic order which was characterized by British bureaucracy, commercialization of agrarian economy, development of transport and communication and western concept of private property inland. Changes also took place in public administration. This led to better job opportunities for the educated people in bureaucracy. As financial position improved the perspective of life also underwent a change. Such a change in the economic field was also responsible for social change among the lower castes.

Reformers of Kerala

The reformers of Kerala belonged to two broad categories. The first group believed that changes in beliefs and behavior are to be effected through their influence of religion. Thus Chattampi Swamikal, Sree Narayana Guru, Theertha pada Swamikal, Sadanada Swami, Vagbhadananda and their followers helped spiritual revitalization as the basis for the advancement of society. The second group of reformers organized themselves under non religious leadership and gained their ends through constitutional means.

Sree Narayan Guru

The most important personality among the social and religious reformers of Kerala during the 19th century was Sri Narayana Guru. He struggled against the upper caste domination in the society. He tried to uplift the socio economic and religious position of the lower caste people. His social reform movements were among the Ezhavas. This inspired other reformers to struggle for social recognition and equality.

Sree Naranayan Guru was born in 1885 at Chembazhanti village near Trivandrum. He received the traditional education and was well versed in Sanskrit and Philosophy. During his early life itself he had started criticizing the rigidity of caste system. He was also against the Brahmin domination of the Hindu society. His early activities were directed to inspire the people, especially the Ezhavas against social inequality.

Aruvippuram Prathishta

Sree Narayana Guru initiates a social reform movement through the 'Aruvippuram Installation' It was a social revolution in the making of Kerala. Sreenaranayana Guru established a Siva temple at Aruvippuram near Trivandrum by installing a rock from the Neyyar River as Sivalinga on the Sivaratri day of Kumbha

month in 1888 (1063 Aandu). Through this he started a silent revolution in the history of Kerala. According to the Brahmanical tradition, the installation of the deity was the right of the Brahmins. This act of Sree Narayana Gur provoked the Upper caste Hindus. It was enough to shake the age old religious hegemony of the Brahmanas. It also represented the self determination of the lower caste people to fight against the caste rigidity and the upper caste domination. It caused a social revolution, which uprooted the old social system of Kerala. Gradually, Aruvippuram became a pilgrim center. On Vavu (Full moon) day, people began to come there to offer sacrifice. The disciples of the Guru which included the famous poet Kumaran Asan, decided to give food to the pilgrims which led to the creation of 'Vavoottu Yogam' (serving food to the people who come as pilgrims). In 1889, Vavoottu Yogam had been expanded. Thus an organization, 'Aruvippuram Kshetra Yogam' had formed.

In continuation of the Aruvippuram installation Guru established several temples in the various parts of Kerala. Lower caste people were permitted in the temple founded by him. Various educational institutions, libraries and reading rooms were established at different places. He worked hard for the eradication of the evil customs prevailed among the Ezhavas. 'Pulikudi' and 'Thaliket' were considered as unnecessary festivals and ceremonials. He was against the luxurious way of conducting marriage. He had to face lot of oppositions from high caste Hindus and even from his own community.

He spread the message of 'one caste one religion and one God for men' He called on the people to strengthen themselves through organization and free themselves through education. He founded the Sivagiri Ashram in 1904 and the Advaita Ashram at Alwaye in 1913. His philosophy is Advaita, which is based upon Upanishads. The awareness created by Sreenarayana Guru touched all the castes of Hindu religion. It paved the way for the greater social reform movement in Kerala.

SNDP Movement

A number of backward class movements were launched in the pre-independence period. The backward classes organized themselves against the Brahmanas, in particular as they thought that most of the socio-economic advantages were cornered by them depriving the agricultural intermediate castes and communities. These were similar to Jyotiba Phule's Sathyasodak Samaj movement with the similar aim of ending oppression by the Brahmanas. The Brahmanas were the first to exploit modern educational and employment opportunities. The upper non-Brahmana caste failed to get access to these opportunities. The Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) movement, among the Ezhavas of Kerala, is an example of the conflict between the depressed classes and the upper non-Brahmana castes. SNDP Yogam is a charitable society established in 1903 May 15 by the efforts of a group of people who

worked hard for the upliftment of the socially backward classes, with the guidance and blessings of Sreenarayana Guru. It was established as a charitable society working for the spiritual and educational upliftment of the Ezhava community for the past years. It mainly aimed at maintaining and propagating the teachings of Sree Narayana Guru. It is the shining story of the change of an almost food gathering society into a cosmopolitan world order. The history of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam is the rise of the socially backward, depressed classes in Kerala. It is the social development of Ezhava from (according to the 824 Royal Order) mere 'owner of thalappu and ladder' to the present state. Yogam is the first organization which envisaged Kerala as a whole.

Educational Institutions

Sree Narayana Trust has been one of the pioneer educational agencies in the field of higher education in Kerala since 1940. This Trust is one of the subsidiary unit of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP) for promote the educational activities of the community "means Sree Narayaneeyar " the society called followers of Guru Narayana. He was the chief architect behind the social renaissance in Kerala and the institutions under the Trusts follow the footsteps of Guru whose motive is to imbibe strength through organization and to seek liberation through education. SN Trusts aims at realizing the high ideals of Guru who professed the welfare of all without any discrimination on the basis of caste, creed or religion. The Sree Narayana Trusts was formed by the former Chief Minister of Kerala Sri R.Sankar in 1952 for managing the Sree Narayana College, Kollam. Later educational institutions were started all over Kerala for the upliftment of the socially and educationally backward strata of the society. At present there are 50+ educational institutions and 4 hospitals.

But soon it became quite difficult to maintain many such institutions by the Yogam, whose main objective was the propagation of Narayana Guru's vision among the masses. Under such circumstances, under the leadership of Sankar, the Sree Narayana Trust was started.

Though these educational institutions were started to help socially and economically backward sections of the society, in the recent years there had been wide spread allegations against instances of bribe and corruption in SN Trust institutions in the form of capitation fees which had malafide intentions to serve the interests of richer sections.

Kumaranasan

Kumaranasan was one of the makers of modern India. He was the famous poet of Malayalam and was a close associate of the SNDP Yogam. Asan was born in a merchant family belonging to the Ezhava community in April 1873 in Kayikkara village near Thiruvananthapuram. He was the second son in a family of nine children.

His father Narayan Perungadi was well versed in Malayalam and Tamil literature and his mother was Kali. He developed taste in Kathakali and classical music and he was trained in Mathematics and Sanskrit. He had a passion towards these subjects. At an early age itself he got two jobs- a teacher and a clerk, but he left these two for attaining higher education in Sanskrit. He undertook a studentship in poetry under Manamboor Govindan Asan. He learned yoga and tantra and worked as an apprentice in a Muruga temple at Vaikom. During this time he was blessed with writing poetry. He composed few devotional songs for the benefit of regular worshipers at this temple. He made use of poetry as an instrument of social change. He represented romanticism in Malayalam with all its beauties. He was a revolutionary in every sense who liberated Malayalam poetry from the clutches of traditionalism. After Ezhuthachan Malayalam poetry reaches its height of emotion is Asan. Deeply moved by the social inequalities in society, he raised his voice against the evils of the caste system.

In his childhood he was dogged by ill health. At the age of 18, with his father's request, Sree Narayana Guru visited his house. At that time he was bedridden. The great saint suggested that Kumaran Asan should stay with him and he became his disciple. He was greatly attracted by the teachings and activities of Sree Narayana Guru. After his contacts with Sree Narayana Guru, he took an intensive study of Hindu religious philosophy. This was followed by a strenuous study of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy and Sanskrit literature. For this purpose he spent about five years in Bangalore, Madras and Calcutta. It was at this time that he was also introduced to English language and literature with which he became closely acquainted. After his return to Kerala he plunged into the task of organizing the S.N.D.P. Yogam for the all-round upliftment of the Ezhava community.

When he was at Bengal, it was experiencing the 19th century Renaissance under Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dayananada Saraswathi, Iswarachandra Vidyasagar and others. He was attracted to the Bengal Renaissance and the great poet Tagore. Born in a community condemned for centuries to untouchability, he fought against the inequalities of a caste ridden society and passionately for individual dignity, social freedom and the brotherhood of man. After his education he returned to Kerala and once again participated in the SNDP Yogam activities as its General Secretary. By the time of his General Secretaryship SNDP Yogam turned into a large organization with specific objectives for the progress of all lower castes. SNDP became a political organization. At the time of his retirement SNDP Yogam had nearly two thousand members and branches all over Kerala. SNDP raised its voice for abolition of caste, temple entry and untouchability.

Some of the earliest works of the poet were Subrahmanya Sathakam and Sankara Sathakam, wherein Asan voiced his devotional aspirations. He wrote his

famous work *Veena Poovu* in 1907 which is a literary classic. It paved way for a new movement in Malayalam literature. His elegy *Prarodanam* mourns the death of his contemporary and friend A R RajarajaVarma, the famous grammarian. His khandakavyas like *Nalini, Leela, Karuna* and *Chadalabhiksuki* won great popularity even today. In *Chinthavishtayaya Seetha* he display his poetic artistry, while in *Duravastha* he patiently and skillfully tears down the barriers created by feudalism, orthodoxy and casteism and consummates the dictum of Guru, “One Caste, One Religion , One God for men”. He wrote his epic poem *Budha Charitha* for which he got inspiration from Edwin Arnold’s *Light of Asia*. He died at the age of 51 in a boat accident while returning from Kollam from a function in Alappuzha. Kumaranasan was the only poet in Malayalam who became Mahakavi without writing a mahakavya.

CHATTAMPISWAMIKAL-Vedadhikara Niroopanan

A great soul and an equally brilliant mind, Chattambi Swamikal was a remarkable religious peripatetic who lived in the historic Travancore State from 1853 to 1924. He was a great social reformer and philosopher of Kerala. He influenced the launching of several social, religious, literary and political organizations and movements in Kerala. He was born in a Nair family at Kannanmula, in Trivandrum in 1853 as the son of a Namboodiri Brahmin. He revolted against the existing social system in Kerala in which the Brahmins enjoyed a monopolistic position. He wanted the major communities of the land like Nairs and Ezhavas to play their legitimate role in society. He concentrated mainly on the upliftment of Nair community. He believed that a social awakening among the Nairs would inspire the Non Brahmin for greater social change. He worked in close co-operation with Narayana Guru in the cause of Hindu religious regeneration. He undertook social and religious activities that aimed at the eradication of untouchability and other social evils. He advocated that sanyasam should not be mistaken for asceticism and proved by his personal example that sanyasis could do great help to the people. His learned discourse and works on religion, philosophy and history had won for him wide acclaim. His speeches, writings and social activities gave the reform movement in Kerala an intellectual appeal, a social bias and a practical turn. He was well versed in Sufi teachings and Christian doctrines.

As a social and religious reformer, his main achievement was that he could rouse the social consciousness of the Nairs and make them fight against the social evils that had crept in to their ranks. These evils included untouchability, sub-caste barriers and observance of irrational social practices like *Talikettukalyanam, Tirandukuli* etc. which impoverished many a middleclass Nair family. He attained Samadhi at Panmana in 1924 and the temple and Asramam founded by his devotees are visited by large number of people even today.

Chattambi Swami's religious quest and discovery, his austere simplicity and great self-denial, his humble sharing with others the light with which he was illumined, and above all his loving tenderness for all living creatures, as illustrated by the many anecdotes reproduced in this brochure, are inspiring for all. The Swamigal was not a propagandist or organizer in the modern sense of the word. He strictly adhered to the characteristic virtues of an ideal hermit practicing *ahimsa*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacharya* and *aparigraha* (non-injury, truthfulness, not taking anything by stealth, sexual continence, and living without acquisition) as an exemplar of this mode of life. His religious influence opened the vision of many and gave self-confidence to innumerable people leaving a mark in the religious attitude of a large section of people in the Travancore area.

At the age of 24, he undertook an extensive tour of south India. In the course of which he established contacts with many religious saints of repute and got opportunities of acquiring mastery of Hindu theological literature as well. In his late twenties, he returned to Trivandrum and plunged into religious activities aimed at the eradication of social evils like untouchability. His learned discourses as well as works on religion, philosophy and the brotherhood of man, soon won for him a wide circle of disciples. By identifying himself with the aspirations and problems of the common people in his speeches, writings and social activities, Chattampi Swamigal gave the reform movement in Kerala an intellectual appeal, a social basis and a practical turn. Chattampi Swamigal had a liberal social outlook. He wielded his pen as an instrument of social change. He believed that early society was based on the principles of social freedom and equality and that Chaturvarnya was introduced by the Brahmins in order to further their own self-interest. By projecting the picture of an original casteless society in ancient Kerala and of they have wrought in it by the introduction of Chaturvarnya, Chattampi Swamikal kindled social awareness among the people and gave an impetus to the social-religious reform movement in Kerala. He always expressed his profound faith in the philosophy of Ahimsa and non-violence. He denounced the primitive custom of animal sacrifice observed in Temples as barbarous and inhuman and thus set the pace for its isolation in Temples owned by the Devaswom Department in Travancore during the Regency of Sethu Lakshmi Bai (1924-1931).

A great scholar and man of letters, Chattampi Swamikal came to be called Vidhyadhiraja. He wrote poems, devotional songs, essays, reviews, commentaries, letters and research papers on a variety of subjects. Though not an academic historian, he had his own original perspective of History. In his work *Prachina Malayalam*, he has challenged some of the traditional theories of Kerala history. He rejected the

Parasurama legend and projected the picture of a casteless society in ancient Kerala. As a contributor to the literary heritage, Swamikal authored *Adi Bhasha* a research work on linguistics. He also contributed to the religious literature of the age. As a social reformer and literary luminary, Chattampi Swamikal had a great place among the reformers of Kerala.

Vedadhikara Niroopanam is the most important work of Chattampiswamikal. In this religious work Swamikal shattered the myth of Brahmins right to the monopoly of Vedic learning and asserts the right of every Hindu, irrespective of caste, has free access to the treasures of the Vedic lore. The book refutes baseless customs and rules that existed in the society. It is the first book to question the monopolization of Vedas and Vedic knowledge, science and education by minority. Vedas are the oldest literature in the world literature. Any single hymn that denied Vedic studies could not be seen in these Vedas. Then also the teaching and study of this treasure of knowledge is rested in the hands of the Brahmanas and denied to the common people. But in the last decade of 19th century reformers like Dayananda Saraswathi, Vivekanda, Swami Ramamtheertha, Maharshi Aravindan etc. advocate the view that everyone had the right to study Vedas. It was about this age that Chattampi Swamikal wrote *Vedadhikara Niroopanam* by advocating that everyone had the right to study Vedas. Through this work he clearly analyzing the question, who is having the right to study Vedas? He finds out the fact that those who had the will to study the Vedas they can study it. It is the first book to question the monopolization of Vedas and Vedic knowledge. He asked the marginalized sections including women to fight for their rights. Through this work, he intended to destroy the Brahmin domination over the society and to show the common people that Vedas and Vedic knowledge were not the monopoly of the Brahmins. His another work *Sarvamatasamarasyam* gives the gist of the truths common to all faith and emphasizes the fundamental unity

of religion. His death on 1924 was a great loss to the cause of social reform movements in the whole of Travancore.

AYYANKALI

Ayyankali was a popular leader of Dalits of Kerala who carried forward many reform movements for dalits. He was born in 1863 in Vengannoor under the rule of Travancore state. He was a contemporary of Sree Narayana Guru. He devoted his life for the upliftment of the most oppressed and suppressed section of the society. The Pulayas and other lower castes were considered as untouchables and unapproachable by the upper castes. They had lost their self respect and self confidence by the age long suppression by the upper caste. They did not enjoy any personal freedom.

Ayyankali was a fighter who took on the powerful upper caste elite as they prevented Dalit children by force from entering the school in his village. He was a

fighter and an anarchist revolutionary at one level and at another, a social reformer and institution builder who made use of the established pillars of society for many centuries. Ayyankali was the leader of a band of Dalit youths who themselves called *Ayyankalipada* and he was also the first Dalit member in Travancore Praja Sabha, the Maharaja's nominated Assembly.

The religion in which Ayyankali lived was particularly affected by social divisions during his lifetime. The Pulayas were regarded as the lowest group of people. They suffered badly from oppressive discrimination, particularly from the members of the Nair casts. So his main aim was to make his men self respected and self confident individuals and community.

The lower caste people were not allowed to travel through the roads. They were also not allowed to take admission in educational institutions. So the struggle conducted by Ayyankali was directed for getting permission to travel through the public roads. In 1893 he challenged the imposed restriction to travel on public roads for Pulayas, by travelling in a bullock cart through the public road in South Thiruvitamkur. The Upper caste Hindus beat him of violating the existing norms. But he continued his struggles.

Later he led struggle of getting permission for the Pulayas in the government schools. Ayyankali launched a school in his village, Venganur, for Pulaya children. His task was daunting. He knew no reading and writing and so had to find a teacher for the school. No teacher was available as the upper castes threatened anyone willing to take up the job. Finally Ayyankali succeeded in persuading a Nair youth to work in his school, but as the teacher entered the school with his Dalit bodyguards, he found the place burnt down.

Sadhujana Paripalana Sangham (SJPS)

The Sadhujana Paripalana Sangham (SJPS) was established in 1907 by social reformer Ayyankali with his friends on the lines of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalan Yogam started by the followers of Sree Narayanaguru to campaign for education for Dalits in Kerala with the support of government of Travancore, British India. The SJPS primarily worked among the Pulayas and its activities spread soon in most parts of South Kerala. It demanded that the Pulayas who worked in farms be given a weekly off and all the members were advised to meet every Sunday to discuss their common problems.

The SJPS gave Ayyankali a powerful forum to address the Dalit question in Travancore. In 1910, as Dewan, P Rajagopalachari and the director of education department, an Englishman named Mitchel, issued orders permitting Dalit admission to schools, Ayyankali went to the Uruttambalam School in Balaramapuram seeking

admission for Panchalim, a Pulaya girl. The headmaster refused and that set of series of clashes between Nairs and Pulayas in various parts of Travancore. According to one set of historians, it was then Ayyankali called for the farm workers strike that lasted almost one year, forcing the land owners to sue for a negotiated settlement.

Within eight years of its inception, several branches of the SJPS were established at different parts of Travancore. The headquarters were established at Ayyankali's native village of Venganoor. SJPS published a monthly magazine, *Sadhujana Paripalini*, the first ever magazine to be brought out by the Dalit community. Kali Chodikkuruppan was the founder editor. The long-defunct magazine is to resume its publication from 5 January 2014. The organization became fractured over time as the various constituent untouchable communities established their own pressure groups and the government intervention in affairs relating to them took over its space. It ended up mostly comprising members of the Pulayar community, of which Ayyankali was a part.

PANDIT KARUPPAN- Jathikkummi, Valamahasabha

Pandit Karuppan was a relentless crusader against untouchability and social evils that existed in modern Kerala. He was a poet, dramatist, and social reformer. He was born in 1885 to the 'vala' or 'Dheevara' community at Cheranallur in Ernakulam to Paapu (locally known as Atho Poojari) and Kochu Pennu. He was called the "Lincoln" of Kerala for steering socio-economically and educationally backward communities to the forefront. Hailing from a community of inland fishermen who engaged in localized fishing in backwaters and rivers, Karuppan became a Sanskrit scholar, poet and dramatist of repute. As the first human rights activist of the Cochin State, he used his literary skill and organizational ability to combat illiteracy, social injustice, casteism, and superstitions. He campaigned for the rights of lower-caste people, who at that time were not even permitted to enter Ernakulam. He dedicated his whole life for the upliftment of downtrodden sections that were under the iron hands of caste system.

Karuppan's childhood name was Sankaran, and the name Karuppan was given to him by a Tamil Gosai who was a family friend. He predicted that the boy would become a great scholar and suggested the name Karpan (meaning a learned person in Tamil), which later turned into Karuppan. Karuppan's formal education began at the age of five under Azheekkal Velu Vaidyan, a relative. Subsequently, Vadakke Valath Appu Asan, a local guru, taught him *Amarakosham*, *Sidhdharoopam* and *Sreeramodantham*, the basics of Sanskrit. A prolific reader, Karuppan also read the Itihasas and Puranas. His first poem was *Sthothramandaaram*. The prodigy took his gurus by surprise when he wrote *Lankamardanam* at the age of 12 with slokas styled in *Shardoolavikreeditham*.

Karuppan studied Sanskrit Kavyas under Mangalappillil Krishnan Asan of Cherai and returned to Cheranelloor to study with Annamanada Rama Pothuval. There, as was the prevailing custom, upper-caste Hindu students did not allow him to sit along with them and hence he sat alone in a corner. He studied the Kavyas Makham and Nyshadham and Bhoja Chambu from Rama Pothuval. The most significant period of his education was at Kodungalloor. The Kodungallur Kovilakam was a place of learning, due to the resident luminaries. At the time of severe caste system, Kodungallur Kovilakam whole heartedly welcomed the downtrodden sections to study Sanskrit and other elitist subjects. Kovilakam, at that time worked as a university of Sanskrit. He was lucky to be the disciple of Keralavyasan Kodungallur Kunhikuttan Thampuran, Cheriya Kocunni Thampuran, Sasthravisaradh Valiya Kochunni Thampuran, Godavarmabhattan Thampuran etc.. This life helped him to be a versatile in Sanskrit Pandit. Not only Karuppan, but lots of downtrodden students were studies in Kodungallur Kovilakam

Karuppan's famous work *Jathikummi*, which criticized the prevailing caste system, was written in 1904 during the period of his study at Kodungallur Kovilakam and it became popular among the poor. *Jaathikkummi* is a pioneering attempt in Malayalam literature questioning the caste system and untouchability. While Sree Narayana Guru, Kumaran Asan and Ayyankali worked for social changes in the Travancore State, the presentation of *Jaathikkummi* was the first step initiated in that direction in Cochin State by Karuppan, who was then a 19-year-old student. Kumaran Asan's *Duravastha* was published 10 years later. Though most of Karuppan's writings were in scholarly Sanskrit, *Jaathikkummi* employs simple, everyday Malayalam that illiterate people from the local communities were able to understand and propagate. He started his work by criticizing Sankaracharya who had followed the elitist Hindu mentality. One day, on his way, Sankaracharya met chandala couple and told them to give way to him, but the Chandala was not ready to give way to him and told that we all are human beings and not animal. Through this way he severely criticized the caste system in his work *Jathikummi*.

Karuppan's talents in Sanskrit came to the notice of Rajarshi Ramavarma Raja, the Maharaja of Cochin, who visited Kodungalloor to worship at the famous Thiruvanchikkulam Siva Temple. Bhattan Thampuran introduced Karuppan to the King. The Maharaja was impressed and invited Karuppan to his palace in Tripunithura. The meeting was a turning point for Karuppan. The Maharaja arranged for Karuppan's advanced study of Sanskrit under 'Sahridayathilkan' Rama Pisharody, the principal guru of the royal family. Karuppan studied '*Sidhantha Koumudi*', '*Manorama*' and '*Sahithe Darpanam*' from Rama Pisharody. Soon Karuppan was appointed Sanskrit teacher at the St. Theresa's Convent Girls' High School in Ernakulam.

When Pandit Karuppan was appointed Sanskrit Teacher in the Caste Girls' High School at Ernakulam in 1912— a special institution exclusively for upper caste girls— there was vehement protest from upper-caste Hindus against his posting, and they were reluctant to send their girls to study under a low caste man. The Maharaja of Cochin over-ruled them and warned that girls unwilling to study under Karuppan would be sent out from the school, ending the protests. After leaving the staff of Caste Girls' High School, he joined the Victoria Girls' High School, Thrissur in 1918. Subsequently, he was posted at the Teacher Training School there. In 1921, he was again appointed to the Girls' High School, Ernakulam, which had by then dropped "Caste" from its name.

During his second tenure at Girls' High School, in August 1925, he was nominated as a member of the Cochin Legislative Council to represent the hitherto disenfranchised classes, in recognition of his tireless crusade for their emancipation through writings and campaigns. As MLC, Karuppan presented their problems and grievances before the authorities arguing for better education, health and living conditions for them. He pressed the Government to establish a separate Department for this purpose leading to the establishment of the Department for the Protection of the Depressed Classes with the then Director of Public Instruction, Rao Sahib C. Mathai as ex-officio Protector and Karuppan as full-time Assistant Protector.

As Assistant Protector, Karuppan was instrumental in initiating several reforms for the progress of the depressed classes by starting schools and establishing colonies. He persuaded the Government to provide scholarships, fee concessions and a number of other incentives for the education of children from the depressed classes. He wrote *Acharabhooshanam* to generate awareness among the depressed classes against superstitions, the book being printed and distributed free of cost to the public by the Government. The Depressed Classes Department was later renamed the Harijan Welfare Department.

Pandit Karuppan was instrumental in starting fishery schools under the re-organized Fisheries Department. The establishment of fish curing yards helped promote fisheries as an industry and improve living conditions among the fishing community. While serving as a director in the Cochin Central Co-operative Bank he urged fishermen and agricultural laborers to form co-operatives for progress through self-reliance. When his three-year term on the Legislative Council expired, Karuppan was nominated for a second term but he requested that the Diwan give the post to some other member of the depressed classes. The Government appointed P.C. Chanchen, a Pulaya leader, as MLC and Karuppan tendered his resignation to make way for Chanchen.

Pandit Karuppan was then appointed as Secretary to the Elementary Education Committee and the Bhashaparishkarana Committee. Then he was appointed as Lecturer in Sanskrit at Ernakulam Maharaja's College. In 1931, he assumed the newly created post of Superintendent of Vernacular Education of Cochin State. In 1932, he was appointed lecturer of Sanskrit at the Maharaja's College. During this time, Karuppan also served as chairman of the board of Examiners of the Madras University and as Member of the Municipal Council, Ernakulam.

Baalakalesam is one of Pandit Karuppan's significant works and it was written as part of the *shashtipoorthi* celebrations of the Maharaja of Cochin in 1919 when Rao Sahib Nanperumal Chetty of Tamil Nadu organized a drama competition in the king's honor. Karuppan wrote the play under compulsion from guru Rama Pisharody in 10 days but, nervous and embarrassed to treat his beloved Maharaja as a character for the stage, Karuppan gave symbolic names to the characters in the drama. His creation was judged best and won the prize. It was named Baalaakalesam eluding to the State of Cochin as Queen Baala and the Maharaja as Kalesan her lord. The drama, dedicated to the Maharaja of Cochin, discussed the condition of the State before Kalesan became the King, and the progress the State achieved during his 16-year rule. The author did not forget to criticise the evils and atrocities suffered by people in the name of caste. Baalaakalesam was first staged in Maharaja's College, Ernakulam and Karuppan's friend Kottilil Narayana Marar, who was an upper caste Hindu, provided financial assistance to print the book.

The Maharaja of Cochin honoured Karuppan with the title *Kavithilakan* or Great Poet. Impressed by Karuppan, Kerala Varma Valiya Koil Thampuram of Travancore, known as Kerala Kalidasan for his translation of Shakunthalam into Malayalam, conferred the title of Vidwan upon him in 1913.

Karuppan decided to quit his teaching job to spend more time and energy spearheading social reforms. With this purpose, he organised the people of his own community into regional groups called sabhas or **Valasabhas**. The main agenda of the *sabhas* was to persuade people to fight against ignorance and superstitions. He put strong pressure on his fellow countrymen to become better educated and accept a healthier lifestyle. He organized the first Sabha, **Kalyanadayini Sabha**, at Anapuzha, Kodungalloor. Another Sabha was **Sudharma Sooryodaya Sabha** (Thevara), **Prabodha Chandrodayam Sabha** (North Paravur), **Araya Vamsodharani Sabha** (Engandiyoor), and **Sanmarga Pradeepa Sabha** (Kumbalam) are other *sabhas* that Pandit Karuppan patronised. All these sabhas aimed to achieve the upliftment of the subaltern dalit castes. The

He gave equal emphasis to the emancipation of other communities too. He formed the Cochin **Pulaya Maha Sabha** for the uplift of the Pulaya community in

1913. Treated as untouchables by the upper caste Hindus, they were not allowed to assemble in any common place for meetings. To keep such meetings away from the eyes of the landlords, Karuppan asked the Pulayas to come in rowboats to the expanse of the Ernakulam backwaters and tie their boats together. There, he addressed them on a wooden-planked platform and charted out strategies for their emancipation by forming a Sabha. Subsequently, Karuppan persuaded other communities like Velas, Sambavas, Ulladas and Kudumbis to form similar Sabhas to give momentum to their fight against social evils and discrimination.

The caste system in Cochin State barred the Pulayas from entering the streets of Ernakulam or walking on important public roads. Karuppan waited for a favorable opportunity to tackle the issue. The Government organized an exhibition of agricultural products in which the Diwan, W.H. Bhore, was the guest of honour. Karuppan, during his speech, brought to the attention of the Diwan that the Pulayas, who had labored hard to cultivate the agricultural products showcased in the exhibition, were not allowed to see the exhibition. Touched by the words of Karuppan, the Diwan ordered the organizers to allow the Pulayas to enter the grounds. Karuppan then took them to the exhibition site in a procession, having already asked them to arrive and wait in their country boats on the Vembanad Lake. From that day, the Pulayas could enter Ernakulam Town and Karuppan had secured the right to walk on public roads for the Pulayas and other depressed classes.

Pandit Karuppan had a special appreciation for Christianity whose missionaries had helped in Kerala's education by starting a number of educational institutions that admitted students without discrimination of religion or caste. When His Grace Alexis Henry Lepeesier (the representative of the Pope from the Vatican) visited Cochin in 1925, Karuppan wrote a welcome poem. Karuppan had also written poems highlighting the greatness of the Buddha and Prophet Mohammed. Aggrieved by the death of Sree Chattambi Swamikal, Karuppan wrote a condolence poem titled *Samadhi Sapthakam*. Pandit Karuppan died of pleurisy on 23 March 1938 at the age of 53. Pandit Karuppan had many published works as a poet and dramatist including: *Achara*

*Bhooshanam, Arayaprasasthi, Baalakalesam, Baalodyanam, Bhaasha
Bhaimeeparinayam, Bhanjithavimanam, Chanjenkutti, Chithralekha, Dheevera
TharuniyudeVilapam, Dhruvacharitham, EdwardVijayam, Jaathikkummi, Kairaleekout
hukam, KattileJyeshtan, Lalithopaharam, Lankamardanam, Mahasamadhi, Mangalam
ala, Panchavadi, SakunthalamVanchippattu, Sangeetha
Naishadham, Soudamini, SreeBudhan, SreeRamavarma, Sugathasooktham, Thirunalkk
ummi, Udyanavirunnu, Ulukopakhyanam, and Vallorkkavitha.*

His *Sakunthala*, *Baalodyanam* and *Kairaleekouthukam* were text books for school classes in Cochin State. *Bhaasha Bhaimēeparinayam* was Malayalam text book for the F.A.Examination of the Madras University.

VAGBHATANANDA(1885-1939)

Vagbhatanda was a great social reformer and philosopher of Kerala. He founded the Atma Vidya Sangham, a major force of social change in Kerala. KunhiRaman Gurukkal, as he was known in the early life, was born at Patyam village of Kannur district in a Ezhava family in 1885. He was educated in the traditional Gurukula system. After studying philosophy, logic and Hindu scriptures, he travelled extensively and propagated the teachings of universal non duality. He took active interests in the Brahmasamaj and founded a Sanskrit school at Calicut. As a great orator of the time, he was conferred the title Vagbhatananda by Sivananda Yogi of Alathur.

Vagbhatananda was an erudite scholar, reformer, organizer, journalist, writer, philosopher and nationalist. The orthodox Hindus found in him a rebel fighting against established religion and caste hierarchy. Vagbhatananda based his argument in the ancient wisdom of Hinduism not on its dogmatism. He composed an Advaita treatise 'Atma Vidya' which became the manifesto of the sangham. But, to him, Advaita was not a negation of material life for him. He said that the primary duty of an advaita follower is to fight against the caste system and the by products of the caste system such as evil customs, rituals and superstitions. He was against the conversion from one religion to another. He criticized the Aryasamaj for its policy of conversion to Hinduism.

As a great admirer of Ram Mohan Roy, Vagbhatananda rejected idol worship, propagated nignupasana, rejected all rituals and formalities. To him, idol worship is a mere superstition. He wrote several articles explaining the meaningless of idol worship. He rejected caste system. In his view caste system is never a part of Hindu religion. It is against the very basic philosophy of Hindu religion. He argued that the concept of *chaturvarnya* has nothing to do with the present day caste system. He was a humanist and a liberal and started a journal *Abhinava Keralam* in 1921.

Vagbhatananda was a great social reformer who advocated reforms among the untouchables. He was a champion of inter caste marriage and inter caste dining. He was a great nationalist. He supported the civil disobedience movement of Gandhiji. His journal *Atma Vidya Kahalam* stood with the nationalist cause. He also supported the constructive programme of Gandhiji. He favoured temple entry for the avarnas. He was also associated with the peasant movements in the country. In the words of E.M.S Namboodiripad, 'though he could not obtain a universal name or fame like Narayana guru, Vagbhatananda was on who had greatly contributed to the growth of society. He was even superior to Narayana Guru in his scholarship and eloquence. He initiated

pogrammes against casteism and played a significant role in the growth of society of North Malabar.

POYKAYIL YOHANNAN- Parathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha

Poykayil Yohannan, popularly known as Poykayil Appachan was a Dalit activist, a poet and a social reformer from the erstwhile princely state of Travancore. He was born on 17th February 1979 to Kanadan and Lechi of Paraiyar community at Eravipur, Pathanamthitta. He was born as a slave to a Syriayan Christian family of the name Sankaramangalam. At birth he was given the name Komaran and later renamed as Kumaran. Being a slave of a Christian family, Kumaran had to follow Christianity and have a Christian name and was called Yohannan or Yohannan. He became literate and versed with Bible and became a Christian preacher. He had lot of followers and they called him Poykayil Appachan or Kumara Gurudevan. By profession he was a Christian preacher. He was an ardent lover of books and used to read a lot to assimilate the knowledge from the. Due to this he became well versed with the principles of Christianity. Apart from reading the books on general topics, he also read the whole of the Bible to understand the religion of Christianity better.

After leaving the Shankaramangalam Christian family, Yohannan joined the Marthoma Church to liberate himself from the clutches of discrimination and untouchability. At that time, the members of the Marthoma Christian church considered to be reformists. After a while, he realized that the members of this reformist sect also considered Dalit Christians as inferior beings. This harsh realization made him to shift his loyalty to religious sect by the name Brethren Mission. In the new sect also he had to face the similar predicament. In the treatments received by him indifferent Christian communities, Poykayil Appachan concluded that the Indian Christian communities continued to treat the people based on their caste. According to him, this was against the basic tenets of the Christian religion.

In his life time, the members of Dalit communities practiced untouchability among themselves. The different Dalit communities like Paraiyas, Pulayas, Kuravas etc had practiced untouchability the same among themselves. Poykayil Appachan was deeply pained by this tendency amongst the members of the lower castes. He felt the necessity of coordinating different Dalit communities to fight for their common cause. In order to trace the root of this custom in the society, he started reading books on these topics. From books Yohannan realised that the members of Parayar, Pulayar and Kuravar communities shared a common lineage in the history of Kerala. Therefore he decided to bring the members of these communities on one platform by properly educating them about their lineage. To make this happen, he left the Shankaramangalam Christian family and started to meet the members of his community personally to generate this awareness in their minds.

With this purpose, Yohannan decided to leave the religion of Christianity and form a new organization for the liberation of the Dalit community members. With this conviction in his mind, he formed a new organization by the name **Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha (PRDS)** in 1909 which meant God's church of visible salvation. Thereafter he was referred to as Poyakayil Appachan or Kumara Gurudevan. After the formation of a neo reformist organization, Poykayil Appachan met people from different communities personally and educated them about the need for living in a dignified way. For this purpose he exhorted his followers to liberate themselves from the clutches of caste equation through the twin powers of education and enlightenment. Through this organization he advocated spiritual liberation, empower and consolidate Dalits. He envisaged the formation of a creed in which the slave castes would be free of discrimination. The organization was open to Christian and non Christian Dalits and thousands became its members. He stated that the Bible accounted only for Jewish history and hence Indian caste system could not be broken with it. Eraviperiyar was made as the headquarters of the Sabha. A number of schools and industrial training centres were started at different places in Thiruvitamkur. Separate buildings were also constructed at several centers for religious ceremonies and public functions. Yohannan was twice nominated in 1921 and 1931 to the Sree Moolam Praja Sabha, the legislative assembly of the Princely state of Thiruvitamkur. In the Assembly he made a historic presentation on the plight of the depressed classes in the state. He strongly argued for education and employment for the depressed classes in general. He requested the government to give scholarship for Dalit students. He pointed out the economic disparities existed in the contemporary society, especially between the Dalit Christians and Syrian Christians. He dwelled upon the measures he prescribed for their betterment. This included job reservations, allotments and fee concessions to uplift the lifestyles of the hapless Dalit families. He struggled throughout his life for the betterment of the Dalit Christians. Yohannan established several government aided schools for Dalit education. He died on 29th June 1939 at the age of 61.

MAKTHI THANGAL (1847-1912)

Socio religious reform movements reached its zenith in the last part of 19th century and it reached among the Muslims of Malabar also through Sanauulla Makthi Thangal, who was the leader of the Muslim society in Malabar. He is the pioneer among the Muslim reformers in Kerala. He was the advocate of western education among the backward community of Mappila. He was notable as the first Muslim scholar to know the significance of the progressed western culture and the necessity of the western education to realize the reformation of knowledge

He was born in 1847 as the son of Ahmed Thangal, follower of Valiyangode Umer khasi at Valiyangode, Malappuram. He acquired his primary

education in Arabic literature from his father and later admitted in various Darse (Masjid based college) at Valiyangdode, Ponnani and Maranchari. He was enrolled in Chavakkad Higher elementary school and possessed good command in Hindustani, Persian, English, Tamil and his mother tongue Malayalam. Besides imbibing a deep knowledge in Islam religion, he was blessed with comprehensive knowledge in Christianity and Hinduism. He was influenced by science, logic and philosophy and inclined to conquer more branches of western education. Thanks to his good command in English and Persian, he was appointed as the excise inspector in Malabar region and later he resigned this post to defend the Christian missionaries.

He dreamt about new Muslim society who will imbibe the advantages of western culture without getting rid of the valuable Islamic culture. Sayyid Sanauulla Makti Thangal is often referred as one of the personalities influenced the Moplah Riots along with Sayyid Alavi Thangal, Veliyankode Umar Khasi and Sayid Fazal Pookoya Thangal. He tried to purify Islam from all later accretions which run contrary to its original tenets and on the other he tried to uplift the community through modern secular education and also stressed the necessity of women education. He wanted to bring Muslim life in conformity with textual Islam rather than to regulate their life according to the standards of colonial modernity.

He commenced in society a new pattern of reformation, which not rejects the primitive culture, approach and concepts, but realizes the role of west education in the progress of backward community. He made herculean task to check the progress of Christian missionary in Malabar regions and made a counterattack on their attempt to tarnish the image of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. After realizing the precarious ignorance of the Mopila society (Muslim society) even in their mother tongue Malayalam, he initiated a massive project to aware people about role of education and empowerment. He opposed armed and non-armed struggle against the ruling power and hailed his hatred towards the inclination of Muslims to be martyred and campaigned for progress of society. He realized necessity of the women empowerment and adopted a new pattern, which was based on Islamic concept of gender discrimination and motivated the women horde to be scholar by pointing the role model in Ayisha, the wife of Muhammad.

He was later a full time social worker who stood for the upliftment of Muslim community. He began writing, speaking and propagating his views that were bold, poetic, reformist and directed to benefit the Muslim community. Thangal wrote in the newspapers that were in circulation at that time, those that were ready to publish his articles and also published books on matters relevant to the community in British India. His social activities were started with publication of pamphlets against the spreading of anti-Islamic ideas by certain Christian missionaries. The significant pamphlet he issued

in this sphere was 'Katora Kutaram' (ferocious axe) in 1884. It is against the allegations raised by Christian missionaries against Islam and the Prophet. It is against the allegations raised by Christian missionaries against Islam and the Prophet. His speeches and all what he wrote turned out to be a clarion call to many who towed his line of thought. Thangal is considered to be the first Muslim to write, publish books and launch a daily newsletter. In order to encounter the ambush of Christian missionaries against Muhammad, he collected a large fund from Muslims and published a series of publications, named as *Nabi Nanayam*.

Even though he was reformist, he never lost his lineage of orthodox Muslims and was the promoter of Islamic ideology. He motivated women empowerment, which is based on gender discrimination of Islamic line and was influenced by the primitive ways of lauding prophet. He narrated about Muhammad in his masterpiece, *Nabi Nanayam*, in which he answered to Christian missionary for their questions about Islam and prophet Muhamed. And he calls Muslims to return to the "Thouheed". And he tried to clear the misconceptions of the peoples about Islam and Prophet Muhammed, so he is considered as the pioneer of Kerala muslim renaissance and the 'Islahi movements of Kerala' (a part of the Muslim renaissance of the community in Kerala).

After some times, Makthi Thangal shifted his place of activities to Thiruvitamkur and from there he travelled throughout Kerala propagating his ideas. He established the 'Muhammadeeya Press' at Alappuzha mainly for printing his own pamphlets. He engaged in many polemical debates with Christian scholars all over Kerala. Dr. C.K. Kareem in his *Kerala Muslim History, Statistics and Directory Vol.1* (History of Kerala and of her Muslims) records that Thangal had to suffer a lot for his work. He quotes from Thangal's concise autobiography, *Makthi Manaklasham* that gives a graphic account of his travels. The fierce attacks came from the conservatives within his community and from the British. But Thangal was not one to be cowed down by all this. For nearly 30 years, Thangal is said to have travelled the length and breadth of the State spreading awareness about the need for education, women's empowerment, calling for a fight against superstition, conversion and non-Islamic beliefs. He engaged in many polemical debates with Christian scholars all over Kerala.

His field of activity was propaganda against Sufism. He published the work *La Maujudin* in 1909 to criticize Sufism and its ideas. Maktho Thangal fought against the matrilineal system that had been prevalent among the Muslims in North Malabar. He spoke at several places severely criticizing the system of Marumakkathayam and issued pamphlets. Once he was manhandled at Kannur, but he was rescued by the local Hindus. He tried to develop a community consciousness among the Muslims in Kerala. But at the same time, he severely criticized the

traditional conservative Mullas for violating the tenets of the religion for personal gains. He acknowledges the support of Hindus in his social reform activities in his autobiography *Makthi Manakelsam*. He strongly argued that only through education Muslims could be liberated. He worked for Muslim women education. He wrote about the necessity of development of the Malayalam language and through it Malayalee identity. He stated that the people of Kerala should have a sense of unity and oneness irrespective of different religious beliefs. What made Thangal unique was that he was the first reformist who studied the religious aspects of various religions before formulating his views. M.Gangadharan notes Makthi Thangal as a reformist who used the vast knowledge to find a way out for the Muslim community from the darkness. He understood the significance of language and insisted that it should not be a barrier for Islam.

He was the first Malabar Muslim to write a book in native language of Malayalam named *Kadora Kodaram* in year 1884. In 1885 he wrote another book named *Parpokari* and it was noted as initiative for the reformation work. Muslim *Janavum Vidyabyasavum* (Muslims and education) was one of his notable work promoting the educational reformation of society. E Moidu Moulavi, in his preface to the collected edition of Makthi Thangal's work (*Makthi Thangal Sampoorncra Krithikal*) published by Kerala Islamic Mission, Tirur states that Thangal must have written 40 books. Though he did not have the means, found no publishers, did all that on his own. Moidu Moulavi considers Thangal's work as a value addition to the ancient Malayalam literary style and an invaluable historical document. What makes these works more important is when one considers the time during which they were written. The language may not have the finesse but certainly did not lack the power. Some of Thangal's works like *Kadora Kudaram*, which was a resistance against the British supported religious conversions, *Muslingalum Vidyabhyasavum* that exhorted Muslims to embrace Malayalam and English education and *Naari Narchichari* on the need for women's education are all revolutionary, progressive works of a genius.

Failing health forced Thangal to settle down permanently in Kochi. He died on September 18, 1912. He had lot of followers and disciples and one among them was C.V Abdurahman Hydrose, editor of *Malabar Islam*. But after his death, he didn't get much care from the authorities even for his graveyard. Makthi Thangal was a real social reformer who tried his level best to uplift his community. His attempt to uplift the educational and social status of Muslims in Kerala was no different from the glories of Sir Syed in the North but the Kerala Muslim community took least care to acknowledge the great visionary's achievements.

VAKKOM ABDUL KHADAR MAULAVI (1873-1932)

Vakkom Abdul Khadar Maulavi was one of the great social reformers who championed for the cause of the Muslims in Kerala. Born and brought up in Southern Kerala, at Vakkom in Thrituvandapuram District, Maulavi became a scholar in Sanskrit, Hindi, Arabic, Tamil and Malayalam. He was the founder, printer and publisher of *Swadesabhimani* newspaper. The newspaper under its editor Ramakrishna Pillai raised a banner of revolt against the government. Maulavi also started an Islamic journal *The Muslim*. He also formed the Islam Dharma Paripalan Sangham. He also published an Arabic Malayalam Magazin Al Islam in 1906. He founded a printing press at Anchuthengu in 1904.

Maulavi was an important social reformer of the Muslims. He realized the deplorable conditions of the Muslims in Kerala and tried to eradicate the evil customs among them. To educate them, a number of schools were started at his initiative. The greatest contribution of Vakkom Maulavi was the starting of the newspaper Swadesabhimani. He was fortunate to get the service of no less a person than Ramakrishna Pillai as its editor. Under their leadership, Swadesabhimani fought against the corruption prevailed in the Travancore administration. As the editorials reveals severely criticized the Diwan Rajagopalahari, the wrath of the authorities fell on the editor who was arrested on a charge of sedition and was deported from the state, the press was confiscated. Thereafter Maulavi started *The Muslim*. In 1931 he founded the Islamic publishing House and a journal *Deepika*.

Vakkom Maulavi is remembered as a great social reformer, a staunch fighter against injustice, a great journalist and an uplifter of the community to which he belonged. The progress of the Muslim community of Kerala in the educational and social field is largely due to the pioneering work done by Vakkom Maulavi.

V.T BHATTATHIRIPAD (1896-1982)-Adukkalayil Ninum Aragathekku

Vellithuruthi Thazhathu Karutha Patteri Raman Bhattathiripad, popularly known as V T Bhattathiripad or simply V.T. was an Indian social critic, well-known dramatist and a prominent freedom fighter who was a key figure in removing casteism and conservatism that existed in the Namboothiri community

He was born in 1896 on the banks of river Nila in Mezhatthur, Trithala, Palakkad. He had received traditional education in Vedas and became a priest or Shanti at the Sastha temple at Koodallur. Later he left the job and joined at Edakkuni Nambootiri school as a student. There he started a magazine named 'Vidyarthi' or student.

VT was a member of Indian National Congress. He had attended the annual conference of the Indian National conference at Allahabad in 1921. When he returned to his native place, he was ostracised from Namboothiri community for travelling in ship which was considered anti-Namboothiri act. He was dismissed from school along with two other classmates for attending the Ahmedabad session of the Indian National Congress in February 1921 without taking the permission of the school authorities. VT writes that intense nationalist feeling had induced him to do this act of indiscipline; he had discussed the consequences of the deed with his two other classmates who had accompanied him to Ahmedabad. They were provided free education; the school was facing serious opposition from the conservatives because modern education was against their custom. . Afterwards he joined as a proof reader at Mangalodayam Press at Thrissur. It was from here onwards that he had fought against the evil customs of Namboothiri community.

At Thrissur, VT did not confine himself to his office work. He involved himself enthusiastically in social reform matters. His efforts were many sided. He started intervening in the reform of his community by writing articles on various issues that affected the community, such as marriage reform and the need of a family regulation. He also wrote articles defending the interests of the Namboothiris as *Jenny* against the tenancy movement. His articles clearly showed his deep awareness of the problems of his community and of the possible solutions.

V.T. was associated with 'Yogakshema Sabha', the pioneering organization which continuously worked for reform in Namboothiri community. The Sabha used its journals like 'Unni Namboothiri' and 'Yogakshemam' to propagate modern ideas among the Namboothiris. VT championed the cause of change in the Brahmin community through writings and various other activities. Apart from directly intervening in the reform discourse supporting the radical group, he began to participate in the deliberations of the Sabha and tried to instill enthusiasm among the activists through his vibrant speeches. VT relentlessly worked for modern education to Namboothiris, widow remarriage and modernization. The most suffered section among the Namboothiris was their women called 'antarjanams'. They had to spend their whole life inside the house. They were not allowed to be a part of social life. Young girls were given in marriage to older people which resulted in early widowhood.

Till about 1928 the reform movement had an exclusive male agenda and constitution. With entrance of V.T. and other radicals, the women issue also came into the forefront. They especially concentrated on marriage issues and education. VT and his friends conducted a 'Yachana Yathra' in 1931 from Thrissur to Kasagod on foot, in order to collect money for social activities especially for starting the Namboothiri

School at Thrissur. In 1935 he conducted the first widow remarriage in Namboothiri community in Kerala. His sister-in-law, a young girl was married to MRB. Again in 1935 VT conducted the first inter caste marriage also in Namboothiri community. His younger sister was married to Raghava Panikkar in 1940.

VT tried to spread his revolutionary ideas through his writings. In 1919, he founded Namboothiri Yuvajana Sangam. '*Adukkalayil Ninnum Arangathekku*' was a famous drama written by him about the empowerment of women. It was first performed at Edakkunni, Thrissur. His *Adukkalayilninnum Arangathekku* which he wrote in 1929 and staged in the next year is credited with the starting of progressive theatre movement in Kerala. It is one of the most revolutionary plays in Malayalam. It is a social drama which captured the attention of people during the renaissance period in Kerala. Afterwards he is known as the initiator of the progressive theatre movement in Kerala. It was used as an instrument for social change. The play was a heavy blow up on the degeneration of Brahmin ideology and its social structure. It could create the most fervent slogan of the period, the slogan for the transformation of 'Brahmins into human beings. The play was first staged at the annual conference of Yogakshema Sabha at Thrissur. The play had a length of six hours. It was then staged at several places and it made an uproar in the Kerala Namboothiri community against orthodox rigidity. The theme of the play revolves around two friends, Kunju and Madhavan and Kunju's sister Thethi. Thethi's marriage was arranged by her relatives to an old man without her consent. Kunju fought against the decision of the orthodox elders and finally succeeded in giving his sister in marriage to the English educated Madhavan his friend at a public meeting. Madhavan then tore out the ghosha or purdah of Thethi, his wife in public. This was a real revolution against the orthodox and abusive system existed in the Brahmin community. His other works like *Rajanirangam* also question the existing obnoxious system in the community. His autobiography, titled '*Kanneerum Kinavum*', won him the Kerala Sahitya Academy Award in 1972. VT passed away in 1982.-

CHAVARA ACHAN-Educational Institutions

Fr. Chavara was born to Mr. Kuriakose Chavara and Mrs. Mariam on February 10, 1805 at Kainakary, a village in Alappuzha, Kerala. His baptism took place at Chennamkary Church on the eighth day of his birth giving the name, Kuriakose. Mrs. Mariam, mother of Kuriakose excelled in religious devotion and was concerned to see that he grew up in the grace of God. She also imbibed her faith in the mind of him. Her earnest desire to dedicate her son to the Immaculate Mother was found at the shrine of Mary Matha at Vechoor.

During the severe crisis in his seminary life, the death of his parents and only brother, giving the household affairs in the hands of the brother-in-law he returned to the seminary. On 29th November 1829, he was ordained priest by Msgr. Maurelius Stabilini, the Vicar Apostolic of Verapoly and was appointed to the parishes of Pulinkunnu and Chennamkary.

The foundation stone of St. Joseph's Monastery, Mannanam, the Mother House of the CMI Congregation, was laid on 11th May, 1831. The Order was formally constituted on 8th December, 1855.

The arduous labors in his life made him physically weak. On January 3, 1871 he passed away at Coonammavu monastery, near Eranakulam, Kerala . A few years after on March 9, 1899 the mortal remains were brought to Mother House at Mannanam. Father Chavara, while he greatly valued the life of prayer proper to an ascetic, also wanted to serve in various spheres of Church activities. Fr. Chavara together with Sr. Alphonsa was beatified when the Holy Father, John Paul II, visited Kerala in 1986 February 8th at Kottayam. In 2014, on November 23rd Holy Father Pope Francis declared Fr. Chavara as a saint of the Holy Catholic Church.

Frequently looking through the past in the historical view of Kerala, the people were in the darkness of illiteracy and caste system. The state of people of that society has shown us the importance of a personality to take the leadership for the people towards the light of literacy and self respect. The innovative steps of reformation put forward by a person like Fr. Chavara has brought a tremendous development in the field of education and employment which sowed the seeds of respect, happiness and devotion in the minds of the downtrodden in the society.

Fr. Chavara has been involved in the reformation of education in the Kerala society from 19th century onwards. In the darkness of caste system, by bringing the concepts of equality among the people of Kerala, Fr. Chavara spoke through his actions about the achievements which can be made through the unity. It was his vision and farsightedness that enabled the Catholic community of Kerala reaches the enviable position in educational field that it has acquired today. As caste system prevailed during the time of Fr. Chavara, it was his responsibility to cleanse the minds of the people by giving them the need of educational empowerment through his contributions.

Establishment of Sanskrit School

On the 15th year of the commencement of the monastery at Mannanam, i.e., in the year 1846, he established a Sanskrit school. Sanskrit was made the medium of education here for the fear that English education might spread the Protestant ideology. This severe attitude of the administrators had the backing of the Synod of Diamper. The status that Sanskrit had among the people in the upper layer of the then society

might also have influenced him in adopting Sanskrit as the medium of education in this school. The success of the Sanskrit school made Fr. Chavara more enthusiastic. He began to focus on the downtrodden in the society. He realized that the lamentable condition of the backward and depressed class could not be changed merely by financial support.

The Mannanam and Arpookara schools are living examples of his attempts to revive the very humanity of these poor communities that was thrashed down by the unjust social system, through literacy and civilization. These schools were the silver stars that spread glitters in the inner soul of these downtrodden members of the society who were deprived admission to public schools.

An isolated stand from the material welfare of the fellow brethren will weaken any religious organization. Fr. Chavara wanted to overcome such an unpalatable situation. The priestly inmates and children from the neighborhood were studying here. A tutor belonging to the *Varyar* community was brought from Thrissur, to run this School. He was well versed both in Malayalam and Sanskrit. The success of the Sanskrit school made Fr. Chavara more enthusiastic. He began to focus on the downtrodden in the society. While the work on the Mannanam School began, a place on the Arpookara Thuruthumali hill was located to build a Chapel and school for the converts from the *Pulaya* caste. Fr. Chavara was the first Indian who not only dared to admit the untouchables to schools but also provided them with Sanskrit education which was forbidden to the lower castes, thereby challenging social bans based on caste, as early as the former part of the 19th century.

Establishment of Harijan School

Fr. Chavara decided to work more for the marginalized, especially for the Harijans of Kerala. He decided to begin his work for a school for the Harijans by bringing up funds for them. There were many people who were ready to share some money and it became a great help for him. Chavara also insisted the families to keep away a hand full of rice for the needy whenever they prepare food in their homes. In this way he made provision of lunch for the Harijan students in his school. Fr. Chavara was the one who came forward to find and bring together the Harijan students under the same roof of the school. The students were brought personally by Fr. Chavara by visiting the houses and work places in their localities. In this way many of the students were admitted to the school at Mannanam from different parts of the state. But as the Government started giving permission for certain private agencies to begin schools, as the time went on the schools only for Harijans began to reduce.

Parish-School Pairing

When Chavarayachan embarked on his social crusade the concept of universal education was not yet visualized. Entry to government schools was based on caste. Admission was reserved for the upper caste of society. It was in this social milieu that in 1864, Chavara worked out a plan of action to mould a society that would unite irrespective of such distinctions. He was then the Vicar General of the Syrian Catholic Church in Kerala. By decreeing that parish schools admit children from all religions and castes, the Catholic Church made its entry to the seashores, river banks, hill tracts and midlands of Kerala with schools bigger than their parent churches. These schools marked the beginning of reformatist activities that united people. Thus, Madhavan, Mathai, Mohammed and Chaathan went to the same school and started learning the same lesson from the same teacher. They became aware, then, that they had a lot in common and that they could work together. They also realized that a *Namboothiri* (upper caste), would not be reduced to ashes, if touched by a *Pulaya*.

The greatness of Chavara's 1864 decree assumes significance when one realizes that his services preceded those of Sree Narayana Guru by several decades. When Chavara made the decree in 1864, Brahmananda Sivayogi was just 12, Chattampi Swamikal, 11 and Sree Narayana Guru, 9 and Vagbhatananda was not born. Though government schools did function in Travancore and Kochi during the time, they were not open to the *avarnas*. After several tumultuous revolts in Travancore for education of *avarnas*, the education statute of 1895 was revamped. Chapter VII, article 69 of the statute was revised to the effect that no student should be denied entry to a school based on caste. The government order effecting these modifications was released on November 19, 1909.

Chavara Achan had a clear vision on education. He wrote: "As soon as children are able to recognize things, they should be sent to school. Besides, the parents should enquire about their studies and their friendship. Every Sunday, their learning should be checked." He entrusted the well to do members of the community and the parishes with the responsibility of providing educational facilities for poor students. He also found out viable means to maintain the schools established by him. In considering Chavara's contribution towards education, it is not the number of schools established by him that matters most. Rather it is the new thought process he injected into the consciousness of the society that education is inevitable for its all-round progress and development. Further, he made it obligatory to the parish churches and monasteries to provide the people with learning facilities, in spite of all sorts of inconveniences.

ARYA PALLAM-PARVATHI NEMINIMANGALAM

The storm of social reform which was started in the 19th century soon spread to all communities especially among the Namboodiri community. By 1930's many women

had begun to emerge in the public domain as active and able participants and the reform movements saw the emergence of personalities like Muthukulam Parvathi Amma, Arya Pallam, Parvathi Nenminimangalam, Devaki Narikkattiri and many writers, political figures etc.. Arya Pallam and Parvathi Neminimangalam were in the fore front of the newly emerged Namboothiri women or antaranam to find out a place in the public sphere.

Along with the revolutionary activities of 'Yogakshema Sabha, the antaranams also came out of their traditional veils or ghoshas and began to participate in social activities. In 1932 a Namboothiri women's organization was formed with the name Antaranana Samajam under the leadership of Arya Pallam and Parvathi Neminimangalam. The new organization worked as the female counterpart of the Yogakshema Sabha. The Antaranana Samajam was started at Vellinezhi and it had several local committees also. Both Arya Pallam and Parvathi Neminimangalam were active organizers of the Samajam. They took initiative to stage the play '*Marakkudakkullile Mahanakaram*' by M R Bhattathirippad.

The Antaranana Samajam established libraries and conducted many number of meetings. It stressed the need for women to change their attitude. Women should take a lead in smashing the old structures and build a new one. They took part in the national movement. Their significant contribution to public life was their active participation in the Paliyam Sathyagraha of 1947 December. Even after independence, the lower caste people were not permitted to walk through the Paliyam road, close to the Paliyam Kovilakam in Kochi. The Namboothiri women under the leadership of Arya Pallam actively participated in the Sathyagraha. This was the first time that the Antaranams of Kerala participated in a public struggle. The Sathyagraha was successful and the Paliyam road was opened for all irrespective of their castes.

Parvathi Nenminimangalam

Parvathi Nenminimangalam was one of the most important social reformers among the Namboothiri community who left her ghosha and came out of the orthodoxy of the community. She was born in Kollam Era 1086 at Nadavarambu near Irinjalakkuda as the daughter of Nallurillath Vishnu Namboothiri and Saraswathi Antharjanam. She acquired the education of just read and write. The waves of freedom struggle and reform movements made some changes in the mentalities of Parvathy also. She was married to Chettupuzha Neminimangalam Vasudevan Namboothiri at the age of 14 which changed her life. Her in-laws were having progressive mentalities which influenced her much to come forward and to work for her community. It helped her come out of orthodoxy. As per the decisions of the Yogakshema Sabha meeting held at Guruvayur in 1931, Antaranana Samajam was formed at Chettupuzha under the

leadership of Parvathy Nenminimangalam. Its first meeting was held at Nenminimangalam itself. This meeting decided to organize various progressive programmes.

Under the influence of Parvathy many Namboothiri women left their palm leave umbrellas which have to be with them whenever they were coming out of their Illam and many of them began to wear blouses and wear earrings and gold bangles. She presided over the Namboothiri Yuvajana Sangham conference held at Thaliparambu on 1931. Her action of doing public speech without ghosha created some reactions in the society. In this meeting he raised a question towards the Namboothiri youth “Who is ready to marry a widow”? Then there come a reply from the audience that “I am ready”. It was Mullamangalath Raman Bhattathirippad (MRB). This question and answer paved way for the first widow remarriage among the Namboothiris and this marriage was in between the widow Umadevi Antharjanam and MRB on KE 1110 Chingam 1st at the Rasikasadanam of V T Bhattathirippad. When debate on Namboothiri bill came in the Cochin Legislative Assembly in 1933, Parvathy Nenminimangalam was the women representative who was nominated to give response to the subject. She died on K.E 1122 at the age of 36.

Arya Pallam

Arya Pallam was another important social reformer among Namboothiri women. She was born on 1908 as the daughter of Alapparambil Madhavasseri Manakkal Parameswaran Namboothiri and Arya Antharjanam. From childhood onwards she was disturbed with the rituals and prohibitions existed in the community. She became aware of Yogakshema Sabha and national movement after her marriage with Pulamanthol Pallathu Manakkal Krishanan Namboothiri at the age of 13. Afterwards she could enter into the social reform activities. She was greatly influenced by the activities of Yogakshema Sabha and the drama *Adukkalayilninum Aranagathekku*. Along with parvathy Neminimagalam she also banished ghosha and worked with activities against ban on widow remarriage, intercaste marriage, ban on entering into temples etc..

When anti untouchability jathas and programmes were conducted under the leadership of K. Kelappan, under the leadership of Thottupurath Kunhunni Menon, Arya and her friends worked among the *Cherumis* (Cherumi women) to improve their condition. They inspired them to leave their *Kalla* and *Mala* (stone garlands) and to wear blouses. She organized people in Pilasseri, Koppam etc. against untouchability and ban on entry into temples and actively participated in the Guruvayur Sathyagraha. She inaugurated the annual meeting of Yuvajana movement at Thaliparambu in 1932. In association with the anti untouchability procession led by

Kelappan, there conducted an inter caste dining at Pallath which caused for imposing ban on Pallathu Mana by the orthodox Brahamins. But Arya or her husband were not bothered about all these and go ahead with their activities. She participated in the first widow remarriage. She was not ready to bow her head before injustice.

When socialist ideas spread throughout Kerala, Arya was become a follower of it and one of its main working centre was Pallam Mana in Kerala. She led a great role in the development of Mahila movement and under it banner gave employment training. Paliyam Sathyagraha was conducted when she was the president of Antharjana Samajam. A jadhha of women was organized towards the Paliyam Sathyaganha Panthal on 1948 March 3rd under the leadership of Arya Pallam and faced brutal police beating. Then also she inspired more women to participate in the struggle. She died on February 8th, 1988.

KALLUMALA SAMARAM

The rights enjoyed by the sections outside the caste system to wear ornaments were won after prolonged social struggles like the struggle by the lower caste women to cover the upper part of their body. The historical analysis of the traditional ornaments and jewellery of Kerala mostly revolved around the gold and precious stones used by the social elites, ignoring the ornaments of the marginalized communities of the land. Thus, the ornaments that one wear, reflects the social campaign for human rights along with the aesthetic history of the people. Behind the sparkle and luster of the ornaments used by Keralites lie some cold and unpleasant realities, reflecting the social customs and practices that prevailed in Kerala. The social revolutions and reformations that took place in Kerala during the past century and the uprising of the downtrodden and marginalized sections of society against caste discrimination also influenced the patterns of use of ornaments. Struggles took place against such kind of caste discrimination to wear even ornaments. One such struggle was the **Kallumala Samaram** that took place in 1915 at Kanjaveli, near Kollam, where the Pulaya community members fought the caste elites by breaking their chains to win the right to wear ornaments.

This struggle was led by the great reformer Ayyankali who always stood for the cause of the downtrodden sections of the society. He was making continuous agitations for the rights of the lower caste people especially the Pulayas. He persuaded the Pulaya women in South Travancore to wear upper garments and throw away the bead necklaces which they used for covering their breasts from time immemorial which was considered as a symbol of slavery. A public meeting of the Pulayas was convened at Perinad, Kollam under the leadership of Ayyankali in 1915. Thousands of Pulaya men and women came to attend the meeting and the women were ready to

throw away their traditional ornaments. The meeting was attacked by the caste elites and soon it developed into a rebellion. They considered it as attempt of the Pulayas to imitate the upper caste women. Hundreds of Pulaya women publicly threw away their bead necklaces in the meeting arranged at Quilon. At the request of Ayyankali the government provided police protection for the meeting held at Quilon. This was really a turning point in the history of struggle for the rights of the downtrodden sections in Kerala. Several such riots took place at different places in Central Travancore also.

P K VARIER AND THE REJUVENATION OF AYURVEDIC TRADITIONS IN KERALA

Padmasree Pannuyampilli Krishna Varier, commonly known as P.K. Varier is the managing trustee and chief physician of Kottakkal Arya Vaidyasala. His name is closely associated with the rejuvenation of Ayurvedic tradition in Kerala. Kottakkal Arya Vaidyasala was founded by Dr.P S Varier for the manufacture and sale of ayurvedic medicines which later became synonymous with Ayurvedic treatment in India. The Patasala established in 1917 has now become an Ayurveda College affiliated to Calicut University. Dr.K Varier is a senior nephew of late Dr. P S Varier. He became the head of the institution in 1954 and thereafter he has been relentlessly working for the rejuvenation of Ayurveda in general and for the multi-farious development of the Aryavaidyasala in particular. He is widely reckoned for his initiative to transform the traditional approaches in the practice of Ayurveda in tune with modern needs and times.

Dr.K Varier is an exponent of holistic medicine. While practicing and propagating Ayurveda as a scientific system of health care, he also acknowledges the validity of other systems of medicine and keeps himself up to date with advances in other fields. He is a visionary with a focus on research and development, expansion of new medicinal plants cultivation and continuation of the work on health care also to take Ayurveda to the status of principal health care system all over the world. He had been awarded with many honours and distinctions for his service. He had been awarded with 'Padmasree', Paulos M Grigorious Award, the Dhanwanthiri Award etc..

MEMORIALS

The constitutional agitation which began with the presentation of the Malayali and Ezhava Memorials in the last decade of 19th century had its genesis in the growing demand of the educated middle class for an increased share of jobs in public services. The agitationists did not think in terms of resorting to direct action for achieving their ends. Their methods were reminiscent of the technique of constitutional agitation resorted to by the moderates within the Indian National Congress in British India during this period. Since the days of Marthanda Varma, the Travancore followed

a policy of importing Brahmins from the neighboring Tamil and Kannada areas to appoint in the government services in its higher posts. Due to this the newly educated and academically highly qualified youth could not occupy a government job. This created resentment among the youth which found expression in a movement aimed at securing increased representation for educated natives in public services especially in the higher cadres.

Malayalai Memorial-G K Pillai, C V Raman Pillai

The Political struggle of the native state of Travancore was started in 1891 with the Malayalee Memorial. The initiator of the Malayalee Memorial was G.P Pillai. He had earlier escaped from Travancore and participated with the activities of the Congress at Madras. Though Travancore had many western educated Malayalees during the second half of the 19th century, Tamil Brahmins were regularly recruited to the government service.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the high official posts in the Travancore government were within the hands of Tamil Brahmins. This enraged the educated Malayalees. They began to criticize the government of importing Tamil Brahmins. They began to criticize the government for importing Tamil Brahmins to the higher posts in Travancore. It was in this background that the Malayalee Memorial raised the slogan “Travancore is for Travancoreans”.

The Malayalee Memorial collected the signatures of more than ten thousand Travancoreans including all castes. The memorial requested the Govt. to provide jobs to the educated Malayalees. Though the Malayalee Memorial by the people belonging to different castes, the major portion of the total signature were of the Nairs. The Malayalee Memorial had gained much publicity not only in Kerala but outside also. The Malayalee Memorial could not make any achievements in the immediate future. But it helped for the growth of the political consciousness among the people of Travancore. It also paved way for the future memorials.

G.P Pillai (1863-1902)

Govindan Parameswaran Pillai, commonly known as Barister G P Pillai was a staunch nationalist and journalist was the spirit behind the Malayalee Memorial. He was the only Keralite mentioned in the autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi. He was born in Pallippuram, Thiruvananthapuram, India, in an aristocratic Nair family. After gaining a B.A. at the Madras Presidency College he was admitted to the Middle Temple in London in 1898, where he was called to the bar in 1902. He later established the first English language newspaper in South India, the *Madras Standard*. It was he who drafted the Malayalee Memorial, which is otherwise called as Thiruvitamkur Memorial. He was an active nationalist leader and his centre of

nationalist activities was Madras. As a journalist G P Pillai had written several articles against British rule in India and the autocratic rule of the Diwan in Thiruvitamkur.

C V Raman Pillai (1958-1922)

Cannankara Velayudhan Raman Pillai was one of the great Indian novelists and playwrights and pioneering playwright and journalist in Malayalam. He is often called and known as C.V. He was another significant organizer of the Malayalee Memorial. He was born in Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), capital city of the erstwhile native State of Travancore, on 8 November 1858 to Neelakanta Pillai, a Sanskrit scholar and Parvathy Pillai, who were both from middle-class families and were employees at the Palace of the Maharaja of Travancore. His novels *Marthanda Varma* and *Dharmaraja* are two classic novels in Malayalam. His *Ramaraja Bahadur* is also famous novel. After taking his graduation from Madras University, C V, joined in the Government service at Thiruvitamkur as the superintendent of Government Press. But he resigned from the post in 1913. He tried to protect the interests of the society in general even at the time of working in government. He worked along with G P Pillai, K P Sankara Menon and K P Padmanabha Menon in the campaign and submission of the Malayalee Memorial.

Ezhava Memorial-Dr. Palpu

In spite of the association of a few Christian leaders with the Malayalee Memorial agitation and referred the plight of the Ezhavas in the petition, it cannot be denied that it was pre-eminently a Nair sponsored affair. If the government response was in favour of the petitioners, the appointment of qualified natives in the government jobs will be Nairs as there were educated youths among the Nairs. Consequently, the Ezhavas will deny entry into government jobs and even admission to public schools on ground of caste. They, by realizing this fact, decided to take their own action to gain their rights. The Travancore Ezhava Sabha which was founded by Dr, Palpu, the first Medical graduate from the community who was denied appointment in Travancore, sought employment in the Mysore Medical Service. As part of the agitation, a mass memorial signed by 13,176 members of the Ezhava community was presented to the Maharaja on September 3, 1896. This document was known as Ezhava Memorial. It demanded that the Ezhavas should be made beneficiaries of all those rights and privileges which were being enjoyed by their brethren who had become converts to Christianity.

The previous governments made repeated proclamations that all classes of people without distinction of caste or creed may have access to public institutions. The Memorial demanded that public schools should be thrown open to Ezhavas also as per the declarations made by the previous rulers. It also demanded that the Ezhavas should be given jobs in Government service so that the educated individuals among them need

not have to seek official career outside Travancore. The government's reply to the Ezhava memorial was equally frustrating and reactionary in tone and content. Though it was generally agreed that new schools would be open to the Ezhavas wherever possible, the Government expressed the fear that any drastic change in the existing social order would endanger communal harmony and obstruct social progress. Eventhough the government didn't give approval to the idea of having common schools for all classes, the Government expressed the view that separate caste schools could be established. In regard to the appointments in public service, it was mentioned that the Government had already "made departure in their favour" which should satisfy their demand for the time being. The Ezhavas who were disappointed by the Government's negative attitude took advantage of the visit of Lord Curzon to Travancore in 1900 to present another Memorial to the Viceroy listing their manifold grievances and requesting him to initiate steps for their redress. This is known as the Ezhava Memorial of 1900. Though Viceroy made no secret of his personal sympathy for the demands of the Memorialists in a speech he delivered at the State Banquet that he could not interfere in minor details of local administration as Travancore was a native state under protection..." Thus Ezhava Memorial failed to produce any favorable result to the Ezhavas. Even though it was a failure it marked the beginning of the long drawn out struggle to be waged by the backward classes within the Hindu community in Travancore for securing social equality and justice.

O. CHANDU MENON AND K P PADMANABHA MENON-MARUMAKKATHAYAM REPORT

O Chandu Menon and *Indulekha*

Marumakkathayam or matrilineal system of inheritance was a system of matrilineal inheritance prevalent in Kerala. In this system descent and the inheritance of property were traced through females. The word Marumakkathayam literally means inheritance by sisters' children, as opposed to sons and daughters. 'Marumakkal', in the Malayalam language, means nephews and nieces. The joint family under the matrilineal system is known as Tharavad and formed the nucleus of the society in Malabar. The customary law of inheritance was codified by the Madras Marumakkathayam Act 1932, Madras Act No. 22 of 1933, published in the *Fort St. George Gazette* on 1 August 1933.

Taravad was the centre of this system where brothers, sisters and sister's children lived together. Father was treated as a guest. Father didn't stay with children. The marriage system was called *Sambandham* and this is a temporary agreement in between the karanavar of the Taravad and the groom. Taravad Karanavar, the senior male member was the owner proprietor of the Taravad property. Whenever the Karanavar or the husband was not liked to continue the marriage alliance, they can be relieved from it. Women of the Taravad's should ready to accept another person as her

husband. Age barrier was not applicable to such sambandhams. Sometimes, small girls were married to older persons. The system of Marumakkathayam was mainly prevailed among the Nair community.

The impact of English education was very much affected the very existence of Marumakkathayam system. The English educated Nair youth began to question the Marumakkathayam system in the 19th century. The social awakening of the Nairs in Kerala was manifested in their struggle against the Marumakkathayam system. The educated young girls began to question the social relevance and validity of *Sambandham*. These events are clearly depicted in the novel *Indulekha* written by O Chanthu Menon.

Chandu Menon was born on 9 January 1847 in Oyyarath house near Naduvannur in the present day Kozhikode District as the son of Edappady Chandu Nair and Kodungallor Chittezath Par vathi Amma. His family moved to Thalassery when he was an infant. Chandu Menon got his first lessons from Koran Gurukkal, one of his neighbors. He learnt Sanskrit poetry, drama and grammar from Pandit Kunjanbu Nambiar. About the same time, he received English lessons from a local school and later from K. Kunjan Menon. He had higher school education in the Basel Mission Parsi Memorial School in Thalassery. While studying there he is reported to have qualified for the uncovenanted Civil Service by securing a high rank in the test for that Service. In 1864 his mother died when he was in the matriculation class and he was forced to abandon studies. Chandu Menon got married to Lakshmikutty Amma in 1872. The couple had six children.

Chandu Menon started his career as a clerk in the government service. William Logan, author of the *Malabar Manual* appointed him as a clerk at Sub-Collector's office. After working in various offices in Malabar, he slowly rose to the position of a *Munsiff*, and in 1892 became the sub-judge of Calicut. Chandu Menon reportedly assisted Willam Logan in the preparation of Malabar Manual.

Chandu Menon was also a social reformer. He was a member of the committee constituted to inquire on Marumakkathayam and report on the Malabar Marriages Bill. His observations on matrimony among Nairs and polyandrous matrimony of Nair women that prevailed during the time are of historical importance. He was given the title of Rao Bahadur in 1898 for excellent service. Chandu Menon died on 7 September 1899 at his *Oyyarath* residence in Thalassery due to cardiac failure. His novel *Indulakha* depicts the social custom that existed in the Malabar region in those days and the attempt of the educated youths to reform the society.

The first socially relevant novel was *Indulekha* by O.Chandu Menon which was written in 1889. *Indulekha* is a social novel, not realistic of the social situation of

the period from which it was written. The theme, characters, events and social situation related to reality of Malayali life and thus the first realistic novel is *Indulekha*. It is worth mentioning that W. Dumuguerge, the Collector of Malabar, translated *Indulekha* from Malayalam to English. It was an honour for a native from an Englishman. Menon says in the preface that he attempted the writing of a novel due to the affectionate nagging of his friends and that he started writing the novel in June and completed it in August. He reminisces that he was very much attracted to English novels and had the habit of telling these stories to his friends. The time factor is relevant here and a social novel of this kind did not intend a complete transformation of society but appropriation of certain reforms. Though Indian National Congress was formed by then, political ideas or literature never implied a challenge to British dominance or colonial rule. Community, religion and administration should be free from superstitions and outdated customs and unscrupulous attitude of higher castes were targeted, For this, the writers stressed the need of modern education. Traditional values had to go hand in hand with modernity.

Indulekha, the central character of the novel is product of Western education and she shows individualism in every stage. She made fit for life through her English education and her financial security which she could avail within the family setup, that too due to her Karanavar. Only a self reliant individual could think about freedom and this aspect was reflected very much in the life of Indulekha. Indulekha was not only conscious about her won freedom but she was aware of all women of Kerala. She was very much conscious about freedom of women on all occasions. Through the novel, Indulekha, the heroine highlighted the ideals of educated women and the role of such women towards social progress by taking examples from various other advanced countries of the work. Education equipped her to decide her own personal matters and she overcome all the hurdles in life because of this education. She openly said the age old Sury Namboothiri, who came to engage in *sambandham* with her that she is not willing to marry him. Through this she openly challenged the long existing social custom among the Nairs.

In *Indulekha* , Chandu Menon visualized a woman not as an instrument of pleasure for a wealthy man but as a person who has her own rights and individualism to decide her way of life. Whenever there was an attack towards individual freedom she defended herself and the media. Indulekha was not a reality of the period but it was the vision of Chandu Menon about how a modern women should be.

K.P Padmanabha Menon

The life of a historian seems to be short in public memory. P. Sankunni Menon (also spelt Shangoonny Menon) and his son K. P. Padmanabha Menon are two home-grown historians that history seems to have forgotten. He was born in October 1857 to Disan

Peshkar Sankunni Menon and Parvathy Amma. Through his work *Kerala Charithram* (History of Kerala), Padmanabha Menon expressed his talents. Padmanabha Menon was an eminent Advocate, Judge and Historian. He also wrote *Kochi Rajya Charithram* (History of Cochin). He was also the Advocate General of Madras Government and member of Marumakkathayam Committee.

He attained considerable proficiency in English and Malayalam, history and law. He served as assistant to Sir H.H. Sheppard, who was then the Advocate General to the Government of Madras and who afterwards became a judge of the Madras High Court. He decided to move to Cochin and worked at the Appeal Court, before he shifted for a while to Travancore where he had good legal practice. Padmanabha Menon was nominated to various committees like the Marumakkathayam Committee appointed to consider changes in the law and custom of the Nair community. Scholars thought that his *History of Cochin* (*Kochi Rajya Charithram*) was a work of absorbing interest, immense educative value and unique in the annals of Malayalam literature. His *History of Kerala* in four volumes with 2,500 pages was completed in 1910. Padmanabha Menon used a portion of the Aluva Palace for this work. The work was published in 1924, five years after his death. The delay in the publication of *History of Kerala* was entirely due to Padmanabha Menon's 'pious solicitude for historical accuracy'. He is said to have investigated matters over which there could possibly be any doubt or dispute so that he could present a work of unassailable veracity. His sedentary habits, mental strain and absence of physical exercise affected his health leading to his death on 1 May 1919.

He is generally considered as the first Kerala historian who separated legends from history and gave importance to historical evidences. He contributed lot to Marumakkathayam Committee Report. In this he made a detailed historical analysis of the system and the need for its reform. The Report recommended that Sambandham should be treated as legal marriage. Polyandry and polygamy were to be made illegal. Mother and her children should live with her husband and their father. Legal protection and encouragement should be provided for monogamous marriage. Accordingly the First Nair Act was passed by the Thiruvitamkur government which inflicted a great blow to the existing Marumakkathayam system. K.P. Padmanabha Menon had a great role in the preparation of the bill.

MAUMAKKATHAYAM

One of the peculiar systems in Kerala was Marumakkathayam or the matrilineal law of inheritance. Although mainly among the Nairs, a large number of Ezhavas, a few Namboothiris of Payyannur and a few Muslim families in Mayyanad and Paravur areas in South Kerala also followed matriliney. According to Marumakkathayam a man's

legal heirs were his sister's children. The paternal property was never given to the children and wife. The State laws did not recognise the husband or father the guardian of wife and children.

As a result of the advent of the Europeans in Kerala the growth of trade and commerce was hastened. The emergence of cash economy and socio-economic changes considerably undermined the importance of Nair 'Taravads'. The first moving changes affected the existence of the Nair taravads and the marriage system among the Nairs in Kerala. The benefit of the English education was taken more by the Nairs than any other community in Kerala except that of the Christians.

New means for independent income for the junior members of the family and new ideological and cultural perspective acquired by the educated middle class affected the solidarity of the taravad. The Nairs who were living in cities and towns started opposing the existing value system in marriage arrangement.

The movement against Marumakkathayam began first in Malabar, which was directly ruled by the British. A memorandum was submitted to the Madras Government in 1896 requesting legislation of *Sambandham* marriage. The first movement in this regard was the Malabar Marriage Association founded in 1879. This association drafted and presented a Bill to the Government seeking legal sanction of Nair marriages. It was also for providing a unified code of law governing succession to property and other matters. Because of the Governments' indifference this bill could not create any impact.

Again the issue was brought to the notice of the Government in 1890. Sir. C. Sankaran Nair introduced a Bill in Madras Legislative council on 24th March 1890. The Nair objective of this Bill were-

1. To legalize Nair marriage practices by registering Sambandham with Government.
2. To make bigamy a punishable offence.
3. To provide legal provision for the dissolution of marriages, divorce and restitution of conjugal rights.

The Madras Government set up a commission to investigate all aspects of the Bill. The investigation revealed that there was considerable amount of opposition from various sections. So the bill was passed in a diluted form. The Nambutiri Nair Sambandham was brought into the purview of law in Madras later by the Madras Marumakkathayam Act of 1933. The defect was that the partition of taravad was not incorporated in the Act. According to this Act the Taravad property of the Joint family was to be divided whether the Karanavar agreed to it or not. And individual shares had to be allotted to each and every member of the family. This was the last blow to the Marumakkathayam system in Kerala. It gave legal validity to 'Makkathayam' System.

The changes made in the marriage system in Malabar inspired the popular demand in Travancore for changed in the marriage system existed there. The first Nair Act was passed in Travancore in 1912. The Act paved the way for the decline of the Marumakkathayam system in Travancore. This Act started that the half of the property of the father should be given to his sons and the other half to the nephews. The Nair reform leaders raised their voice for more freedom. Accordingly, another Nair Act was passed in Travancore in 1925. This nullified the claim of the Nephews to the property of their uncle and made provisions for individuals sharing of the property among the sons. The Nair Act of 1925 prohibited polygamy also.

The Nairs of Kochi also undertook reformist struggles. It resulted in the passage of the Kochi Nair Regulation Act of 1920. It cut short the rights of Karanavar in the Taravad property. This Act entrusted the responsibility of protecting the wife and children upon her husband. Polygamy was also made illegal by this Act. The Cochin Marumakkathayam Law of 1938 provided for partition of taravad by individuals. The wife and children of a husband or a father became the legal heirs of his property. The Act of 1938 put completely an end to the Marumakkathayam system in Kochi.

Separate new Acts were passed for those communities who had been following the Marumakkathayam system. The Mappila Marumakkathayam Act made the Malabar Muslims to follow Makkathayam. Similar effects were made by the Ezhava Act, Vellala Act, Namboodiri Act etc. to the respective communities. The Hindu Succession Act of 1956 passed and implemented during the post-independence era provided a common law of inheritance to all Hindus, a common succession system and prohibited polygamy among all communities.

MODULE III**EARLY POLITICAL AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN KERALA**

- **Early Leaders of Indian National Congress from Kerala**
- **Political conferences-Ottappalam,Manjeri,Palakkad and Vadakara**
- **Khilafat-Malabar Rebellion**
- **Vaikkom Sathyagraha**
- **Non Co-Operation Movement-Salt Sathyagraha**
- **Guruvayur Sathyagraha**
- **Temple Entry Proclamation**
- **Quit India Movement-Keezhariyur Bomb Case**

EARLY LEADERS OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS FROM KERALA

The last decades of the 19th century saw the emergence of nationalism in India. The Indian National Congress was established in 1885 and it soon became the spear-head of the Indian Nationalist Movement. These developments did not go unnoticed in Kerala. Malabar was the nerve centre of national movement in Kerala. People in Malabar were very much watchful of and influenced by the political developments outside. The growth of Indian National Congress and its political activities were represented in Malabar by the educated middle classes. The activities of these educated middle classes under the banner of the Indian National Congress united the people of Malabar against the British rule. The freedom struggle in Malabar was more intense than in Travancore and Cochin because colonialism was deeply rooted in Malabar. The people fell victim to both feudal oppression and colonial exploitation. The people who were suffering from the hands of British authorities and landlords participated in the national movement. Those who had gone out from Malabar brought home the message of nationalism and political awareness among the people. When organized struggle for Indian Independence was launched by the Indian National Congress, under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, several patriotic young men all over the country were attracted to it. In Kerala too, many educated young men came to the scene forsaking their comforts and jobs for fighting the cause of motherland. The most important among such personalities were K Madhavan Nair, K P Kesavamenon, Geroje Joseph, K Kelappan, A V Kuttimalu Amma, Muhammed Abdurahiman Sahib etc..

K. Madhavan Nair

K. Madhavan Nair was the most prominent of such early freedom fighters of Kerala. He was one of the founders of Mathrubhumi and the first K P CC President. He was born in an ordinary family of Manjeri, in the Ernad Thaluk in South Malabar in December 2nd, 1882. He took his degree from Madras University and taught for some time in M.G.M. High School, Thiruvalla in the erstwhile Travancore State.

In 1909, Madhavan Nair took his law degree from Trivandrum Law College and started practice in Manjeri. He started his career as an advocate under Lawyer Anandan Nair. Within two years he could start independent practice. In 1911 April, he married Karumathin Kakkuzhi Kalyani Amma. His freedom mind and fearless personality created lot of problems to him. Due to this he had to engage in disputes with many of his colleagues. The 18th Congress Session was held at Ahammedabad when he was studying for F.A. He was greatly impressed with the speeches of Surendranath Banerjee and Dadabha Naoroji. The wordings of Dadabhai like “the triumph of liberty are not won in a day” inspired him lot.

It was due a rift with Munsiff Venkateswar Ayyar and due to many other personal reasons that he shifted his residence and practice to Calicut in 1915. This made great changes in his life. He had close connections with K P Kesava Menon, C Krishnan, Lawyer C Achuthan and Manjeri Ramayyan which greatly influenced his later career. C.Krishnan stood mostly for community oriented issues and reforming of his community rather than politics. Even though Madhavan Nair could not follow his political attitudes, he was ready to cooperate with his anti-untouchability campaign and other social reform attempts. One of the most important examples of this was the Thali incident. In those days the downtrodden communities were not allowed to walk through the roads attached with Thali temple in Calicut. This road was in the earlier period was under the Zamoirns of Calicut. But the administration of Zamorins Kovilakam was transformed to British Govt. this road was also under the rule of British Government. When the District Collector, Evan was gone for leave for two months, the rule was under the hands of Mr. A J Thoran IAS. With the pressure of some orthodox Hindus he gave permission to hangs no entry boards to untouchables in the approached roads of Thali temepe in the two entries on November 1st, 1917. While hearing this, C Krishnan and Manjeri Ramayyar, along with K Madhavan Nair and K P KesaMenon decided to travel through the road and they started the jouney in the governance cart of C Krishnan. Eventhough Madhavan Nair, Ramayyar and Kesavamenon had no objection to travel through the road, C Krishnan was a lower caste and so he may be checked by the orthodox. By seeing this that for the protection of Krishnan that others joined with him. They succeeded in their attempt without any objection and they not only travelled through the road, but also destroyed the boards. By seeing this action, those who gathered in the two sides of the roads clapped and they promoted them to do this. Thus ended the *theendal* dispute of the area.

Manjeri Ramayyar was a close companion of Home Rule Movement of Mrs. Annie Besant and Madhavan Nair was also, in the early period of his political career

was closely associated with the Home Rule league and Madhavan Nair became an active Congress worker. But in the early phase, he was behind K P Kesava Menon and others and not in the forefront. He was not in front of the first four Political Conferences. The fifth Kerala Political Conference held at Manjeri with Nilambur Manavedan Thirumulpad as the president of the Organising Committee. A K Pillai in his *Congreesum Keralavum* mentioned this conference as the transformation phase of Kerala politics. Madhavan Nair was in the forefront of the conference along with K P Kesava Menon and Manjeri Ramayyar. Lot of local people especially local Mappilas participated in the conference. It was due to the initiative taken by Madhavan Nair that the local poor populace in the conference could be participated along with the Upper class lords of the area. This makes this conference more particular than the formal one. In the conference about one thousand and three hundred delegates were there. The attitude of Annie Besant was strongly criticized by Madhavan Nair and against her wishes the resolution of non cooperation movements was passed. The Manjeri political conference was the last District political conference held in Malabar and the next one was conducted at Ottappalam in 1921, but it was the first Kerala State Conference held after the formation of Kerala State Congress Committee.

It was the 1920 Nagpur conference of Indian National Congress that recognized Kerala as a separate linguistic state including Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. Kesava Menon, T R Krishnaswamy Ayyar, Moidu Moulavi, Madhavan Nair, U Gopala Menon, P K Achan, A K Pillai and such leaders were participated as delegates in the conference. The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee was formed as the decision of the Nagpur congress and K Madhavan Nair was selected as its first Secretary. Madhavan Nair left his profession as a Lawyer and became a full time Congress activist in the public meeting held at Calicut beach in 15th January 1921. As per the new constitution the congress Committee was held at Calicut and selected Madhavan Nair the first secretary and U Gopala Menon as the Joint Secretary. Congress committees were formed in every nook and corner of Malabar and spread the messages and activities of Congress through meetings and thus spread Congress activities in the villages.

Afterwards he became an active worker of national movement and congress in Malabar. He was one of the four persons in Malabar to court imprisonment during Non-Cooperation Movement. He actively participated in the Non cooperation Movement. He paid lot of effort to avoid a Rebellion in Malabar in 1921, but in vein. Tottenham has reported that the Mappilas of Malabar in those days said that Madhavan Nair and N P Narayana Menon had to be killed first. The Congress leaders like K Madhavan Nair were looked with suspicious eyes by Collector Mr. Thomas and he passed a prohibition order on February 5th 1921 towards both Madhavan Nair and U Gopala Menon. They were suspicious of having giving inspiration to poor populace of Malabar against the British Government. But Madhavan Nair rejected this version of British Govt. that the Mappilas of Malabar were so arrogant and he said that six months after the starting of Non co operation Movement, there happened no single instance of

violence and they were always inspiring the people to consider both Hindus and Muslims as brothers. Almost all the speeches of even the Moulavis were of peaceful struggle and not for violence. But the British arrested Yakub Hassan, Madhavan Nair, Gopala Menon and Moideen Koya. In the absence of Madhavan Nair K P Kesava Menon became the secretary of KPCC. After his release from jail he was engaged in providing relief to the people those who were come out of the rebellious areas of Southern Malabar. He organised relief work in Calicut for the refugees after the Moplah rebellion in 1921.

He was selected as the first president of KPCC in 1925. He participated in all agitations including the Civil Disobedience Movement, boycott of foreign cloth, prohibition and Simon Commission Boycott. He took active interest in Vaikom and Guruvayur Sathyagraha and served as Director of Guruvayur Temple Entry Referendum besides serving for a term as a member of Madras Assembly. Along with his close associates, Madhavan Nair founded the 'Mathrubhumi' newspaper and was its first managing director. Gandhiji had often praised his earnestness, frankness, simplicity, public spirit and integrity. Madhavan Nair expired on September 28, 1933. After the starting of Mathrubhumi he wrote columns and articles on Malabar Rebellion and its aftereffects in it. His book *Malaar Kalapam* was published by his wife Kalyanikuttyamma after his death which gives details of the Rebellion and the atrocities committed by the British authorities in Malabar after the Rebellion.

K.P. KESAVA MENON

Grandson of Raja of Palghat, K.P. Kesava Menon was born in Tharoor village of Palghat in 1886, September 1st. His father was Naduviledath Bheeman Achan of Palakkad Swaroopam and mother was Meenakshi Nethyar. He received primary education from Throor School, Alathur Board Schools and higher education from Present Guruvayurappan College, Calicut. He took B.A. degree from Madras University and Bar-at-law from Middle Temple. It was in this time he was attracted to national movement. After getting inspiration from Gokhale he cut off his *kuduma* (hair style-hair tying) and began to practice what he believe in his personal life also.

He returned to homeland after getting degree from London in 1915 and began to practice as a lawyer at Calicut. After setting up practice in Calicut, he joined the Indian National Congress in 1915 and served as the Secretary of the Malabar branch of the Home Rule League. He was a member of the Home Rule League Deputation under the leadership of Annie Besant which proceeded to London to present a memorandum to the Secretary of State in 1917.

He gave up practice to join the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1921. He became the Secretary of K.P.C.C. when Madhavan Nair and U Gopala Menon were behind the bars and did active relief work during Moplah rebellion. In 1923, he became the Founder-Editor of the 'Mathrubhumi'. He led the famous Vaikom Sathyagraha in 1924 and was imprisoned for six months in Trivandrum Central Jail. Due to financial difficulties as a result of full-time political activities, he went to

Malaya in 1927 to set up practice there. While in Malaya, he worked for the amelioration of the conditions of estate laborers of Indian origin.

When Rash Behari Bose organised the Indian Independence League in 1942, Kesava Menon became a member of its action committee. He was very active in INA, but when Subhas Chandra Bose assumed the leadership of the Indian Independence League and INA and formed 'Azad Hind Government', Kesava Menon parted ways from INA due to difference of opinion with Subhas. Kesava Menon resisted the Japanese attempt to exploit the Indian freedom fighters in Malaya for their own benefit. He was arrested by the Japanese at Singapore, confined to solitary imprisonment and released after the Second World War. In October 1946, he returned to India and resumed the editorship of the 'Mathrubhumi'. Soon afterwards, he was appointed Indian High Commissioner in Ceylon, but he resigned the post due to difference of opinion

He worked for the formation of unified Kerala State in his capacity as president of the Aykya Kerala Committee. Author of several books in Malayalam, Kesava Menon returned the Sahitya Academy Award. He was the first Executive president of Kerala Sahitya Academy and was honoured by the President of India with the 'Padma Vibhushan'. He was considered and respected by all as the 'Grand Old Man' of Kerala. Till his death on November 9, 1978 Kesava Menon served as the Chief Editor of the 'Mathrubhumi'. He wrote lot of books which includes he famous autobiography *Kazhinjakalam* which is translated into English recently . It got Kendra Sahithya Accademy Award. His work *Bilathivishesham* gives information of his educational life at England. His work *Rashtrapithavu* won Kerala Sahithya Accademy Award. He wrote the biography of Jawaharlal Nehru. His works *Gopalakrishana Gokhale*, *LalalpathRai*, *Lokamanya Thilakan*, *Alisahodaranmar*(Ali brothers) and *Abraham Lincon* are also famous. His other works are *Navabharbharathaseilpikal*, *Samakaleenaraya Chila Keraleeyar*, *Bandhanathilninnu*, *Bhootavum Bhaviyum*, *Jeevithachinthakal*, *Sayahnachinthakal*, *Yesudevan* etc.. He also wrote two collection of stories *Danabhumi* and *Asthamayam*. His *Prabhathadeepam* (children's collection) drama *Mahathma* is also famous. His writings are very simple which are readable even to the common people. Like K Madhavan Nair he also practiced what he said in his life. But the most important criticism he faced was that till death he was not ready to leave his elitist Hindu mentality.

GEORGE JOSEPH (5 June 1887 – 5 March 1938)

George Joseph was one of the earliest Congressmen from the Christian Community in India. By profession he was a lawyer. Born in a Syrian Christian family of Chengannur in erstwhile Travancore in 1887, George Joseph graduated from Madras University and then took his M.A. and Bar-at-law from England. George studied at the Madras Christian College and did M.A. in Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh before doing law at the Middle Temple, London in 1908. During his time in London he came into contact with many prominent Indian freedom fighters there.

Having completed his studies, he returned to India in January 1909. He set up practice as a lawyer in Madras and later in Madurai.

Joining the Home Rule League, he soon became one of its leaders. In 1917 at the age of 29, Joseph was invited by Annie Besant to go to England along with her, Syed Hussain and BV Narasimhan to talk about Home Rule there. The British however foiled this bid, arresting them when the ship Besant had chartered reached Gibraltar, Subsequently deporting them back to India. When P. Varadarajulu Naidu was arrested for making a speech at the Victoria Edward Hall, George Joseph assisted C. Rajagopalachari who appeared for Naidu in the case. Joseph was the leader of the Rowlatt Sathyagraha in Madurai, organising meetings, fasts and hartals during the sathyagraha and during the Non Cooperation Movement he relinquished his lucrative legal practice and joined the movement.

He took over the editorship of the *Independent* daily of Allahabad started by Motilal Nehru. For his sharp criticism of the British Government, in the columns of *The Independent*, George Joseph was arrested and imprisoned for some time. After the release, he served as the Editor of *Young India*, as Gandhiji was then in jail.

Joseph played an important role in setting up the trade union movement in Madurai to organise the textile mill workers there. The union's initial struggles resulted in higher wages and reduced work hours for the mill workers but soon the mill owners and the government came together to bring about a collapse of the union.

Joseph was an eager participant in the Vaikom Sathyagraha that sought to achieve the right to temple entry for the Dalits in Travancore. According to C. F. Andrews, the plan for a non violent agitation was arrived upon by Joseph when he visited Gandhi who was convalescing in Bombay. Joseph and other Congressmen led the Dalits in walking through the Brahmin quarter of the town where they were met with violence. The police immediately arrested Joseph and his accomplices who were sentenced to varying terms in prison.

He also took part in Vaikom Sathyagraha. Joseph viewed the struggle at Vaikom an issue of civil rights for all Indian citizens but this was in contrast to the views of most Congressmen who saw it as purely an issue between high and low caste Hindus and to be settled by the Hindus themselves. He began to participate actively in the Sathyagraha just after the arrest of K.P Kesava Menon and T.K.Madhavan after the march they had led on 7th April 1924. The arrest of these two prominent leaders was a great blow to the Sathyagraha movement as they were taking a pivotal role in the conducting of the Sathyagraha. It was at this crucial situation that George Joseph entered into the Vaikom Sathyagraha agitation and delivered some speeches in Vaikom. In this speech he severely criticized the action of the district magistrate towards the Sathyagraha movement and strongly exhorted the common people for the successful conduct of the Sathyagraha. After his entrance to the Sathyagraha, there was little change in the tactics and techniques of the movement. He led the sathyagrana in an apt way, but his decision to lead the Sathyagraha caused

unhappy to Gandhiji. Gandhi himself did not encourage Joseph's participation in the sathyagraha. Immediately after getting the news of George Joseph's entry in to the Sathyagraha, Gandhiji wrote a letter to him that "*as to Vaikom, I think that you shall let the Hindus do the work, it is they who have to purify themselves. You can help by your sympathy and by your pen, but not by organizing the movement and certainly not be offering sathyagraha. If you refer to the congress resolution of Nagpur, it calls upon the Hindu members to remove the curse of untouchability. I was surprised to learn from Mr. Andrews that the disease had infected even among the Syrian Christians.*" In the opinion of Gandhi an honest Christian like George Joseph should not dedicate himself for the struggle in the Vaikom because those efforts may become more complicated. Gandhiji said "*untouchability is the sin of the Hindus, they have to purify themselves and they should suffer for it. If any non Hindu enters in to this movement that attempt would leave the Hindus unmoved*".

Though there was disagreement with Gandhi, George Joseph continued his active participation in Vaikom Sathyagraha for some time. To him it was a movement for civil rights, not a movement of Hindus to get freedom to walk through the roads. Under his leadership the movement continued vigorously. His Christian identity could not stop him from being a sathyagrahi in Vaikom. He was arrested on 11th April 1924 and sentenced for 6 months imprisonment and sent to Trivandrum jail. Afterwards he was active in the constructive programmes and propagation of Khadar.

But disillusioned by Gandhi's lack of support and the attitude of the Congress Party, Joseph left the Congress Party to join the Justice Party. He however rejoined the Congress in 1935. He was elected to the Central Assembly on Congress ticket from Madras presidency and earned recognition as an able parliamentarian. He led the Abstention Movement of Travancore, and also helped the agitation for responsible Government in the State. George Joseph expired on March 6, 1938.

Joseph led Congressmen of Madurai in the agitation against the Simon Commission. In this he was supported by K Kamaraj and he mobilized thousands of volunteers at the Tirumalai Nayak Mahal to demonstrate against the Commission when it visited Madurai in 1929. Later, when Kamaraj was implicated in Virudhunagar Conspiracy Case in 1933, Joseph and Varadarajulu Naidu argued on his behalf and succeeded in exonerating him of all charges. He also agitated against the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA), an act that criminalised and negatively affected communities like the Pirmalai Kallar and Maravars. He fought for them in the courts and wrote extensively in the newspapers against the act and came to be called *Rosapoo Durai* by the grateful Kallars who continue to pay homage to him on his death anniversary.

K. KELAPPAN

K. Kelappan popularly known as 'Kerala Gandhi' was born in an ordinary Nair family in Muchukunnu Village of South Malabar in 1889. He graduated from Madras University and became a teacher in the S.B. High School, Changanacherry. While in Changanacherry, he took up social work and was one of the founders of the Nair

Service Society and became its first president. Resigning from S.B. High School, he became the Headmaster of the first school started by Nair Service Society. Later, he went to Bombay for legal studies, but left the law-college during the Non-Cooperation Movement. Returning to Malabar he started active congress work. During the Moplah Rebellion, he played a very heroic role disregarding his personal safety and tried to bring about peace and communal harmony. He participated in Vaikom Sathyagraha and was imprisoned. He took special interest in Gandhian programmes like uplift of the untouchables, propagation of Khadi and Hindi. For some time he was editor of the 'Mathrubhumi'. It was he who led the famous Guruvayur Sathyagraha.

On his release from prison after Quit India Movement, he became President of KPCC and ceaselessly worked for organising Congress activities in the whole of Kerala. Due to disagreement with the Congress leadership he, along with some colleagues, joined the Kisan Masdoor Praja Party (KMPP) led by Acharya Kripalani. In the general elections of 1952 Kelappan contested on KMPP ticket and was elected from Ponnani Lok Sabha seat. After the five-year term in the Lok Sabha, he left active politics and became a Sarvodaya worker and was actively associated with Bhoodan Movement in Kerala. He established the 'Rural Institute' at Thavanoor in Ponnani Taluq and was president of Harijan Seva Sangh and Sarvodaya Sangh in Kerala. He expired in 1970.

A.V. KUTTIMALU AMMA

A.V. Kuttimalu Amma was a freedom fighter and a campaigner for swadeshi and an active member of the Indian National Congress. She was a tireless social worker and before independence twice she was a member of Madras Legislative Assembly. She Born in Anakkara Vadakkath family of Ponnani taluq of Southern Malabar in 1905. This family produced several famous women freedom fighters and social workers including Ammu Swaminathan, Captain Lakshmi of INA, dnacer Mrinalini Sarabhai and the former Lok Sabha member Subhashini Ali. Kuttimalu Amma was drawn into the freedom movement in her youth. She and her husband K. Madhava Menon (former KPCC President and Minister in Madras State) actively participated in all movements of the Congress.

Kuttimalu Amma began her public life as an active Khadi and Swadeshi worker in 1930. She led batches of women volunteers and successfully conducted picketing of foreign cloth-shops in Calicut in 1931. During the Civil Disobedience Movement, holding her two month old baby in her arms, she led a procession of women, breaking the ban order in Calicut and was arrested and convicted for two years imprisonment. When she reached the jail with her baby, authorities did not allow her to take the baby with her. Kuttimalu Amma insisted that she had every right to take her baby with her into the jail, quoting relevant rules. Finally, the authorities had to accede to her demand. In 1936, she was elected to the Madras Assembly. During individual Sathyagraha in 1940, Kuttimalu Amma was arrested and imprisoned for a year. During Quit India Movement, she was detained for two years in the Presidency jail for women.

After her release in 1944, she took up the task of organising Congress in Malabar and became KPCC President for a term. Kuttimalu Amma had also served as a member of AICC and the Congress Working Committee. In 1946, she was again elected as a member of Madras Legislative Assembly. She was Director of the Mathrubhumi Calicut for some time. She expired in 1986.

MUHAMMAD ABDURRAHIMAN

Muhammad Abdur Rahiman was one of the most important freedom fighter who dedicated his whole life for India's freedom and for the upliftment of Muslim community. He born at the village of Eriyad near Azhikode, Kodungallur on Thursday, 13th May 1898, in the erstwhile Cochin State. He was the eldest son of Panakkaparambil Abdurahiman of Karukappadath Pannachal family and Koachaisumma of Ayyaril family. He was educated at Veniyambadi, Calicut, Madras and Aligarh. When he was a student at Madras that he got an opportunity to listen to the great nationalist leaders, Justice Tyabji and Yakub Hassan. Under their influence he was became a regular reader of *Muslim Herald* and *Muhammadam*. It was at this time that he happened to read the *Mas-ala-w-Khilafat-wa-Jazirah-e-Arab*, 'a scholarly and illuminating discourse on the concept and history of Khilafat' written by Abdul Kalam Azad. The words of Azad that 'English education given in the colleges are cups filled with poison' stirred the sentiments of Abdurahiman. His mind now swung whether to continue his studies or to give it up. It was at this time that Maulana Shaukath Ali visited Madras. Then there came the appeal of Gandhiji to boycott educational institutions. It filled the void. He left Madras Presidency College in November 1920.

Meanwhile a few national educational institutions came up. The Jamia Millia Islamia was one such. The great nationalist leaders Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad and Ali brothers were the teachers in this institution. Muhammed Abdurahman joined Jamia Millia and made contacts with lot of nationalist leaders which shaped his attitudes and character. From here he felt the need of leading the freedom struggle at Malabar and thus he discontinued his studies at Aligarh University to participate in Non-Cooperation and Khilafat movements in Malabar. After the Moplah rebellion of 1921, he tried to establish peace in affected areas. It was he who took initiative to provide relief to the poor Muslim populace of the rebel areas and he wrote to the Central Khilafat Committee to provide aid to these poor sections. Despite his efforts to pacify Moplah rebels, he was arrested by British authorities in October 1921 and sentenced to two years imprisonment.

For breaking Salt law on Calicut beach during Salt Sathyagraha in 1930, he was brutally lathi charged by police, sentenced to nine months rigorous imprisonment and lodged in Cannanore Central Jail. Abdur Rahiman edited a nationalist daily *Al-Ameen* from 1929 to 1939 from Calicut. The paper had to close down in 1939 due to repressive measures of the Government. Abdur Rahiman was a member of Calicut Municipal Council from 1931 to 1934 and the Malabar District Board from 1932. He was elected to Madras Legislative Assembly in 1937.

He became President of KPCC and a member of AICC in 1939. Being an admirer of Subhas Chandra Bose, Abdu Rahiman associated himself with the Forward Block formed by Subhash. When Second World War broke out, he was arrested and kept in jail as a detenué from 1940 to 1945. After the release from jail, he returned to Calicut and started active participation in Congress activities. But he, untimely, expired on November 22, 1945 just after addressing a public meeting. Muhammad Abdur Rahiman always opposed the two nation theory of the Muslim League. An able orator and writer, he was a tower of strength to freedom fighters.

C. KESAVAN (1891-1969)

C. Kesavan was one of the Triumvirate of Travancore State Congress leadership, the other two being Pattom Thanu Pillai and T.M. Varghese. Born in an ordinary Ezhava family of Mayyanad near Quilon on May 23, 1891, he studied in Quilon, Ernakulam and Trivandrum. For some time, he worked as a teacher and then took a law degree from Trivandrum and started practice in Quilon.

He was influenced by the teachings of Sri Narayana Guru, Gandhiji and Karl Marx. He worked for temperance and eradication of untouchability and served as General Secretary of SNDP Yogam. From 1933 he was one of the prominent leaders of the Abstention movement of Travancore. Because of a speech he made at a public meeting in Kozencherry he was arrested on June 7, 1935, tried for sedition, and sentenced to two years imprisonment.

Kesavan took an active part in organising Travancore State Congress and became a member of its Working Committee. During the agitation for responsible government in Travancore, he was arrested several times. During Quit India Movement in 1942 Kesavan was sentenced to one year simple imprisonment and was released on July 19, 1943.

After Independence Kesavan was elected to Travancore Assembly and became a member of the first cabinet headed by Pattom Thanu Pillai, but resigned after few months. Kesavan became Chief Minister of Travancore-Cochin in 1951 and was elected to State Assembly in 1952. He expired on July 7, 1969 at Mayyanad.

T.M. VARGHESE

T.M. Varghese was born at Pallikkal, Mavelikkara in erstwhile Travancore State in 1886. He was an eminent lawyer who was drawn into the agitation for responsible government. A prominent leader of the Abstention movement of Travancore, he was elected from Pathanamthitta Constituency to the Travancore Legislative Assembly and became its Deputy Speaker. He pressed for the demand of responsible government in Travancore Assembly in 1938. As a founder and Working committee member of the State Congress, Vargese guided its activities for a decade. During 1938-1943 he was arrested several times. After Independence, Varghese became a member of the Cabinet headed by Pattom Thanu Pillai. With integration of Travancore and Cochin he became speaker of Travancore-Cochin Assembly in July

1949. He later became a Minister in the Cabinet headed by A.J. John. He breathed his last on December 31, 1961.

E.IKKANDA VARRIER

E.Ikkanda Varrier was born in 1890 in a feudal family of Edakkanni Variyam, Ollur, near Trichur. He was the grand-nephew of Dewan Sankara Varrier, the 'Builder of Modern Cochin'. While studying in Madras Law College, Ikkanda Varrier met Gandhiji and the meeting proved to be a turning point in Varrier's life. After taking Law degree Varrier started practice in Trichur.

As Chairman of Trichur Municipal Council, Varrier did a lot to improve the civic life of Trichur. He was elected to the Cochin state Legislative Council for four terms. As the second president of the Cochin State Prajamandal, he worked strenuously for establishing responsible government in Cochin State. An active Khadi worker he led the campaign for foreign cloth boycott and participated in all the movements under the auspices of the Congress. He was imprisoned for an year during the Quit India Movement.

In 1948 elections, he again became the leader of Prajamandal Legislature Party and was appointed Prime Minister of Cochin. An able administrator, Varrier worked for the improvement of agriculture in Cochin state and was responsible for starting many irrigation and power projects in the state. After Travancore-Cochin-integration, Varrier continued as Food and Agriculture Minister of State. Later he resigned his post and left active politics. He became a Sarvodaya worker and was active in Bhoodan Movement. He expired on June 7, 1977.

S. NEELAKANTA IYER

Born in a poor Tamil Brahmin family of Chittoor in old Cochin State in 1889, Neelakanta Iyer graduated from Madras University and was later employed in the Revenue Department at Madras. His meeting with Gandhiji in 1915 was a turning point in his life and he resigned from his government job and according to Gandhiji's advice took B.T. degree and started teaching. While serving in various schools in Cochin and Malabar he was associated with the freedom movement. Whenever Gandhiji toured Kerala, Neelakanta Iyer accompanied him.

In 1930, he participated in Salt Sathyagraha and was arrested at Calicut during Civil Disobedience Movement and imprisoned for six months. When the Cochin State Prajamandal was formed, he was elected as its first president and worked in that capacity for many years. He was arrested by Cochin Government and imprisoned in 1941. During Quit India Movement, Iyer was arrested while addressing a public meeting in Trichur for breaking the ban order and was imprisoned in Viyyur Central Jail for several months. He became president of the Prajamandal for the second time when Prajamandal merged into the Indian National Congress. Neelakanta Iyer worked as the organising Secretary of Harijan Seva Sangh and participated in the agitation for temple entry. He established the Vyasa College of Wadakkancherry.

POLITICAL CONFERENCES-OTTAPPALAM, MANJERI, PALAKKAD AND VADAKARA

In Malabar, the organised political activities began only in the second decade of the 20th century. The important step taken by the Congress committee during the period was the formation of the Malabar District Congress Committee in 1910. Mr. Kunhirama Menon was its first secretary. The main purpose of the meetings of the District Congress Committee was mostly to elect a few delegates to attend the sessions of the Indian National Congress. The political conference held at Calicut in 1913 under the presidentship of C. Vijayaraghavachariar was successful to some extent in creating political awareness among the people. The Home Rule Movement that began in 1916 under the leadership of Dr. Annie Besant and Lokamanya Tilak evoked positive responses in Malabar. The organised political activity motivated by nationalist sentiments started in Malabar only with the Home Rule movement. A branch of the Home Rule League was formed in Calicut with Mr. Manjeri Rama Iyyer as president and K.P. Kesava Menon as secretary. The district Home Rule League and the district Congress committee worked jointly under the leadership of K.P. Kesava Menon. The movement attracted a large number of students and youth. Under the auspices of the Home Rule League and district Congress committee several meetings and processions were organised in various parts of Malabar. In 1916, the Calicut Municipal Chairman convened public meeting at the Town Hall, to get the support of the natives of Britain in the First World War. When Kesava Menon, the District Congress Secretary began to speak in Malayalam, the District Collector, Evans asked him to speak in English. Kesava Menon stopped his speech, protested and boycotted the meeting. Majority of the audience followed him, leaving the collector and a few officials there in the hall. This was sometimes the first public protest against British government in Malabar.

The first Malabar district political conference held in 1916 at Palakkad under the presidentship of Dr. Annie Besant was an important landmark in the history of the national movement in Malabar. In an important resolution of the conference it exhorted the people to organise committees in the district for the attainment of self-government. It passed some resolutions requesting the government authorities to grant home rule to the Indians and to free the political prisoners. The participants were mainly educated middle class. The success of the Palakkad conference was a source of inspiration and encouragement to the leaders and the people.

The second district political conference was held at Calicut in 1917 under the presidency of Sri. C.P. Ramaswami Iyyer. The conference was attended by several delegates from different parts of Malabar, Travancore and Cochin. The conference touched on a number of problems like self-government for India, the Arms Act, Elementary education, Tenancy question etc. The arrest of Dr. Besant by the middle of 1917 greatly excited the national consciousness of the people of Malabar.

Third Malabar district political conference held in 1918 at Tellicherry under the presidency of Mr. Azad Alikhan Bahadur passed important resolutions like Indianisation of the army, introduction of primary education, the repeal of repressive acts etc.

The fourth Malabar district political conference held at Badagara/Vadakara in 1919 under the presidency of K.P. Raman dealt with the important political developments with a special reference to the needs of Malabar. The leaders of the national movement in Malabar realized the evil effects of the caste system and untouchability. They found that it was a major obstacle to political activity. The nationalists adopted concrete programmes to fight these social evils. They firstly passed resolutions in the meetings urging the public opinion and religious organisations to eradicate the evil of untouchability. They also occasionally involved in direct action as well. For example, when the authorities of the Zamorin's college at Calicut denied admission to low caste students the nationalists organised struggles demanding admission for them. Another important step taken by the early nationalist to challenge caste discrimination was the organizing of interdining. Scores of such events were organized throughout Malabar in which the caste Hindus shared seats along with the lower castes while dinning. The nationalists also fought against the denial of accessibility to public spaces for untouchables. For example, the roads near to the Calicut Tali temple was closed to the polluting castes stating that there entry will turn the place polluting. Rejecting such beliefs as superstition and ungrounded the nationalists appealed to the elites to open all public roads to the lower castes. To break the existing elite conventions the nationalists leaders like K.P. Kesava Menon, K. Madhavan Nair and Manjeri Rama Iyyer walked through the road near to the Tali temple, along with C. Krishnan (a Tiyya lawyer) and a group of men belonging to various lower castes. It encouraged common people to be daring enough to walk through the road near Tali temple and even remove the board on the road prohibiting the lower castes entry. An important consequence of the the Tali road agitation was that it inspired untouchables from other parts of Malabar to initiated similar movements.

In April, 1920 the fifth Malabar district political conference was held at Manjeri under the presidentship of Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar. This was the last in a series of early district political conferences held in Malabar. The fifth conference was significant. It marked the decline of the great influence that had been exerted by Dr. Annie Besant on the political developments in Malabar. The Manjeri conference marked a change in the composition of delegates as well as in the nature of the Congress deliberations. The conference was attended by about 1300 delegates among whom were a large number of Muslim peasants. The conference represented a trial of strength between the two wings the moderates led by Dr. Annie Besant and the extremists led by K.P. Kesavamenon. The representatives of the landlords who attended the conference identified themselves with the moderates while the tenants and workers present in the conference sided with the extremists. An important resolution passed in the conference declared that India was ready for self government and that the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were unsatisfactory. Dr. Besant and her wing vehemently opposed the resolution. The resolution was passed by a huge majority. Mrs. Besant and her followers staged a walkout. The Manjeri conference also passed

resolutions demanding the introduction of tenancy reforms, the regulation of working hours in factories, prohibition of child labour, etc. The Manjeri conference revealed the rising tide of nationalism in Malabar. It broadened the mass base of the nationalist movement in Malabar. The conference clearly indicated that Malabar cared more for a national organisation and the policy it enunciated than for an individual and his or her personal opinions. So it had an important place in the history of the political struggle of Malabar. The nationalist movement in Malabar during the pre-Gandhian era was an upper caste organisation. The early district political conferences were held under the control of elite classes. The Mappilas and the lower castes in Hindu religion were not so active in the national movement in the early days.

Malabar played an important role in the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movement of the early 1920's. Malabar witnessed the large scale boycott of foreign goods, courts of law, educational institutions, etc. Many people resigned their jobs, advocates stopped their practices and students boycotted schools and colleges. The Kerala Provincial Congress Committee was formed in the same year, 1920. The first conference of Kerala Provincial Congress Committee was held at Ottapalam on April 23, 1921 under the presidentship of T. Prakasan. It was the first representative gathering of Congressmen from Malabar, Travancore and Cochin. Delegates from all district committees attended the meeting. The tenants' conference, Khilafat conference students' conference and farmers' conference were also held at the same spot. The conference gave its full support to the decision on non-cooperation adopted by the Indian National Congress in Kerala. The conference passed a number of resolutions urging the govt. to redress the genuine grievances of the people. In the conference at Ottappalam, resolutions asking all lawyers to suspend practice and all shop keepers not to sell foreign cloths were passed. Such requests were for first time in Malabar.

It endorsed the non-co-operation resolution of the Nagpur congress and requested the people to participate in the struggle to end the alien rule and to achieve 'swaraj'. The moderates and the Home rule Leagues boycotted the Ottappalam Conference since they were totally opposed to the non-co-operation movement. The large scale attendance of the delegates from all over Kerala and the smooth proceedings of the conference and above all the enthusiasm of the local people irritated the district administration and the delegates were beaten up without any provocation. But the delegates had shown considerable restraint to bear with the persecutions of the police. The attempt of the police to provoke the Congressmen further ended in failure. Police assault on Ramunni Menon, secretary of Ottappalam Conference and Ahamad Khan, Khilafat leader from Madras led to a confrontation between the local people and the Police. But the leaders pacified the local people and requested them to be calm even on provocation. As pointed out by *The Hindu* it was an object lesson in non-violence. K Madhavan Nair wrote "after the Ottappalam Conference, there was a resurgence of Khilafat and Congress activities". The common masses became politically conscious and there existed perfect communal amity among them. The

period marked the expansion of the Khilafat and Congress activities in Malabar. This alarmed the Collector and he determined to crush the movement with large scale arrests. The police arrest of Khilafat leaders triggered off the Malabar rebellion of 1921. The tenancy movement, the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movements partially caused for the outbreak of the rebellion.

KHILAFAT-MALABAR REBELLION

The Khilafat movement, started in all India level against the inhuman attitude followed by the British and the allied powers after the First World War and the non co operation movement started by Indian National Congress under the banner of Mahatma Gandhi reached in Kerala especially in Malabar which was under the control of British government and it had made far-reaching changes in the local populace of the region. It made the political movement in Malabar more popular. The despair produced by the Montague-Chelmsford reforms, the repressive policy of the government towards the popular movements and above all the dynamic leadership of Gandhiji, transformed the congress in to the popular movement. It was the Khilafat movement that made more movements in the political scene of Malabar. The Turkish Sultan was accepted as the Khalifa or the spiritual leader of the Muslims all over the world.

The Turkish Sultan joined with Germany in the First World War against Britain. For getting support of Muslims of the World, Britain declared that power and position of Khalifa would not be tampered during and after the War. But after the war, in contradiction to their declaration and the expectations of the Muslims, Turkish Empire was split into pieces and deliberately tampered the powers and rights of the Khalifa after the war. Muslims started the Khilafat movement demanding the reinstalment of Khalifa and return him his powers. The Indian Muslims also part and parcel of the Movements and the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji supported the movement and thus the Khilafat and non cooperation movement went hand in hand and its message spread all over India. Within a short period these movements acquired wide publicity and popularity among the Muslim masses of India. The leaders of Khilafat and non cooperation decided to join hands to struggle against the obnoxious activities of the British government. They started the movement for *swaraj* and *khilafat*.

In Malabar, after the Nagpur session, village, taluk and district level committees of Indian National Congress were formed. The students and professionals who had boycotted the law courts, educational institutions and govt. offices, later left their workplace and became fulltime workers of the Party. Khilafat Committees were also formed at various places. Tenant farmers were also joined with them and the tenant, Congress and Khilafat committees coalesced into a single movement. The message of Khilafat and non co-operation and Khilafat reached even the remote corners of Malabar. The unity of the people against the British govt. and landlords frightened the district administrators. The District Collector served a notice to K. Madhavan Nair and U. Gopala Menon, Secretary of the South Malabar and secretary of the North Malabar Congress Committees respectively alleging that through

propaganda, they had created disaffection towards the British Government and the landlords. The effort of the Congress to forge a friendly relation between the Hindus and Muslims was viewed as an attempt to create class hatred in the society. The government was also not prepared to solve the problems of tenants who were doubly hit by colonialism and landlordism. The congress and Khilafat Committees emphasized the need of non-violent agitation. The KGandhiji and Moulana Shoukath Ali visited Calicut in August 1920 to get the support of the people for the Khilafat and non co-operation movements. They were given a pompous welcome by the people of Malabar. Their visit paved way for the emergence of a new consciousness among the people of Malabar.

Kerala Provincial Congress Committee invited Yakub Hassan, Khilafat leader of th Madras Presidency to tour the district and to educate the people on the importance of practicing non-violence in the ensuing struggle. But the govt. issued prohibitory orders on public meetings. The meetings scheduled at Parappanagadi, Tanur and Calicut were cancelled. K Madhavan Nair, Yakub Hassan, P. Moideen Koya and U.Gopala Menon were arrested under section 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code. A ban on public meetings was imposed under section 144. The arrested leaders were sentenced for six months imprisonment. The imprisonment of the leaders gave wide publicity to the no co-operation and Khilafat movements. In addition to this, by using indiscriminately section 144 of the C.P.C., public meetings and public speeches of the leaders were banned. The Congress and Khilafat leaders were threatened with prosecution.. At the sametime, the landlords evicted tenants on flimsy grounds to earn more profit and the district administration and law courts protected their interests. The government always turned a deaf ear to the grievances of the tenant farmers. The efforts of the Congress to highlight the injustice done to the tenants by the district administration and the landlords were interpreted as an attempt to arouse Muslim Communal feelings to make the non co-operation movement a success.

The Pookkottur conference of the Kudiyan in 1921 discussed both Kudiyan and Khilafat issues. Such conferences annoyed the district administration. Freedom of association was restricted, public meetings were prohibited. Evictions and the enhancement of the rent became the order of the day. There was a sea change in the attitude of the tenants also. Instead of resorting to direct violent action the Muslim tenants through the Khilafat Sanghams tried to solve their problems by resorting to collective bargaining. But the govt. and landlords shut the doors for an amicable settlement. The administration decided to suppress the movement by using force.

Malabar Rebellion of 1921

The Malabar Rebellion of 1921 was an important episode in the history of the freedom movement in India. It may be considered as a turning point in the history of Kerala as all further developments in the national movement in Kerala bore the marks of the Rebellion. Rebellion, characterized by the imperialist historians as the Mappila Rebellion occurred in South Malabar in between the Khilafat and Non co operation movements. This rebellion was a tragic incident in the history of the freedom struggle

in Kerla. This rebellion has to be considered as the culmination point of the continuous revolts that took place during the nineteenth century in south Malabar against the colonialist government.

The Khilafat issue had made deep inroads in to the people of South Malabar who were being oppressed by the landlords. The peasants of South Malabar who had been subjected to the brutal exploitation of the jenmis were looking for a chance to burst out their grievances. The repressive policy of the government authorities towards the Khilafat workers, especially after the Ottappalan Conference, had provoked the Mappila peasants. The Rebellion took place mainly in the Eranad, Valluvanad and Ponnani Taluks where the Muslims had majority population.

The Rebellion started at th Pookkottur village in the Ernad Taluk. 70% of the total population of the Pookkottur village in 1921 was Mappila Muslims. The owner of the sixty percentage of the total cultivable land in the village was the Nilambur Raja. The Mappilas were the tenants of the Raja who had cultivated the land by giving the rent demanded by the Raja. Police made an attempt to arrest Vadakkeveetil Muhammed (Kalathingal Muhammed), the secretary of the Pookkottur branch of the Khilafat Committee as a suspect in a theft case of 28th July 1921. It was alleged that he has stolen a rifle from the Pookkottur *Kovilakam*, a branch of Nilambur *Kovilakam*. Muhammed had been formerly in the service of the *Kovilakam* for a few years. Tenancy movement was very strong in Pookkottur an dMuhammed was its leader. The theft case was a fabricated one to insult Muhammed, who was the organizer of the Pukkottur Kudiyan Conference in January 1921. The Police raided his house, but he managed to escape. The situation became tense. The Circle Inspector of Police asked Muhammad to meet him on 1st August 1921 at the *Kovilakam* of the Raja. The Khilafat workers considered this as an open threat to their movement. Muhammad and his followers went to the *Kovilakam* with weapons to meet the Inspector. The Police had minimum force at that time. The Inspector had had no other choice, except to accept the demand of the rebels. The agitators demanded that the follow up action of the case be suspended for a short period. The people got the signature of the Inspector and the action against Muhammed was suspended.

The police and the British authorities took this seriously and the govt. brought more forces to Malabar from Madras. They arrested many of the Khilafat leaders and arrest warrants were served to P Narayana Menon, Secretary of Ernad Taluk Congress Committee, K Abdu Haji and Karadan Moideenkutty Haji, members of the Khilafat committee. They issued arrest warrants against the Muslim religious leaders like Ali Mussaliar and Kattilassery Muhammad Musaliar. A two hundred strong force of the police and the army jointly went to arrest the religious leaders at Tirurangadi and they surrounded the famous mosque 'Kizhakke Palli'. After cordoning the mosque, the Muslim Police Officials, Amu and Moideend entered into the mosque to enquire about the rebels. But there was nobody inside the mosque. Afterwards they searched the nearby house and then destroyed the Khilafat Committee office there and arrested three persons.

The entry of the police in the mosque in full uniform violated the sanctity of the mosque and aroused religious passions of the Muslims. At that time, a rumor was spread in the nearby places that the police had destroyed the Tirurangadi mosque. On hearing this false news, the Mappilas from the different villages rushed to Tirurangadi with available weapons. Ali Mussaliar pacified them and asked them to return to their houses. But the police arrested a few of them and locked them up in the police station. Ali Mussaliar accompanied by a crowd reached the police station and requested for the release of the arrested persons. Without any provocation the police opened fire at the mob. Most of them were shot to death.

On 21st August 1921 the liberation struggle had began. The call “to fight to finish the alien rule” reverberated throughout Ernad, Walluvanad and parts of Ponnani Taluks. The Congress leaders rushed to Pookkottur, a strong hold of the Kudiyan Sangham to avert an open clash between the army and the tenants. M. P. Narayana Menon, Muhammed Abdu Rahman and Moideenkutty Haji, leaders of the movements, persuaded the tenants and Khilafatists to keep calm. But the peace that established by them did not last long. The hidden feelings and fury bursted out and on 26th August they attacked they attacked the police. In this battle about three hundred tenants and Khilafatists were killed and the army forced to retreat from Pookkottur. Rioting spread to Kalikavu, Malappuram, Manjeri, Pandikkad, Tirur and Ponnani. In Ponnani K. Kelappan averted an open clash between the rioters and the army. But he was arrested and imprisoned for a year. The rail road traffic was cut off. Ernad and Valluvanad were isolated from the rest of Malabar. Police Station, Registry offices, village offices, railway stations etc. were attacked, records were burnt, money was looted from treasury and arms were stolen. As the available government forces could not resist the rebellion, they retreated and consequently the administration of the rebel areas went under the control of the rebels. The administration of Tirurangadi, Ernad and Valluvanad was taken over by the rebel leaders Ali Mussaliar, Variankunnath Kunhahammed Haji and Seethiloua Thangal respectively. Khilafat Raj was established in these areas. Variankunnath Kunhahammed Haji declared himself as the king of Hindus, the Amir of the Muslims and the colonel of the Khilafat army. Through a proclamation, he put an end to the tenancy system and declared that all the tenants would be the owner-proprietors of their land. He stated that those Muslims should be severely punished who attack the Hindus. The reason for this stern declaration was that, towards the later stages of the rebellion, some of the Hindus were attacked by the Mappilas as they suspected that these Hindus were assisting the government authorities against the rebels. These rebels in later days adopted guerilla warfare and the hilly tracts were suitable for adopting such a strategy. At this stage the rebellion became anti British in character and no harm was done either to the landlords or to the Hindus.

The administration of the rebel areas was short lived. The government authorities returned to the rebel areas with more forces. The government army and the police started severe repressions against the rebels. Martial law was declared on 29th August 1921. Ernad, Ponnani, Kozhokode, Walluvanad and Wynad were brought under

this law. More forces including the Gurkka regiment were rushed to Malappura, and Tiruraagnadi. On the early morning of 31 August the forces sieged Tirurangadi mosque after a fierce battle. When the ammunitions were exhausted, the Muslims came out from their hideouts and fought with their knives and spears. Such a resistance with crude weapons lasted only for a few hours. The Khilafat volunteers and their leader Ali Musaliar surrendered. The rebellion subsided for the time being. The ruthless oppression of the government again sowed the seeds of disgust and resulted in the organization of riots by local leaders in isolated regions. Instead of direct confrontation the rebel gangs adopted the technique of 'hit and run'. Soldiers of the Gukha rifles were brought to combat the guerilla warfare ad they were ordered to move to the interior regions. The rebel attack on the Gurkka rifles stationed at Pandikkad on 14th November ended in the death of bout two hundred people. Chembrasserri Thangal and Kunjahammed Haji led them. At this stage the mutineers clashed with the landlords. The informants to the police, both Hindus and Muslims were attacked and killed. Their properties were looted. This act of the rebels alienated them from the people who were sympathetic to their cause. The police search for the rebels continued and the rebels were cruelly punished. Their houses were burnt, women were molested and even children were not spared. Realizing the futility of their hostility the number of rebels surrendering to the police increased day by day. By the beginning of the year 1922 about 45,000 rebels were taken in to the police custody and about 10,000 were killed in the police action. Almost all the main rebel leader like Variankunnath Haji, Ali Mussaliar and Seethi Tangal were arrested. By December 1921, the rebellion was completely suppressed.

The 'Wagon Tragedy' was the tragic incident of the Malabar Rebellion. It took place on 10th November 1921. The British army packed up the surrendered rebels in a goods wagon of a train, numbering about more than hundred. Once the rebels were pushed inside the wagon, the army men closed the doors of the wagon and locked it from outside. The closed door was the only one out-let of the wagon and the rebels inside the wagon became suffocated. The army men travelled in another compartment and never enquired about the conditions of the prisoners inside the wagon throughout the night. Without getting water to drink and air to breathe, the unlucky prisoners, clustered inside the dark, small wagon room, became suffocated and died. The closed and locked door of the wagon room was opened only in the next morning at Pothanur Railway station in Tamilnadu, only to find the dead bodies of the majority of the prisoners inside the wagon. Sixty –five out of the hundred prisoners were dead and the remaining ones were on the verge of death. The inhuman and brutal action of the British army men shocked the civilized world. The British authorities did not take any action against the officials who were responsible for this tragic incident. The British authorities sanctioned three rupees as a contribution to the surviving family members of the dead.

The British authorities took sever attitude towards the participants of the Malabar Rebellion. The leaders like Variankunnath Kunjahammed Haji, Chembrasserri

Thangal etc. were put under trial and were shot dead. Many others also were shot dead after a routine trial. Thousands of the participants were deported to the Andaman-Nicobar islands were just like that of giving death sentence.

The Malabar Rebellion produced far reaching consequences. It gave a set back to the freedom struggle in Malabar. After the Rebellion the Congress lost much of its popular appeal. For a long time after the Rebellion no public activity was possible in Malabar. The Hindus and Muslims began to suspect each other and lost their cordiality. It paved way for the growth of different communitarian organization in the Malabar region.

Nature of the Rebellion

The nature and character of the Malabar upheaval is a point controversy among historians. There are broadly three views about the origin and character of the Rebellion. According of the nationalist school of historians, it wa an anti imperialist struggle, a political uprising of the Mappilas against police repression. According to the Marxist school of Thought, it was an agrarian outbreak, purely economic in character. As the Mappila tenants were oppressed by the Hindu Jenmies and the British officials, the tenants rose in revolt. The third School of Thought regards the upsurge as a communal flare up of rather an outburst of religious fanaticism. The atrocities were committed by the Muslims and the victims were the Hindus. In fact the Rebellion was the result of the combined operation of political, economic and communal factors. It was at once anti-Biritsh, agrarian and communal.

VAIKKOM SATHYAGRAHA

Untouchability is a major curse to the society. It had been a great threat to the existence of peace in the society and Kerala has been a victim of such a brutal practice. Kerala society has gone through many such situations. During the *Sangam* period there was no caste system prevailing in the Kerala society. In the ancient period, Kerala was a part of ancient Tamizhagam which was a Dravidian society without any caste or class distinction. At that time Tamizhagam was free from the evil hands of caste system. The *Chaturvarnya* system was absent there. It was quite difficult to establish a *Chaturvarnya* system in ancient Tamizhagam. The Dravidian culture was absolutely a casteless culture. Only with the coming of the *Brahmins*, the *Chaturvarnya* system began to spread to the south. The Brahmins started their migration to South India by 5th Century A.D. onwards. Most of them were Sanskrit scholars and ascetics. They reached South India and introduced the Vedic culture to the Dravidian people. The Vedic culture was more religious and based on *Chaturvarnya* system. These *Brahmins* could inject some of the evil aspects of caste system into the casteless Dravidian society. They persuaded the local princes to perform *yaga*. Performance of *yagas* could enable the *Brahmins* to strengthen their positions. Gradually Brahmins gained a superior position in the society of South India. With the coming of the *Brahmins*, the South Indian society went through a transitional period –from a casteless society to a society which was strictly following all the evil aspects of casteism. Thus

caste system in Kerala was a result of Aryan entry. *Brahmins* gradually occupied a dominant position in the society especially in religious matters. Their role in religious ceremonies became unavoidable which put them into the uppermost position. The castes which had to engage in manual labour began to be considered as the most inferior caste in the society. Kerala society was transforming through such stages, which slowly welcomed the most evil customs like untouchability, unapproachability and unseeability.

All these customs became a curse to the society. A new concept of pollution got into the Kerala society. The lower castes became the victims of all these barbarous customs. They were denied of any kind of freedom in the society.

The lower castes were prohibited to enter into the premises of the temple. They could not even worship freely. The Vaikom Sathyagraha was fought for having the right to enter the roads attached to the Vaikom Mahadevar temple. This movement came out mainly because of a new revival emerged in the Kerala society due to the spread of English education. People became aware of the meaningless, evil practices like untouchability. The modern ideas brought them into a revolt with the dominant upper classes. Many persons from the upper caste community came forward to reform the society from the clutches of untouchability. C Krishana and T.K Madhavan were making hecting campaigns to put an end to untouchability and unapproachability in Malabar ant Tiruvitamkur respectively. The crusade against untouchability was carried on by T K Madhavan through his news paper *Desabhimani*. C Krishnan used his newspapaer *Mitavadi* to pur an end to untouchability.

Vaikom Sathyagraha came out as a historical event not only in the history of Kerala but also in the history of India. Indians had never experienced such a movement against untouchability. The leaders in Vaikom followed the new technique of *sathyagraha* introduced by Gandhi. *Sathyagraha* was a new weapon used by Gandhi against all immoralities. He has proved it as a strong weapon against social discrimination in South Africa. *Sathyagraha* marked a new phase in Indian freedom movement. Indian National Congress leaders did not give much importance to social problems in its earlier period. Political change was the need of the time. They believed that if they turned towards social freedom, it would reduce the spirit of the freedom struggle. So they thought social freedom would come after attaining complete political freedom. Thus priority should be given to political causes. But the entry of Gandhi into Indian political field brought a drastic change in all areas. Under the influence of Gandhi, Congress passed a resolution which demanded the admission of untouchables into temples. In a Congress session held in Bardoli, a resolution was passed which banned untouchability. Thus untouchability became a major concern of the time, with the arrival of Gandhi. Untouchability in all varieties proved to be a curse to the society.

In the annual conference of Congress held at Kakkinad in 1923, T K Mdhavan moced a resolution reuesting the congress leadership to take initiative towork for the eradcatin of untouchability in Kerala. The resolution was passed and accordingly a committee was formed to conduct propaganda aginst caste inequalities, pollution and

untouchability. The committee members were K. Kelappan, K. P Kesava Menon, Kurur Nilakantan Nambootiri and A.K.Pillai. the committee convened a meeting at Kollam in February and passed a resolution, which requested the government to take necessary steps to permit all, irrespective of caste to travel on all public roads. There was no favourable response from the government and the committee decided to launch Satyagraha in front of the Vaikom temple with the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi.

The *Sathyagraha* movement, which took place in Vaikom was an outcome of the long suffering experienced by the people. The lower castes were striving hard for getting the social freedom. Temple entry was a major objective of the backward classes. Though the oppression against the lower class prevailed all over the country, Travancore was the first state to start a *sathyagraha* against untouchability, unapproachability and unseeability.

Many leaders promised their enormous support for the agitation against such social evils. George Joseph had keen interest in this matter. George Joseph along with leaders like K.P. Kesava Menon, took up this issue seriously and provided a wide propaganda to this matter. George Joseph provided his full support for the *sathyagraha* movement in Vaikom. He came to Vaikom and entered into the struggle with great enthusiasm. He became an active leader of Vaikom Sathyagraha. The Vaikom Sathyagraha was actually started under the initiative of some leaders like K.P. Kesava Menon, A.K. Pillai, K. Kelappan Nair and Kurur Neelakantan Nambudirippadu. All of them belonged to higher castes. They made a propaganda tour in many places of Travancore. They aimed to gather public support for starting the *sathyagraha*. So they organized public meetings in many places and people got attracted towards the ideas and methods propagated by the leaders.

Gandhi urged the leaders to conduct the movement in a calm and peaceful manner. The leaders of the movement reached the site early in the morning and made all the final arrangements for the flagging off the *sathyagraha* movement. They made a march towards the prohibited roads under the leadership of K.P. Kesava Menon and T.K. Madhavan. They stopped a few yards before the non entry board and then sent a three member group consisting of a *Pulayan* named 'Kunjappu', an *Ezhavan* or *Tiyyan* named 'Bahuleyan' and a *Nair* named 'Govinda Panikkar' towards the prohibited road point. But before they took their entry into the prohibited path, the police stopped them and asked their castes. The *Pulaya* and *Ezhava* were blocked and only the *Nair* was allowed to enter the roads. But he refused to follow their order and the three men sat down on the road floor demanding their entry to the temple road. After sometime all three men were arrested and taken into custody. The district magistrate made an order giving them a six months imprisonment. After this the *sathyagraha* spread to all parts of Vaikom. The next day also the *satyagrahis* made a march towards the concerned spot. Again the arrest and imprisonment took place as on the previous day. At this time there arose a rumour that a conflict between the *Nairs* and the *Ezhavas* are taking place in Vaikom. After that the *satyagrahis* entered the roads using force and that led to a

critical situation. Such rumours prompted the sathyagraha leaders to give some awareness to the higher caste Hindus regarding temple road entry. So the movement stopped temporarily. K.P.Kesava Menon made a speech in a *Savarna* (high caste) meeting. He tried to reform the minds of the higher caste Hindus. But most of them were not ready for any compromise. They could not come forward from their orthodox beliefs. At last there was no way other than the *sathyagraha* movement, to get the temple roads opened. So the organizers decided to start the movement immediately. The orthodox higher class sent some representations to Gandhi in Bombay. They tried to convince him that the temple roads were private roads and if the Congress leaders continue the *sathyagraha* movement, the upper caste Hindus would stop their support to the Congress activities in Travancore. Letters were sent to Gandhi.

The initial stage of Vaikom Sathyagraha brought a pleasant situation in Vaikom. Based on non violence the *sathyagraha* movement brought a calm atmosphere in Vaikom. People acquired more confidence in this non violent agitation which gave them a new energy and enthusiasm. At the same time it raised the anger and fear of the *Savarnas* (high castes). K.P Kesava Menon and T.K. Madhavan led the march on 7th April 1924 and both were arrested and sentenced to six months imprisonment. The arrest of these two prominent leaders was a great blow to the *sathyagraha* movement as they were taking a pivotal role in the conducting of the *sathyagraha*.

At this crucial situation George Joseph jumped into the Vaikom Sathyagraha agitation and delivered some speeches in Vaikom, in which he severely criticized the action of the district magistrate towards the sathyagraha movement and strongly exhorted the common people for the successful conduct of the *sathyagraha*. After George Joseph's entry into the sathyagraha, there was little change in the tactics and techniques of the movement. George Joseph kept moving promptly to lead the Vaikom Sathyagraha. But George Joseph's decision to lead the *sathyagraha* caused Gandhi unhappy. Gandhi was not fine with the attitude of George Joseph towards the Vaikom Sathyagraha. Immediately after getting the news of George Joseph's entry into the *Sathyagraha*, Gandhi wrote a letter to him, in which Gandhi informed him that "*As to Vaikom, I think that you shall let the Hindus do the work, it is they who have to purify themselves. You can help by your sympathy and by your pen, but not by organizing the movement and certainly not by offering sathyagraha. If you refer to the Congress resolution of Nagpur, it calls upon the Hindu members to remove the curse of untouchability. I was surprised to learn from Mr. Andrews that the disease had infected even among the Syrian Christians*".

Though there was a disagreement with Gandhi, George Joseph continued his active participation in Vaikom Sathyagraha for some time. Under his fine leadership the movement continued vigorously which compelled the authorities to take new steps to control this movement. They barricaded the concerned temple roads which denied the further entry of the *sathyagrahis* into the temple roads. This new change raised the anger of George Joseph. Thus he wrote to the district magistrate. "*I need not hide from*

you the committee's feeling that the Government has not played the game fairly. It has imposed upon the volunteers an unnecessary and superfluous amount of suffering verging on torture, but I do not make any complaint about it'

Immediately after the new decision taken by the Government to barricade the temple roads, the *satyagrahis* took fasting in the hot days of April without food or water. It was really hard to take fasting on those days of mid-summer. George Joseph made vibrant speeches at various meetings and rallied his followers in several places. Under George Joseph's leadership the Vaikom Sathyagraha kept going with in the same manner as it was in the initial stage . Like other brave leaders in Vaikom, George Joseph too was put in the prison. Arrest of George Joseph again left the *sathyagraha* leaderless.

Gandhi had a different attitude and a different approach towards each step of the Vaikom Sathyagraha. He wanted to make this *sathyagraha* an inter-Hindu affair. He criticized the participation of any other religious leader in the *sathyagraha*. In his opinion "the caste system, untouchability and other similar issues are happening inside the Hindu community. So Hindus should suffer all the pains regarding the removal of these social evils". George Joseph was totally dissatisfied with the view of Gandhi. He avoided such suggestions and took an active role in the *Sathyagraha*. Gandhi also disagreed with the practice of accepting monetary aid coming from outside Travancore. He told that monetary aid should come from the local people. Money from outside would reduce the enthusiasm of the local people. Outsiders can send their help only through their love and support . After the starting of the Vaikom Sathyagraha, the Sikhs of Punjab had reached Vaikom and started free kitchen to provide food for the *satyagrahis*. Gandhi was disturbed with such actions. Gandhi wrote "*it is not to be denied that the present movement throughout India is to throw open to the suppressed classes all the public roads, public schools, public wells, public temples etc which are accessible only to the Brahmins*". Gandhi used the word 'public' for all people. Because he never liked the discrimination against some people due to their birth and occupation. Gandhi considered these discriminations as barbarous and uncivil. Gandhi was also against sending Congress leaders from outside Travancore.

Arrest of George Joseph and other prominent leaders created the situation in Vaikom complicated. There was a need for fine leadership. Such a person came to their mind was E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker (Periyar). So George Joseph and Kurur Nilakantan Namboodirippad sent a secret letter to E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker in which they requested him to take the leadership of the *sathyagraha*. After receiving the letter Ramaswamy Naicker rushed to Vaikom and assumed the leadership. He was soon arrested by the Travancore authorities and imprisoned for one month. In his absence, his wife Nagamma reached Vaikom and continued the *sathyagraha* movement. After his first release, E.V Ramaswamy Naicker had to leave Vaikom as per the order of the Travancore authorities. But he refused to do so which got him a six months imprisonment. Gandhi tried to persuade E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker to keep away from the Vaikom scene. But he refused to do so. His role in Vaikom gave him the name

“Vaikom Hero” . the role of Akalis of Pnjab in the Vaikom Sathuyagraha was momentable. They opened a kitchen at Vaikom for providing food to the Sathyagrahis.

Another leader who came to Vaikom was Dr. Varadarajulu Naidu. Kamaraj Nadar also had his role in Vaikom, who was a close friend of George Joseph. Kamaraj reached Vaikom and became himself a true satyagrahi. Even after the arrest of the prominent leaders, the *sathyagraha* was continued to reach its ultimate aim.

In support of the Sathyagraha two marches were organized- one from Vaikom led by Mannath Padmanabhan and the other from Nagarkoil eled by Emperumal Naidu. Both hese marches joined to form a big rally at thiruvanthapuramon 7th November 1924. After the Public meeting at Thirutvananthapuram a memorandum popularly known as Vaikom Memorandum wa submitted to the Maharaja. The memorial requested the king to open theroads at Vaikom temple and other similar roads toall, irrespective of their castes. In the meanwhile, a resolution withthe same request was moved in the Thiruvitamkur Legislative Assembly, but was defeated by one vote.

Gandhi reached Vaikom on 9th March 1925. He made some discussions with government officials, representatives of Vaikom temple administration and the police commissioner Mr.Pitt to reach a final settlement of the sathyagraha movement. At this time the ruler of Travancore Srimoolam Thirunal (1885-1924) had passed away and Rani Sethu Lekshmi Bhai (1925- 31) took over the administration as Regent. Finally a settlement was made by which the lower caste people were allowed to walk through the three raods adjacent to the temple which were already used by Muslims and Christians. The remaining one was exclusively reserved for the used for higher castes only. As a result of this settlement, the Vaikom Sathyagraha was suspended. In 1928, the Thiruvitamkur government opened all temple roads in Thiruvitamkur to the people of all castes. Vaikom Sathyagraha was not the end, but the beginning of anti-untouchability struggles, not only in Kerala , but whole India.

NON CO-OPERATION MOVEMENT-SALT SATHYAGRAHA

The brutal repression, during and after the Malabar Rebellion, changed the face of national movement in Malabar in the remaining years of 1920s. A few meetings were organized in Malabar as a part of the national level protest against the Simon Commission. The Kerala Pradesh Congress Conference held at Payyannur in 1928 under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru requested the national leadership of the congress to declared attainment of “Poorna Swaraj” as its aim. It was after the starting of Civil Disobedience Movement and Salt Sathyagraha under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in March 1930 that a new spirit and energy had got to the national movement in Malabar.

Consequent on the Poorna Swaraj resolution of the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress in 1929, Mahatma Gandhi was requested to lead the great struggle

for freedom. The Salt Sathyagraha, which has begun in March 1930, was a symbolic act of the nationwide civil Disobedience Movement. Five Malayalees were included in the seventy eight volunteers who accompanied Mahatma to Dandi. The K.P.C.C. decided to break the Salt laws at Kozhikode and Payyannur in Malabar. Kelappan's march from Kozhikode to Payyannur with 32 volunteers on 21st April 1930 and that of another march under the leadership of T R Krishnaswamy Ayyar from Palakkad to Payyannur had created tremendous impact on the people. Hundreds of Congress volunteers under the leadership of local Congress leaders proceeded to Payyannur to take part in the agitation. Congress volunteers from Travancore and Cochin also joined the Salt law breaking agitation at Payyannur and Kozhikode. Within a short period payyannur became a place of pilgrimage for Congressmen in Kerala. However the government did not arrest the volunteers at Payyannur. This attitude of the authorities was changed with the arrest of Gandhiji on 5th May. The police atrocities at Kozhikode beach were more severe. Leaders like P.Krishna Pillai and Muhammed Abdurahman who were involved in the Sathyagraha at the Calicut beach on 12th May were cruelly lathi-charged by the police. The volunteers P.Krishnapillai and R.V.Sharma, bravely resisted the effort of the police to capture the National Flag from their hands. The volunteers hoisted the tri-colour national flag throughout Malabar and took a pledge to honor the flag even at the cost of their lives.

The next day the police lathi-charged the volunteers at the Payyannur camp also. The Congress leaders of Malabar –K kelappan, Mdhavan Nair and Muhammed Abdurahman were arrested. The volunteers resorted to the picketing of the liquor shops and the boycott of the foreign goods as a part of the civil disobedience movement. The Youth League volunteers from Travancore led by Ponnara V Sreedharan, K. Kumar, N.C.Sekhar and N.P.Kurikkal reached Malabar to participate in the agitation. They were brutally tortured. Hundreds of Congress Volunteers came forward to court arrest. The district administration obstructed the functioning of KPCC and declared it as unlawful organization. "Congress Bulletin", a secret publication of the Congress was circulated. The students boycotted classes and assisted the Congress in mobilizing resources for the struggle. The civil disobedience movement of Malabar gradually gathering momentum like in many places of India and it was in this juncture that the movement was suspended by Gandhiji as per the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 4th March 1931.

The sathyagraha volunteers of Kerala had participated in the second Civil Disobedience Movement started in January 1932 also. During this movement the authorities adopted strict measures and declared the Congress Pradesh Committee illegal. Prohibitory orders were issued in Calicut. Public meetings were conducted in Calicut defying the prohibitory orders. The Second Civil Disobedience Movement was more powerful and active in North Malabar. The people boycotted the judicial courts, educational institutions, foreign goods, liquor shops etc.. About four hundred volunteers and workers of the Congress, who had assembled at Calicut for the political conference defying the prohibitory orders were arrested by the government. The "Congress Bulletin", the news paper published by the Congress Committee was

circulated among the members secretly. Gandhiji withdrew the Civil Disobedience movement suddenly and thus came an abrupt end to the mass movement.

GURUVAYUR SATHYAGRAHA

The Vadakara session of KPCC in May 1931 decided to launch anti-untouchability drive as one of the programmes of the Congress. Meetings of the Congress Committee and those of the Women and students organization were held jointly to mobilize support for the cause of untouchables in Kerala. The caste Hindu dominated Indian National Congress, considered the practice of untouchability as a social disgrace and resolved to remove that stain, even from the mind of the people as it became an imperative for a united fight against the aliens. Wide publicity and elaborate arrangements were made for the beginning of the campaign. Guruvayur, the seat of caste Hindu orthodoxy was chosen as the centre of the sathyagraha agitation. The Congress demanded the right of temple entry to all Hindus. They considered untouchability as part of the Hindu social practice and through proper education sought the eradication of the evil practice and through proper education sought the eradication of the evil practice. The practice of untouchability prevented the lower caste Hindus from entering temples for worship. The Zamorin of Calicut was the trustee of the famous temple of Kerala Guruvayur. The Congress leaders requested the Zamorin to allow all Hindus to enter and worship in the Guruvayur temple. But Zamorin rejected this demand. The State Congress leader, K. Kelappan went to Bombay in July 1931 and got the consent of the Congress Committee for starting a fresh Sathyagraha at Guruvayur temple for temple entry. The Provincial Congress Committee, met at Alappuzha in September of the same year, resolved to carry on an intensive propaganda for temple entry to all castes, all over Kerala. A Sathyagraha committee was formed with Mannath Padmanabhan as the President and K. Kelappan as the Secretary.

The Provincial Congress Committee, met at Calicut in October 1931, decided to start the Temple Entry Sathyagraha at Guruvayur on 1st November 1931 and to observe that day as All India Temple Entry day. A.K. Gopalan was nominated as captain of the Sathyagraha volunteers. Mannath Padmanabhan, N.P. Damodaran and T. Subrahmanian Tirumumbu were the other prominent leaders of the Sathyagraha agitation. Wide publicity was given to the campaign throughout the State. Sixteen volunteers under the leadership of Subrahmanian Tirumulpadu started from Kannur on 21st October, as a March to Guruvayur temple. The march reached at Guruvayur on 31st October and it was joined there by several others from all over Kerala. The Sathyagraha was started on 1st November. The police had raised barricades to prevent the Sathyagrahis from entering to the temple. According to the CALL OF THE Kerala Provincial Congress the 'Temple Entry Day' was observed at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras apart from Kerala of 1st November. After one month's peaceful picketing and Sathyagraha, the temple authorities with the help of anti-social elements, physically assaulted the volunteers like A.K. Gopalan, P. Krishnapillai etc.

As the Sathyagrah progressed, Zamorin, the trustee of the temple, became more adamant. He had the support of the deistrict administration and a few orthodox Brhamins. Enraaged by vandalism the sathyagraha agitation intensified. As a retaliatory measure and as an attempt to consolidate orthodox opinion Zamorin closed the temple from 1st January. The decision was resented by allnHindus ad other religious leaders. The Sathyagraha was suspended during the closure of the temple and it again started when the temple was re-opened on 20th January 1932. No compromise was yet reached. Simultaneous to Gandhiji's 'fast unto death' in September 1932 at Poona in protest against Ramsay Macdonald Award, Kelappan began his 'fast unto death' at the eastern gate of the temple on 31st September 1932. This incident changed thecourse of the Sathyagraha. Many national leaders requested the Zamorin ot open the gares of the temple to all Hindus and save the life of Kelappan. Considering the seriousness of the problem, Zamoin himself requested Gandhiji to pwesuae Kelappan to stop the fast. Realizing the seriousness of Kelappan's fast, Gandhiji send a telegram to him to end the fast to give sufficient time time to Zamorin to reconsider his view. Still Kelappan continued the fast without heeding to the request of Gandhiji. Gandhiji send a second telegram to Kelappana to suspend the fast immediately to which he agreed. He broke his fast on 2nd October 1932. After the breaking of the fast by Kelappan the Guruvayur sathyagraha also suspended.

Afterwards a referendum was held among caste Hindus of Ponnani taluk where the Guruvayur temple situated, to ascertain their view on temple entry to all Hindus irrespective of caste. About 20,000 people recorded their opinion, of which only thirteen percent were against temple entry to all Hindus believers. The political education given to the people helped them to consider the untouchables as integral part of the Hindu religion. An age old wrong done to the untouchables was corrected rather the case Hindus were self-purified. It was one of the notable achievements of Indian National Congress in Kerala during the national movement.

TEMPLE ENTRY PROCLAMATION

Sree Chithira Thirunal, the ruler of Travancore , appointed a committee in 1932 to examine the question of Temple Entry for the dalits. The Committee made the following observations regarding the temple entry:

If temple entry is allowed, one result apprehended is that the opposition from a fairly large section of Savarnas (upper castes) is likely to lead to breaches of the peace. But the Government should be able to take the necessary precautionary measures. Any change in the matter of temple entry could be made only with the advice and concurrence of Vaidiks (Brahmin priests), Vadhyans (Hindu religious teachers), Thantris and the Azhvanchery Thamprakkal and men learned in the religion and conversant with present day world movements.

The Committee also suggested certain methods to the government by which the rigour of the custom, that excluded the dalits from the temple, might be softened. The Committee stated that Hindu community is bound to take immediate and adequate

measures for the upliftment of the dalits, socially and economically, and it should be done independently of the question of temple entry. The committee suggested for the following steps for the upliftment of dalits :

- Theendal (distance of pollution) should be removed by appropriate legislative measures, subject to reservations in the matter of entry into temples and into their adjuncts like temple-tanks, temple-wells, Homapuram(place where prayer rituals were conducted), Anakottils(place where elephants are cared for) etc.
- Public tanks used for bathing purposes should be thrown open, after separate cisterns are attached to them or portions of them are walled off, where people could wash their clothes, etc. before getting into the tanks for bath.
- Public wells should be thrown open, after they are provided with cisterns, in which water should be stored from the wells by Municipal or Health Department employees, and from which water should be drained through taps.
- Government sathroms (inns) should be thrown open, after they are provided with separate kitchens, as in the case of such as are already open to all classes.

The above four observations were immediately put into action by the government and thus all restrictions on the usage of public amenities, like roads, wells, tanks etc. by the dalits, were removed. The practice of Theendal (distance of pollution) or untouchability was immediately banned too.

After this action, on 1st November, 1936 the Travancore ruler, Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma made the famous historic Temple Entry Proclamation which sanctioned the downtrodden sections of the society to enter or worshipping in to all the temples controlled by the government of Travancore. Most of the historians believe that it was Sir C.P.Ramaswami Aiyar's legal skill that overcomes all the practical difficulties posed by the orthodox section before the proclamation. Through this proclamation Travancore achieved equal freedom of worship to all classes of Hindus in 1930s itself. The Proclamation was the first of its kind in Princely States as well as in British India.

Temple Entry in Cochin and Malabar

Both the Maharajah of Cochin as well as Zamorin of Calicut were staunch opponents of temple entry for dalits. Despite repeated requests and petitions, neither considered the matter of temple entry. The Cochin Maharajah went to the extent of declaring the whole people of Travancore as untouchables and forbade any Travancore citizen from entering temples under the control of Cochin government due to the fear of pollution. The Cochin ruler even forbade the rituals like *Arattu*(holy bath) and *Para* (holy procession) in Tripunithura and Chottanikkara Temples. Even when temple entry was given in 1947, the Cochin Maharajah made an exemption clause in the Bill so as to keep his family temple "Sree Poornathrayeesha" out of the purview of temple entry. This ban was lifted in 1949 after the Thiru-kochi union. The Malabar Temple Entry

Act was formed in 1938 but the Bill became an Act only on June 2, 1947. The attitude of the Zamorin was not favourable to temple entry in Malabar. The Zamorin had no wishes to change the existing customs and usages in temples. For this reason, when hearing the news of the Travancore Temple Entry proclamation from the 'Mathrubhumi' news reporter he said that the Travancore Maharajah had freedom to give temple entry right to his subjects. But he was unable to do so as the Zamorin was only a trustee of the temples which were under the supervision of Hindu Religions Endowment Board and had been pressing the trustees to act without any default in the ancient usages and proceedings of temples. He blamed the 40th Section of the Hindu Religions Act and told that its amendment would be helpful to act him as free. But after hearing about the Bill, Zamorin send a memorandum to the authorities claiming no one had the authority to take decisions regarding temple entry as they are private properties. This clearly shows Zamorin was also against temple entry. Malabar region finally got temple entry only in 1947 after India's independence

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT-KEEZHARIYUR BOMB CASE

The Quit India Movement of 1942 was a great divide in Indian politics. The Indian National Congress, The Congress Socialist Party and the Forward Bloc decided to launch Direct Action against the British rule. The All India Congress party decided to start a non-violent mass struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. After the German invasion of Russia and the Russian declaration of war against Germany, the Indian Communist Party decided to co-operate with the British imperialists in their war efforts.

The Quit India movement of 1942 had its echoes in Malabar. The major reason for this was the change of the policy of the CPI towards the Second World War. The Communists who had the major influence upon the people of Malabar during the Quit India Struggle kept aloof from the movement.

The Travancore State Congress and its student organization and the labour unions under the leadership of N.Srikantan Nair extended support to the Quit India movement and merged State politics for a short period with national politics. The Travancore Government had issued notifications and orders similar to those issued by the Government of India, declaring the AICC and other Congress organizations illegal and controlling the publication of news relating to the movement sanctioned by the AICC. Some young worker within the Congress in Malabar constituted themselves into a Socialist group under the leadership of Dr. K. B. Menon and played their part in

the 'Quit India Movement'. They organized meetings and demonstrations in defiance of Government ban and also organized boycott of schools, colleges and courts of law. A secret Journal called *Swatantra Bharatam* was published during this period. The Travancore Government issued an order under rule 56 of Defense of Travancore Rules prohibiting public meetings, processions and other demonstrations in the State for a period of 15 days from the 10th August in view of the present situation. The District Magistrates and Police officers were instructed to prevent hartal and closing of shops in sympathy of the agitation. The State Congress Working Committee meetings held on 17th August 1942 at Trivandrum decided to join the Quit-India movements and to follow the anti-government policy adopted by the Indian National Congress and dissuade the government from helping the British government in their war efforts. The whole machinery of the civil government was to be paralyzed by open mass defense of the British Government. The government feared that the State Congress might exploit the emotion and idealism of young and unsophisticated school children and college students who were available in large numbers for agitation. The students were the main source of strength of the State Congress in the Quit India movement. The students were stirred by idealism and the spirit of self-sacrifice. The Quit India movement was the blue print for freedom. The appeal of the Quit-India movement was so touching for the nationalist minded students that they joined the agitation. The Travancore government declared the State Congress as its main enemy and alleged that the party instigated the students to violence.

The arrest of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Abdul Kalam Azad and other Congress leaders provoked the students to agitation. The 9th, 10th and 11th August being holidays there was no demonstration and protest march in the State. But the residential students of Government Law College, Trivandrum held a demonstration and protest march on 9th August itself. Students especially from Trivandrum, Alwaye and Nagecoil took the lead. They wore black bits of cloth as a sign of mourning and shouted 'ki-jais' to the arrested leaders. In Trivandrum city the students who boycotted class held a meeting in the University College premises on 12th August and passed a resolution supporting the Quit-India Movement "we the students of Trivandrum protest against the arrest of Indian National Congress leaders and that we resolve to boycott all educational institutions until the Congress and the British Government come to an agreement." The protest meetings of the students, holding Congress flag continued unabated for several days. The students also organized strikes, hartals, hunger strikes and

black flag demonstrations. The student leaders were arrested to avoid the intensification of the agitation. Salahuddin, who exhorted the students to implement the programmes of the Indian National Congress to paralyze the working of British-Indian Government, was arrested, convicted and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for 21/2 years and to a fine of Rs.500/- The government had closed down all schools up to 31st August and colleges up to 15th September. The students of Union Christian College, Alwaye and St. Berchman's College, Changanasseri conducted protest marches, demonstrations and hunger-strike as part of Quit India Agitation.

The police unleashed a wave of repression against the participants of the Quit India Movement in Malabar. The Socialist Congressmen organized secret activities and conducted sabotage. They burnt the Chemancheri railway station and the Registrar office on 19th August. This was followed by series of action of destruction by the workers of Quit India Movement in Malabar. The Ulliyeri Bridge on the Quilandy-Balusseri road was destroyed and they removed the telegraph wires and the post boxes. The police could not capture the culprits as the sabotaging was done in the night.

The Thalasseri sub court, Naduvannur Registrar office and the salt godown at Chombal were completely destroyed within few days. A country bomb was planted at the Feroke Bridge. During the first week of September 1942, telegraph wires were cut in many places near Calicut. In Kottayam thaluk, cutting of wires were frequent. The Bombay group decided to intensify the sabotage activities and they met at Verkot House in the last week of October 1942. E Vasudevan Nair and Suniyil Achuthan from Quilandy were present at the meeting chaired by K B Menon. The last message of Mahatma Gandhi was read out at the meeting which generated great enthusiasm among the participants in the secret enclave. At the end of the meeting they decided to observe 17th November 1942 as "All Kerala Sabotage Day". The meeting also resolved the responsibility of conducting the activities in different localities in Malabar. Muhammad Naha, a native of Parappangadi was an active participant in the meeting and he was selected as the treasurer of Wandoor and Manjeri firkas. He undertook to blow up Parappanagadi Railway Station. He also undertook the responsibility of demolishing the road bridge at Panampuzha. He demanded Rs.500, 6 dynamites, 4 hand bombs and 2 incendiary bombs for performing the task of sabotage.

K.V.Chanthu was another active participant in the meeting and he undertook to blow up the Government Vicotria College, Palakkad. K.T Alavi, the earlier Secretary of Ernad Firka committee offered to blow up Vadakkumpad railway bridge. To make

the Sabotage day a success, the conspirators decided to make bombs and dynamites. The meeting held in Kollam Charka Club had decided to make explosives in Kizhariyur.

Kizhariyur Bomb Case

Kizhariyur was selected as the venue of bomb making as a result of the discussion among the active delegates of Quilandy. Kizhariyur was a remote village on the sleepy banks of Akalapuzha. As this place was surrounded by hills and waterways, the conspirators could not detect the hide out easily. They had also made arrangements to give signal to the activists on the arrival of police. Meetings were held in Verkott house and in Kollam Charka Club and confirmed 17th November 1942 as the 'All Kerala Sabotage Day.' On 18th November K. Ahammed Kutty, the Sub Inspector of Badgara Police Station received a message from coastal police constable that the Fish Curing Yard at Mukkali had been burned to ashes. On the same day reported that Telegraph wires had been cut above the railway line in the night of 17th November. In Kannur district also certain blasts occurred. In many places such blasts were occurred. The Pallikkunnu Post office had been destructed partially. The railway lines near Kannur Railway Station had cut down. The police cordoned the place and arrested some persons. Later a case was filed against thirty socialists including the leaders. The Kizhariyur Bomb Case conspiracy was thoroughly investigated by the police. The man who controlled the entire movement behind the curtain was K.B. Menon. Therefore police charged a case against K.B. Menon as first accused and 31 others. Just after these incidents K.B. Menon went underground. He escaped narrowly many times from the police cordon. Later with the help of his relative, police captured him. 27 persons were arrested and produced before the Court. Four of the accused including K.B. Menon were sentenced to ten years imprisonment each. Menon was in Calicut sub Jail from the day of his arrest for 4 months. He was imprisoned at Tanjore for 8 months as detenu prisoner and one month in Vellore. He was in Alipur Jail for 14 months. Out of thirty two accused, only twenty seven were arrested. Mahtai Manjooran, T.P. Kunhirama Kidavu (son of Kerala Ganfhi K. Kelappan), M.A. Sadanadan, O. Chekkutty and Verkott Raghava Kurup went underground and the police reported them as absconding.

The August revolt was a mass movement in which men and women of all ages, all casts and creed and also all strata of the society joined together and adopted various methods. Kizhariyur Bomb case was a heroic episode in the annals of freedom movement in Malabar. The urge behind this conspiracy was nothing but patriotism and love of freedom. Even though they did not achieve their final goal it was a leap towards freedom.

MODULE IV

AIKYA KERALA MOVEMENT

- **Impact of Vaikom And Guruvayur Sathyagraha Jathas**
- **Role Of K P Kesava Menon and K Kelappan**
- **Tiru Kochi merger**
- **Aikya Kerala Movement**
- **Sir C.P.Ramaswami Aiyar's American Model and Punnappra Vayalar Struggle**
- **Kerala in 1947**
- **General Elections 1952**
- **Formation of Kerala as a linguistic State**

ROLE OF K P KESAVA MENON AND K KELAPPAN

K.Kelappan and K P Kesava Menon were two great leaders of the freedom movement in Kerala and also the forerunners of the Aikya Kerala Movement. Kelappan, who is popularly known as 'Kerala Gandhi' was the versatile leader from Malabar who led the Aikya Kerala movement. He had actively participated in the Khilafat and Noncooperation movement. He was one of the founders of *Mathrubhumi* News paper. He was elected as the convener of the 'Untouchability Abolition Committee' formed just before the Vaikom Sathyagraha. He was jailed for his participation in the Vaikom Sathyagraha. He was the President of KPCC during the Civil Disobedience Movement and led the Salt Satyagraha of Payyannur. He was arrested and jailed for six months for his participation in the Salt Sathyagraha. He was again arrested during the Quit India struggle of 1942.

Kelappan was fully involved in the work of Harijan upliftment. He started the 'Panchama School' for the lower castes at Pavor near Koyilandi and also the 'Sradhananda School' at Gopalapuram, Payyoli. He founded the 'Adhikeralodharana Sangham' mainly for the upliftment of the lower castes. It was as a continuation of his activities against untouchability that Kelappan resorted to fast unto death at Guruvayur temple in connection with the Guruvayur Satyagraha. He was elected as the President of the Malabar District Board in 1937 and continued upto 1940.

Kelappan was the president of the Aikya Kerala Committee formed in 1945. In the Aikya Kerala Convention held at Thrissur, Kelappan, as the President, stated that the Kerala state should be formed with Kasagod, Coorg, Nilgiris, Malabar, Kochi and Thiruvitamkur. It was he who first of all stated that while forming a separate state, apart from language, geographical features and historical background also should be taken into consideration. After Independence a petition committee under the leadership of Kelappan went to Delhi in February 1948 and submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister Nehru, requesting immediate formation of Kerala State.

K.P. Kesava Menon was another important freedom fighter from Malabar. He was not only a freedom fighter but also author of many books and founding member and editor of *Mathrubhumi* News paper. He also led the Aikya Kerala Movement. He started his political activities as the secretary of the Malabar Home Rule League. He practiced as an advocate at Calicut. It was at this time that he participated in the Non co-operation and Khilafat movement. During the Khilafat and non co-operation movement he was the KPCC Secretary and KPCC President at the time of Vaikom Sathyagraha. He was arrested and put behind bars while attending Vaikom Sathyagraha. He wrote lot of articles in favour of Aikya Kerala.

When Rash Bihari Bose organized the Indian Independence League in 1942, Kesava Menon became a member of its action committee. He was very active in INA, but when Subhash Chandra Bose assumed the leadership of the Indian Independence League and INA and formed 'Azad Hind Government', Kesava Menon parted ways from INA due to difference of opinion with Subhas. Kesava Menon resisted the Japanese attempt to exploit the Indian freedom fighters in Malaya for their own benefit. He was arrested by the Japanese at Singapore, confined to solitary imprisonment and released after the Second World War. In October 1946, he returned to India and resumed the editorship of the 'Mathrubhumi'. Soon afterwards, he was appointed Indian High Commissioner in Ceylon, but he resigned the post due to difference of opinion

He worked for the formation of unified Kerala State in his capacity as president of the Aikya Kerala Committee. Author of several books in Malayalam, Kesava Menon returned the Sahitya Academy Award. He was the first Executive president of Kerala Sahitya Academy and was honored by the President of India with the 'Padma Vibhushan'. He was considered and respected by all as the 'Grand Old Man' of Kerala. Till his death on November 9, 1978 Kesava Menon served as the Chief Editor of the 'Mathrubhumi'. He wrote lot of books which includes his famous autobiography *Kazhinjaalam* which is translated into English recently. It got Kendra Sahitya Academy Award. His work *Bilathivisham* gives information of his educational life at England. His work *Rashtrapithavu* won Kerala Sahitya Academy

Award. He wrote the biography of Jawaharlal Nehru. His works *Gopalakrishana Gokhale*, *Lalajpath Rai*, *Lokamanya Thilakan*, *Alisahodaranmar* (Ali brothers) and *Abraham Lincon* are also famous. His other works are *Navabharbharathaseilpikal*, *Samakaleenaraya Chila Keraleeyar*, *Bandhanathilninnu*, *Bhootavum Bhaviyum*, *Jeevithachinthakal*, *Sayahnachinthakal*, *Yesudevan* etc.. He also wrote two collection of stories *Danabhumi* and *Asthamayam*. His *Prabhathadeepam* (children's collection) drama *Mahathma* is also famous. His writings are very simple which are readable even to the common people. Like K Madhavan Nair he also practiced what he said in his life. But the most important criticism he faced was that till death he was not ready to leave his elitist Hindu mentality.

Kesava Menon went to Malaya in 1927 and practiced as an advocate at Singapur. There also he was involved in the activities connected with Indian freedom struggle. There he was arrested for his political activities and sent back to India by Japanese authorities. HE came back to Kozhikode and again became the editor of *Mathrubhumi* in 1948 and continued till his death in 1978. After his return he worked along with Kelappan and others for the achievement of Kerala, a separate state in Indian Union.

TIRU KOCHI MERGER

Travancore-Cochin or Thiru-Kochi was a short-lived state of India (1949–1956). It was originally called United State of Travancore and Cochin and was created on 1 July 1949 by the merger of two former Princely States, the kingdoms of Travancore and Cochin with Trivandrum as the capital. It was renamed State of Travancore-Cochin (Tiru-Kochi) in January 1950. The policy of merger and integration of Native States initiated by the States Ministry of the Government of India under the guidance of Sardar Vallabhai Patel had improved the prospects of the early formation a united Kerala. The States ministry secretary V P Menon had already started the implementation of the schemes in 1949 itself. V.P Menon held discussions with the kings, ministers and political leaders of both Travancore and Cochin and they all accepted the proposal for the integration of Travancore and Kochi.

The integration of Travancore and Kochi was accepted by the Central Government in principle in April 1949. After accepting the proposal for the integration of these two states, the Central Government appointed another committee, the Buch Committee, to study and report about the integration in practice. The Kind of Travancore demanded to the Buch Committee that the king must be life-long Perumal of the integrated state of Kochi and Travocre. On the contrary the Cochin king was ready to hand over any administrative aspects for the benefits of the people. After a series of discussions, the King of Travancore was forced to accept the suggestions put forward by V.P.Menon. It was decided that the Travancore King would be the

'Rajapramukh' of the integrated Tiru-Kochi state and his successor was to be appointed by the government of India. This was accepted by the King. Finally the Travancore and Cochin was integrated in to one state called Tiru-Kochi on 1st July 1949. The capital of the new State was fixed as Trivandrum and the High Court at Ernakulam. The Travancore King became 'Rajapramukh' (governor) of the new state. The Maharajah of Cochin was offered to be addressed as Uparaja Pramukh, but he did not want any title after handing over the power. The Maharaja of Cochin offered 'to efface himself completely in order that his people might enjoy a larger life'. The Maharaja politely said that the eldest member of Cochin Royal Family should be called Valiya Thampuran and gave up royal powers unconditionally for the good of the people. The legislature and the Ministries of the two States were combined to form the Legislature and the Ministries of the two States were combined to form the Legislature and the Ministry of the new State of Travancore-Kochi. The Congress Prime Minister of Travancore, Parur T.K.Natrayana Pillai became the first Prime Minister of Tiru-Kochi. When the Indian Constitution was accepted in 1950, the designation of Prime Minister was changed into Chief Minister. This was the first positive step taken in the direction of the formation of the state of Kerala. The state of Travancore-Cochin started functioning under good auspices.

First elections were held in 1951 and A. J. John, Anaparambil from Congress party was elected as the Chief Minister, ruling until 1954. While Pattom A. Thanu Pillai was the Praja Socialist Party Chief minister in 1954, Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress launched a campaign for the merger of the Tamil-speaking regions of Southern Travancore with the neighboring area of Madras State. The agitation took a violent turn and civilians and local police were killed at Marthandam and Puthukkada, irreparably alienating the entire Tamil-speaking population from merger into Travancore-Cochin.

Under State Reorganisation Act of 1956, the four Southern Taluks of Travancore, namely Thovalai, Agasteeswaram, Kalkulam and Vilavancode and a part of the Chencotta Taluk was merged with Madras State. On 1 November 1956 Travancore-Cochin was joined with Malabar District of Madras State to form the new state of Kerala, with a governor, appointed by the President of India, as the head of the state instead of 'Rajapramukh'.

AIKYA KERALA MOVEMENT

The Aikya Kerala Movement was the concrete expression of the Malayalam speaking people to have a state of their own. It aimed the integration of Malabar, Kochi and Thiruvitamkur into one territory. The Keralites who spoke the same language, shared the common cultural tradition, unified by same history, rituals and customs were politically separated for a long period by different rulers including the foreigners.

The division of Kerala by the British into three administrative units, viz., Malabar, Travancore and Cochin acted as an obstacle to the early formation of such a state. Moreover a portion of the Malayalam speaking area, viz., the present Kasarkode and Hosdurg Taluks formed as part of a fourth administrative unit, viz., the district of South Canara State.

It was during the national movement that the people of Kerala understood the necessity of unification and integration for the common growth of the Malayalees. Malabar was under the direct rule of the British while monarchical rule under the control of the British existed in Travancore and Cochin. It was the national movement that taught the Keralites that political unification was to be done on linguistic basis. The first step in this direction was taken over by the Indian National Congress especially in its 1920 Nagpur Conference. It was in this Congress session that they decided to organize the State Congress Committees on linguistic basis. It was with this aim that the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) was formed in 1920. It was not only for Malabar, but also for Travancore and Cochin. The Kerala Pradesh Conference met at Ottappalam in 1921 was attended by the representatives from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore.

One of the earliest resolutions on the subject of United Kerala was passed at the State Peoples' Conference held at Eranamkulam in April 1928. The Conference was attended by delegates from all parts of Kerala and one of the resolutions passed therein called for the early formation of Aikya Kerala. The All Kerala Kudiyan Conference in 1928 also adopted separate resolutions demanding 'Aikya Keralam'. The Payyannur Conference of Congress in 1928 under the Presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru, through a resolution requested the national leadership of the Congress to take steps to constitute Kerala into a separate province at the time of the framing of a Constitution for Free India. The series of All Kerala Political Conferences held under the auspices of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee since 1921 helped to bring political workers from all the three administrative units on a common platform and to make them think in terms of a United State. The issue regarding the formation of Kerala into a separate state was discussed in the Congress Working Committee meeting at Wardha in 1938 and in the Bombay Congress Conference on 1939. During this period the activities for the formation of the Kerala State were restricted to the passing of resolutions in different platforms. There were no such movements. Still those people, who had shown their interest in the national movement, generally agreed that there should be a separate state for the Malayalam speaking people.

The movement for the formation of a Kerala State gathered momentum in the forties when the prospects of Indian Independence looked bright. In 1945 a combined meeting of K.P.C.C, Cochin State People's Congress and the Travancore

State Congress discussed the plans and programmes to be adopted for the formation of Kerala as a separate state. In a message sent to the Cochin Legislative Council Council on 29th July 1946, Sri Kerala Varma, the then Maharaja of Cochin, expressed himself in favour of the early formation of a Kerala State comprised of Travancore, Cochin and British Malabar. A sub-committee of the Kerala Provincial Congress formed for the purpose met at Cheruthuthi late in 1946 under the presidentship of K.P.Kesava Menon and decided to convene an Aikya Kerala Conference at an early date. As a result of this the Aikya Kerala Conference was held at Thrichur in April 1947 under the Presidentship of K.Kelappan. It was attended by hundreds of delegates from all parts of Kerala and was more representative in character than any other conference held in Kerala till then. The reigning Maharaja of Cochin, Sri Kerala Varma, attended the conference. He spoke in favour of the establishment of a united Kerala State comprising of British Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. The convention demanded that the Kerala State should be formed with the princely states of Travancore and Cochin and British occupied Malayalam speaking areas and Mahe, considering the geographical, linguistic, cultural, economic and administrative aspects. It further stated categorically that such a state would be an integral part of the Indian Union, having self-governing powers of administration vested with the people. The conference passed a resolution moved by the Congress leader E.Moudu Moulavi, urging the early formation of Aikya Kerala and also elected a standing council of 100 members to follow it up by action.

After Independence a Petition Committee under the leadership of K.Kelappan went to Delhi in February 1948 and submitted a memorandum to the then Prime Minister, Jaeharlala Nehru, questioning the immediate formation of the Kerala State. The Constituent Assembly appointed a State Language Commission called the Dhar Commission to enquire the problems related to the new state formation on linguistic basis and to submit report to the government. Accordingly, the Dhar Commission visited Kerala in 1948 itself and made detailed enquiries about the possibility of the Kerala State formation. To persuade the Commission to hasten its work, another Aikya Kerala Conference was held at Aluva in February 1949 and passed a resolution requesting the Central Government to form the new Kerala state without any delay. But the State Congress leader from Travancore, Pattom Thanu Pillai opposed the formation of a united Kerala State. In November 1949 another conference was held at Palaghat to press for the formation of Kerala State.

SIR C.P.RAMASWAMI AIYAR'S AMERICAN MODEL AND PUNNAPRA VAYALAR STRUGGLE

Sir C.P.Ramaswamy Iyer, popularly known as Sir CP or simply CP was an able lawyer, efficient administrator and shrewd politician. He was the Dewan of Travancore princely state from 1936 to 1947. Under his Dewanship, Travancore

became the first princely state to abolish capital punishment, first to introduce free and compulsory education, first to introduce universal adult franchise and the first to be connected to the rest of India by air. It was with the support and initiation of Sir C.P. that Sri Chithirathirunal Ramavarma, the Maharaja of Travancore issued the famous Temple Entry Proclamation on November 12, 1936, which gave Hindus of all castes and classes, including Harijans or untouchables, the right to enter Hindu temples in the state. He was the first person in India to suggest a plan for interlinking the rivers in the country and is also credited with the establishment of several hydro-electric projects. He established the Pallivasal Hydro electric power project on the Periyar River and initiated the Pechipara Hydro-electric scheme and the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary Project. In 1940 under his Dewanship, Travancore became the first state to nationalize road transport in India. The first cement highway in India between Trivandrum and Kanyakumari covering a distance of 88kms was constructed during his tenure. He also carried out a great deal of pioneering work for the Vivekananda Rock at Kanyakumari. It was he who started the University of Travancore (present University of Kerala) in 1937 with the Maharaja Sri Chithira Thirunal as the Chancellor and himself as the Vice Chancellor. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Travancore in 1939. He also renovated the Padmanabhapuram palace built during Marthanda Varma and expanded the Trivandrum Art Gallery.

He was the first to introduce the midday meal scheme in the form of the Vanchi Poor Fund in Travancore to encourage poor children to attend school. Capital punishment was abolished and universal adult franchise introduced in 1940. He appointed Mrs. Anna Chandy as the first District Judge who later became the first Indian woman High court Judge. He established the Travancore Bank which became the State Bank of Travancore. It was during his time that Travancore made rapid progress in industrial development; He invited the Indian Aluminium Company to set up its first plant in Alwaye to manufacture aluminum cables. He established the Fertilizers and Chemicals of Travancore, the first plant in India with American collaboration. He also established the Travancore Cement Co., the Travancore Titanium Co. and the Travancore eRayons Limited. The state revenue increased four-fold during his tenure as Dewan.

But he was become unpopular among the public in Travancore due to his changing attitude and policies. Sir CP determined to implement the American Model Reforms and support the cause of an independent Travancore. In October 1946, a mass uprising broke out in Punnapra and Vayalar regions of Alleppy in reaction to Ramaswami Iyer's speeches for the creation of an 'American Model' of executive in Travancore. But he ruthlessly suppressed the revolt which had made far reaching changes in the history of Kerala.

Punnapra Vayalar Uprising of 1946

Punnapra Vayalar Uprisings, named after the two major centers of confrontation, were led by the working classes of Ambalapuzha and Cherthala taluks in October 1946. In this struggle, the rural mass joined hands with the organized trade unions. They were inspired by the communist ideology. This revolt lasted for four days from October 24 to 28, 1946. Intense repression and army firing resulted in the death of over 300 on the people's side. The upsurge was suppressed in a few days, but had made far reaching consequences in the history of Travancore.

The Communist Party of the 1940s took a clear and forthright stand regarding the ideal of United Kerala, the rejection of princely rule and the establishment of democracy. Only the struggles related to these, the party believed, can equip them for the ideological struggle against the destructive and reactionary feudal, bourgeoisie and colonial elements.

On the eve of transfer of power at the center Ramaswamy Aiyar tried to introduce substantial changes in the constitution of Travancore in January 1947. The very nature of the government was to be changed by the reform. It was conceived "as a constitution based upon a non-removal executive, on the monarchical system and on the theory that the Ruler should not be the target of controversy". The new Act introduced adult suffrage and on the basis of this franchise the maximum strength of the Assembly was fixed at one hundred and fifty five. The members were to be elected from territorial constituencies consisting of about 13000 to 15000 voters. All members of the House were to be elected. Though official were given the right to participate in the deliberations of the House, there were denied voting right. The Upper House represented various professions and interest groups. The administration was to be carried out not by ministers but by six committees constituted for that purpose, from among members of the two Houses. Most of the powers and functions of the government "with very small exceptions", were invested with these committees. The committees represented the Legislature and the decisions of the Legislature were to be implemented by the committees. i.e. the Executive. The Legislature has no power to change the Executive once it was constituted. The powers of the Dewan remained intact and his authority, as the head of the Executive was supreme. He was responsible only to the Maharaja, who had the right to appoint and remove him from office. The Dewan, C.P.Ramaswamy Iyer, came to the conclusion that at this juncture the path of prudence, the path of safety, the path of realization is the path of independence of Travancore". His learned view was that Responsible government of the Westminster model was not suitable to the conditions of Travancore.

The political parties in Travancore rejected the new condition. They dubbed it as 'American Model' and started agitation for its withdrawal. The new

proposal was intended to sabotage the struggle for responsible government and to ensure the continuance Dewan's autocracy in the State. But it was soon revealed that it was strongly anti-nationalist also. The Dewan said that if a Muslim majority nation of Pakistan was to be created, India would get fragmented and Tiruvitamkur should also be an independent entity. On the creation of Pakistan, later, he even sent his government's envoy to Karachi as the Ambassador of Independent Tiruvitamkur.

In the early stages, all the political parties were unanimous in rejecting the proposals. But the State Congress leadership was totally opposed to the idea of mass protests and direct action against these proposals. This resigned attitude soon gave rise to an opinion of the State Congress that the new constitutional proposals be given a chance of trial before they are rejected outright. The discussions of the State Congress leaders with the Dewan resulted in the widespread rumour that a sellout was on the way. But the Communist Party and its politically conscious unions especially of Ambalppuzha, Cherthal taluks had no doubts about how to react to this proposal. They rejected the proposals outright and "*American Model Arabikkadali*" became the leading slogan of the period.

Along with the American model declaration of Sir CP, the conditions of the people in Travancore at that time also provoked the people. The actual material milieu of Ambalapuzha, Cherthala taluka was also conducive to the struggle against the state and its allies. There were the economic grievances which were sharpened by the world war conditions, food shortage, unemployed ex-service men in large numbers etc. in these two taluks. On the other hand, there was sufficient provocation offered by the Jenmi classes. Like the workers, the big Jenmies, big merchants and factory owners of these areas also had their associations and political attitudes. These groups had indirect allies with the state. Besides physical assaults on union leaders, they sided with the police in cooking up and registering innumerable fraud cases against the workers. As the police and *jenmi goondas* attacked the workings, they also started countering it in their own way.

Besides hunger jathas and protest meetings the situation led to a spate of strikes in the coir factories in the months of August and September in 1946. The workers of Alapuzha organized an indefinite strike on 24th September 1946 to get political freedom and some other immediate demands. The police arrested the trade union leader R. Sugathan and tried to suppress the strike. The Dewan issued orders banning the Communist party and the trade union from 1st October onwards. By that time the struggle had become so popular and wide spread. The people clashed with the police at several places. The government sent a contingent of the Army also to Alappuzha to assist the police in suppressing the striking workers and the people who supported them. The owners of these factories became panicky and declared lock

outs. This only helped to deepen the crisis. The militant workers now found themselves in joining open strikes with their brethren. The government decided to crush the working class movement in Punnapra and Vayalar.

In between the conflicting atmosphere, All Travancore Trade Union Congress gave a call to observe a one-day strike on 20th October 1946 in support of the workers on strike. The Dewan tried to stop the workers from resorting to strike, in vein. The trade union leader T.V.Thomas and Karunakara Panikkar met the Dewan and told him that the workers would not retreat from their path of struggle until they are being given the responsible government.

When the workers struggle became more and more wider, the government declared martial law throughout the two taluks and C.P Ramaswamy Iyer was promoted to the rank of Commander-in-chief of the Tiruvitamkur Armed Forces. Under his personal supervision a reign of terror was unleashed in the Ambalapuzha and Cherthal Taluks. The working class notwithstanding the strains, trials and mounting pressures took their own defensive measures to meet the situation. The formation of volunteer camps in the remote and isolated areas of the Taluks should be viewed in this background. These volunteer camps were centers designed to impart defensive and offensive training through indigenous technological innovations.

There were army firings in more than half a dozen centers. From 24th to 27th October 1946, the people with their country made weapons fought against the police and the army, with extreme bravery and reckless adventures. On 24th October, on the birthday of Maharaja, the striking employees marched from Alappuzha to Punnapra and communist cadres from other parts of the taluk joined the. A contingent of police force was stationed at Punnapra to check communist activities in the locality. The mob attacked the police stationed seized rifles from the policemen. In the encounter four policemen including one sub-Inspector were killed on the spot, ten other constables were injured and in the police firing 26 rioters died and hundred injured. Police was instructed to break the labour camps at any cost and to start clear up operation immediately after the birthday celebration of Maharaja. The situation became so tensed and the police tried to suppress the struggle by force.

The army and police used machine guns to face the sickles and stones used by the workers and peasants on 27th October, the army fired their machine guns continuously for three hours towards the people at Punnapra and Vayalar. Nobody has counted the number of the people who died on the soil of Punnapra and Vayalar. After the firing of 27th October, Punnapra and Vayalar remained as a grave-yard for months to come. Over 300 workers were believed to have been killed in them. Large number of arrests and other tortures followed the shootings. The government went on its maximum extent dealing with the insurgency in Ambalapuzha and Cherthala Taluks.

C. Narayanapillai who was not a communist, condemns the nature of the suppression as brutal and barboise. He says that when a single unit of police would have been enough to face the disturbed situation, Dewan C.P employed the whole Travancorean armed forces for the same. This was with the clear ulterior motive of eradicating the politicized working class and not for the maintenance of law and order.

The news about the genocide at Punnapra and Vayalar by the army shocked the whole country. The strike was withdrawn on 28th October. Eventhough the Dewan could suppress the upsurge; its spark kindled the spirit of revolution among the youth of Kerala. The workers and peasants unions were became more and stronger in the state and communist movement became more ardent in the region.

On June 3, 1947, British government accepted the demands for a partition of India and the Princely States were given two options of wither staying independent or merging with the dominions of India or Pakistan. Supported by the Dewan, Maharaja Sri Chithira Thirunal issued a declaration of Independence on June 18, 1947. As Travancore,s declaration on Independence was unacceptable to India, negotiations were started with the Dewan. According to his family sources, the Dewan was not in favour of independence but only greater autonomy to Travancore. A favourable agreement had been reached between the Dewan and the Indian Union representatives by July 23, 1947. Accession to the Indian Union could not be carried out because it was pending for approval by the Maharaja of Travancore. But as assassination attempt was made on Dewan on July 25, 1947 during a concert commemorating the anniversary of Swathi Thirunal, dewan survived with multiple stab wounds and hastened the accession of Travancore to the Indian Union soon after his recovery. He resigned as Dewan of Travancore and went to London in 1948.

KERALA IN 1947

Towards the end of British rule, Kerala was a collection of princely stats and British administered provinces. The Northern regions were part of Madras Presidency which included Dakshina Karnataka or South Canara and the Malabar District. The southern regions were either part of the Kingdom of Cochin(Perumpadappu Swaroopam) or of the bigger kingdom of Travancore. When India became Independence in 15th August 1947, Kerala's condition was this. Madras Presidency became Madras State and a part of the Indian Union and this, the Malabar district and South Canara became Indian Districts. It was at this time that Sardar Vallabhai Patel, the Iron Man of India, set upon the mighty missin of integration of princely states. Kochi was one of the first princely states willingly join in the Indian Union . But it took some serious threat of popular protests to meke the kingdom of Travancore to join in the Union.

Thiruvithamkur Diwan Sir C.P. declared on 11th June 1947 that Thiruvithamkur would remain an independent sovereign nation when British leaves India. The Independent Thiruvithamkur declaration of Sir C P caused for strong protest from every part of Thiruvithamkur, especially from the side of freedom loving people of the region. The state congress decided to start direct struggle through out Thiruvithamkur for responsible government. A secret meeting was held by the state congress at Paravur and declared the objective of state congress was to achieve responsible government in Thiruvithamkur, its joining in Indian union and finally the formation of united Kerala.

Several public meetings were held at various places against the declaration of Independent Thiruvithamkur. The Thiruvithamkur students Congress decided to hold a public meeting Thiruvananthapuram in July 1947. The government banned the meeting, but the students broke out the ban and conducted the meeting. The government took severe repressive measures and many of the student leaders were arrested. In the protest, students all over Kerala boycotted classes. Protest meetings were going on. Three persons including a student were killed in a police firing at Pettah, Thiruvananthapuram on 13th July 1947.

In Kochi 'Kochi Prajamandalam' or Kochin Congress was conducting continuous struggles for responsible government in 1946-47 periods. A system of Dyarchy was existed in Kochi. The first popular ministry had come into power in Kochi in September 1946. But the important portfolios like finance, law and judiciary were still in the hands of the Diwan. This paved way for conflicts between the popular ministers and Diwan. The Prajamandalam demanded that all the departments including finance should be handed over to popular ministers and decided to start fresh struggle for achieving their demands.

The King of Kochi was forced to succumb to the popular demand finally. The departments of finance and others were taken over from the Diwan and handed over to the ministers on 14th August 1947 on the eve of Indian independence. Now the Diwan post was nothing but a name of ornamentation and finally it was abolished on 1st September of the same year. A new post of Chief Minister, in place of Diwan was created in Kochi. Panambilli Govinda Menon became the first chief minister of Kochi.

GENERAL ELECTIONS 1952

Democratic governments started functioning in Kerala right from 1948 onwards. Travancore was the first Indian state to have a Legislative Council under a colonial system. This was formed in 1888 during the period of Sree Moolam Thirunal Maharaja of Travancore for the purpose of making laws and regulations. The council consisted of six official members and two non official members. This Council was formed, enlarged and invested with more powers and functions during the later years. In Cochin State the Legislative Council came into being in 1925 and it was

progressively reformed later. In August 1947 following the transfer of power steps were taken in Travancore to constitute a popular government. Travancore was the first state in India hold a general election on the basis of universal adult franchise two years before the Indian Constitution came into force. The election was held from 2nd to 16th February 1948. Out of the 120 seats, the Travancore State Congress captured 97 seats, The Travancore Muslim League 8 seats, the Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress captured 14 seats and the remaining one seat was secured by a non-party candidate. In Malabar region, the people elected their representatives to the Madras Legislative Assembly and the Central Legislature on the basis of property rights. So elections were not new to the people of Travancore.

The first decade since independence was a period of political instability due to the emergence of multi party system, the decline of the Congress, the ascendancy of the Communist Government and the realignment of the communal forces. The period from 1947 to 1956 was a period of ministerial instability in the regions of Travancore Cochin State. There were two ministries in Travancore in the course of 19 months and two in Cochin. Between 1949 and 1956 there were five ministers in Travancore-Cochin which meant that the average tenure of a ministry was only 16.

After the merger of Thiruvitamkur and Kochi in July 1949, the new State of Thiru-Kochi was known as 'United State of Thiruvitamkur and Kochi'. It was renamed as Thiruvitamkur-Kochi in 1950. The Thiruvitamkur Raja became 'Rajpramukh' of the new Thiru-Kochi state. The Prime Minister of Thiruvitamkur, T.K.Narayana Pillai became the first Prime Minister of Thiru-Kochi. After the acceptance of the Indian Constitution in 1950, the designation of Prime Minister in the Princely State was changed in to Chief Minister.

T.K Narayanapillai ministry faced opposition from all sides. When he introduced a bill relating to the Devaswam Board it was opposed by the leaders of Nayar Seva Sangam and SNDP yogam. Evethough the bill was passed in spite of their opposition, they were not satisfied with the appointment of them in to the Devaswam Board. They brought the T.K.Narayanapillai ministry down on 24th February 1951. The fall of T.K.Naraya Pillai ministry caused for a period of chaos and confusion in the politics of Kerala. The State Government came to a virtual stand still. The second ministry came under the leadership of Shri C. Kesavan on 3rd March 1951. He submitted his resignation on 10th February 1952 after the announcement of the General Election Result in 1952.

The first general election under the Republican Constitution was held in the State from 10th December to 5th January 1952. Almost all the political parties in Travancore and Cochin decided to contest the election. The parties decided to use the situation to prove their strength in Travancore. The Indian National Congress fielded

candidates in all constituencies. The election Commission approved a list of 26 symbols and laid down rules for the assignments of these symbols. 14 symbols were reserved by the Commission for All India Parties. Altogether there were 108 constituencies out of which 97 were single member constituencies and 11 two member constituencies. Total number of voters came more than 50 lakhs. Three national parties-Indian National Congress, Socialist Party and Revolutionary Socialist Party, Four State parties-Kochin Party, Thiruvitamkur-Kochin Republican Praja Party, Thiruvitamkur-Tamil Nadu National Congress and Tamil Toilers Party, two unrecognized registered recognized parties-Kerala Socialist Party and Tamil Nadu People Front, apart from 199 independents contested in the election. Though Communist Party was banned, its candidates took part in the election as independents.

Double white bull was selected as the symbol of the Congress party which indicates National Unity and political stability in India, particularly in Travancore. The leftists stood for revolutionary reforms with their symbol 'sickle and paddy'. The socialist party selected their traditional symbol Banyan tree.

Travancore was allocated 108 seats in 97 constituencies for the State Legislative Assembly. Eleven seats in the State Legislature were reserved for the scheduled cast. In order to ensure secrecy of the ballot and to leave no room for complaints the symbol system of voting was adopted for the conduct of elections. Under this system a separate ballot box was allotted to each candidate and to distinguish that box from the boxes of the other candidates, the symbol assigned to the candidate was prominently displayed outside the box. A copy of the printed symbol was also pasted inside the box.

The poll was conducted between December 10, 1951 and January 5th, 1952. In the election the Congress party allied with the Democratic Congress to oppose the Communist party. Despite this merger, the result of the election was very disappointing to the Congress Party because it met with unexpected reverse. Out of the total 108 seats, Congress won 44 seats(three uncounted), socialist Party- 11(one uncounted)Thiurvitamkur-Tamilnadu Congress -8, Kocin Party -1, Revolutionary Socialist Party -6, Kerala Socialist party-1 and 37 independent candidate out of which 25 we communists. The congress party fell short of majority and so it made coalition with Thiruvitamkur- Tamilnadu National Congress, Kerala Socialist Party and a nominated member. Congress leader A.J John was selected as the new Chief Minister of Thiru-Kochi State in March 1952 with other six ministers. Later a representative of T.T.N.C Party was also made as minster.

A.J.John ministry could not complete its term. He had to resign in March 1954 as TTNC withdrew its support on the question of forming a separate Congress Party for Tamils. When the non-confidence motion against the government was passed, in

September 1953 the Assembly was dissolved. Still then the John ministry continued as government till the next elections. In February 1955 a Congress Ministry headed by Panampalli Govinda Menon assumed office with the support of the Tamilnadu Congress. This Cabinet fell in March 1956 owing to internal dissensions in the Congress Party. The fall of the Panampilli Ministry was followed by the first spell of President's rule in the State.

FORMATION OF KERALA AS A LINGUISTIC STATE

The desire for a united Kerala, or Aikya Kerala, consisting of all Malayalam speaking territories was a long cherished desire for the people of this region. The modern state of Kerala was divided into Malabar, Travancore and Cochin by the British for administrative reasons and was the foremost obstacle on the way of realizing the dream of a united Kerala. The Thiruvitamkur-Kochi merger of 1949 provided a new encouragement to the people working for the formation of Kerala State. The Aikya Kerala committee welcomed the formation of the Thiru-Kochi State. The Aikya Kerala conference was held at Palakkad in November 1949. Malabar was to be added to Thiru-Kochi State. But there was a problem- in the political hierarchy of the national, Madras was treated as 'A' State while Thiru-Kochi as 'B' State. Some of the activists thought that integration of Malabar with Thiru-Kochi would degrade the present political position of Malabar. Some of the activists thought that integration of Malabar with Thiru-Kochi would degrade the present political position of Malabar. Some others held that being 'Rajpramukh' the head of the Thiru-Kochi State, integration of Madras with that State would affect the democratic system of Malabar adversely. The conference finally passed the resolution which clearly stated that the formation of Kerala State must be done without having the post called 'Rajpramukh'.

Different opinions and suggestions were put forward regarding the formation of Kerala State. The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee-KPCC-was split into two in 1952 with separate organization called Malabar Pradesh Congress Committee and Thiru-Kochi Pradesh Congress Committee on the issue of the formation of Kerala State. The Malabar Pradesh Congress now started opposing the formation of Kerala State and put forward a new suggestion that a south Indian State should be formed by merging Thiru-Kochi with Madras State.

It was during this period that the struggle for Andhra Pradesh on linguistic base was gathering momentum. The leader of the movement Potti Sriramalu's self immolation forced the union government to take immediate steps for the formation of states on the linguistic base. The report of the Dhar Committee also suggested that the formation of States should be done on the basis of respective languages. A new commission headed by Sardar K.M. Panikkar was formed by the government. When

this Commission visited Kerala in 1954, several memorandums were submitted for and against the formation of Kerala state.

Panikkar Commission submitted its report and the government acted quickly. According to the State Reorganization Act that was passed in 1956, Malabar added to the Thiruvithamkur-Kochi state and thus a new state called came into existence on 1st November 1956. The State Reorganisation Act that formed Kerala also resulted in the re-bordering of a number of other Indian states including Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and Bombay state among others. A federal structure of governance adopted soon after Independence in 1947 had led to the formation of state borders in keeping with historical and political considerations. In 1956 the borders of states had to be redrawn along linguistic lines. It was during the period of President's rule in Thiruvithamkur-Kochi that the decision on the re-organization of the States of the Indian Union on linguistic basis was taken by the Government of India. Under the States Reorganisation Act of 1956 the four southern taluks of Tovala, Agastiswaram, Kalkulam, Vilavancode and a part of Shencottah taluk were separated from Travancore-Cochin and included in Madras State. The districts of Malabar and Kasargod Taluk of South Canara district were added on to the remaining portions of Travancore-Cochin to constitute the new State of Kerala. The State of Kerala formally came into existence on November 1, 1956, with a Governor as the head of the State. The last vestiges of Princely rule in Kerala also disappeared with the end of the institution of Rajpramuksh. Kerala became an independent democratic state as a part of the Republic of India and ushered for a new era of development. The modern Kerala is divided into fourteen districts with Thiruvananthapuram as the state capital. The first general election to the Kerala Legislature was held in February and March 1957. The Communist party of India and a few independents supported by it secured 65 out of 125 seats in the Legislature. President's rule came to an end on April 5, 1957 and a Communist Ministry under the Chief Ministership of E.M.S.Namboodiripad came to power. Thus the government on the basis of Indian Constitution came into existence in Kerala. Kerala is one of the first places in the world where a Communist Ministry came into power by a general election in 1957.
