

HISTORY OF KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



First Degree Programme under CBCSS System

HISTORY OF KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Dissertation submitted to the university of Kerala in partial fulfillment of the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts

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DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “ History of Kerala Legislative Assembly” is a record of the Research work carried out by us at the department of History under the guidance of Dr. Lekha Rani.M.L, All Saint’s College, Trivandrum and submitted to the University of Kerala partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts First Degree programme in History under CBCS system. The particulars given in the report are the best of our knowledge and understanding


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
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project titled “ **History of Kerala Legislative Assembly**” is a record of studies carried out by Karunya.S.B, Mariyam.A, Princy.B, Renjana Raj R.L and Rethika.R.S the department of History All Saints’ College Thiruvananthapuram under my guidance and submitted to the University of Kerala Partial fulfillment of the Degree Bachelor of Arts, First Degree Programme in History under CBCS system.


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CONTENTS

Sl.No	Topic	Pg.No
1	Introduction	
2	Chapter – I Early political movements in Kerala	
3	Chapter – II Early Legislation Sreemoolam Assembly and Sree Chitra State Council	
4	Chapter III Kerala Legislature	
5	Chapter – IV Present Legislative Assembly	
6	Conclusions and suggestions	
	Bibliography	
	Appendix	

INTRODUCTION



In 1956 the state of Kerala was formed on linguistic basis marginalising Cochin, Malabar and Travancore regions and the Kasargod region of South Canara. The first Assembly Election in Kerala State was held in February, March 1957 the first Kerala Legislative Assembly was formed on 5 April 1957. The Assembly had 127 members including a nominated member.

The Kerala Legislative Assembly popularly known as *Niyamasabha*. It is the state Assembly of Kerala one of the states as in India the Assembly is formed by 1910 representatives each elected member represents one of the 140 Constituencies with the borders of Kerala is referred as member of the Legislative Assembly consists of 140 elected members and one member nominated by the Governor from the Anglo Indian community.

Our Secretariat is over 140 year old was constructed in the year 1869 by Sree Ayillyem Thirunal. The original purpose was to run Travancore Royal Darbar hall where the king meet his council of ministers on monthly basis. It was designed and built by Baily then chief engineer of Travancore and incorporates elements of Roman Dutch architecture. The construction was supervised by Dewan T. Mahadev Rao, whose statue now crosses the road opposite the building it is also housed the Legislative Assembly from 1939 before it moved to the new buildings.

A glimpse into the evolution of the Legislative Assembly of Kerala in decades different phases of development matching the social political and economic changes over the years. The evolutionary cycle of the development in the elsewhere princely state of Travancore and Cochin and British Malabar to the uniform progress in the Integrated State of Kerala.

The presently states of Travancore and cochin were unified and the state of Travancore Cochin was formed on July 1 1949. Malabar district of the state of Madras excluding the state area constituted the state of Kerala as per the states reorganization in November 1956.

The Phases

1888–1947	-	Pre Independence period
1947-1956	-	Responsible Government
Since 1956	-	The State Legislative

Objectives of the Study

Aims and objectives of the study is given below

1. To study about origin and Historical background of Kerala Legislative Assembly
2. To get an a idea about the significance of Legislative Assembly
3. To analysis scope and importance of legislative assembly in Kerala administration and politic.
4. To provide opportunities to the study and research about Kerala Legislative Assembly
5. To understand important rocks of legislative play the development of the State.

Sources for the Study

The project is prepared with the help of both primary and secondary sources. Besides that several sources are also utilized in the study.

Review of Literature

1. K. Mathen through his book “ *Nammude Niyamasabha Nadapadi Kramangal*”, referred in depth study of the background of the Kerala Legislative Assembly evolution and functioning of Kerala Legislative Assembly
2. A. Sreedhara Menon through his book “ *A Survey of Kerala History*” deals with Kerala’s political and administrative background

3. A. Sreedhara Menon through his book “Political History of Kerala” deals with Kerala political event that took place in Kerala
4. J. Prabash through his book “ Kerala Legislative History and Politics” gives detailed information about Kerala Legislative Assembly since 1957
5. Louise Ouwerkerk through his book “ No Elephants for the Maharaja Social Political Change in the Princely State of Travancore” gives deep information about political conditions during the period 1921 to 47.
6. Balakrishnan Nair through his book “ the Government and Politics of Kerala and Trivandrum” It gives deep information about Kerala and Travancore political situations
7. T. Mahadeva Menons “ A Hand Book of Kerala’ provided valuable sources of the reconstruction of Kerala Legislative Assembly.
8. M.Laxmikanth “ Indian Polity” sixth revised edition, give the information about political powers and features of India and its states
9. S.V. Unnikrishnan Nair “ History and Kerala Legislative Assembly” (guide). It gives information about the Legislative Assembly

METHODOLOGY

The present study is an attempt to find out of the History of Kerala Legislative Assembly the Work is completed by analytical and Historical, Narrative Method Both primary and secondary sources are used for the preparation of the work Analytical and Narrative style was used throughout the study. Throughout the research we got deep information about Historical Background of the Kerala Legislative Assembly.

HYPOTHESES

SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

The main aim of research is to research and interpret historical background of Kerala Legislative Assembly. Mainly the research focus on the historical background of Kerala Legislative Assembly to the evolution period. An Integrated State of Kerala emerged on the fusion linguistic grounds demoting the walls of provincial separations. After the first general elections held in February March 1957. The first series of the legislative assemblies of Kerala indicate different phases of development and social political changes over the years that include British period. Kerala Legislative Assembly include primary state of Travancore Cochin and Malabar to the uniform progress in the integrated state of Kerala. The research help to examine the history of Kerala Legislative Assembly also give the deep information about functions legislative assembly and its importance.

Limitations of the study

Due to the pandemic situation and short period of time direct collection of Data is not possible.

Chapter – I
POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN TRAVANCORE

Chapter – II

The Legislature

Travancore was the first Indian State to have a Legislative Council in a Council with a minimum of five members having been brought into existence as early as 1888 A. D. , *Early Constitution*- The strength and the powers of the Council grew steadily with the passing of years until as a result of the promulgation of the Legislative Reforms Act, II of L108 M. E. (1932 A. D.), the legislature was reconstituted and made to consist of two houses, viz., the Sri Mulam Assembly which was the Lower House and the Srichitra State Council which was the Upper House. The Assembly consist with of 72 members of whom 62 were non-officials and 10 officials. The Sri Chitra State Council was composed of 37 members of whom 27 was were non-officials and 10 officials. The Dewan was the President of both the Houses of the Legislature.¹

Sree Moolam Popular Assembly

The Srec Moolam Popular Assembly in the erstwhile State of Travancore was the first popularly elected legislature in the history of India. Its predecessor legislative council was formed in Travancore in 1888 with eight appointed members. Sri Moolam Thirunal Ramavarm, who became maharajah of Travancore in 1886, established it in an order issued on 30 March 1888. In 1898, the strength of the council was increased to 15, comprising nine officials and six non- officials.

In 1904, a lower house called the Sree Moolam Popular Assembly (known in the local language as Sree Mulam Praja Sabha) was formed with 88 members to provide for increased participation of the people in the administration. Its membership was limited to representatives of landlords and merchants. Although not a legislature, it was intended to give the people an opportunity to bring to the notice of the government their

¹ Louise Ouwerkerk, *No Elephants for the Maharaja Social and Political Change in the Pricely State of Travancore* (1921- 1947) DC Books, Kottayam, 2019

requirements, wishes or grievances, and to make government policies and measures better known to the people. The members of the Assembly were not elected but chosen, two from each taluk, by the District heads from among landholders who paid an annual land revenue of not less than Rs. 100, and landholders or traders whose net annual income was Rs. 6000 or above.

In 1906 the Sree Moolam Popular Assembly began to have elected members. Out of the new strength of 100 members, 77 were to be elected and 23 were to be nominated. Voting right was limited to persons who paid an annual land revenue of not less than Rs. 50. or whose net income was not less than Rs. 2000. University graduates with not less than ten years of standing, and having their residence in the respective Taluk, were also eligible to vote.²

In 1907, the Assembly was conferred the right to elect members of the Upper Legislative Council. The Upper Council had 15 members nine officials and six non-officials. In 1919, the Council was remodelled raising its strength to 25, out of which eight were elected members. In October 1921, the total strength of the Council was further raised to 50, with the majority elected members.

In 1932, the Legislative Council of Travancore and Sree Moolam Popular Assembly were replaced with a formal bicameral system consisting of an Upper House, the Travancore Sri Chitra State Council, and a Lower house, the Sree Moolam Assembly. This bicameral system continued to function until September 1947 when it gave way to a constituent assembly that later led to the merger of Cochin state and its accession to India following independence.

Members

Among the Sree Moolam Popular Assembly members were-

- Ayyankali' He became a member of the Prajasabha on December 5. 1911 and held that position for 25 years
- C.Kcsavan

² Generl Info – Kerala Legislative Assembly, Niyama Sabha.org.assessed on 10/03/2022

- E. V. Krishna Pillai
- J. Thomas Kayalackakom
- K. C. Mammen Mappillai
- Kumaran Asan
- M. K. Macker Pillai
- Muloor S. Padmanabha Panicker
- T. K. Madhavan
- T. M. Varghese
- Kochu Hassan Kuju Bahadoor
- Pallithanam Luca Matthai
- Poykayil Yohannan
- Pattam A. Thanau Pillai
- N. J. Kuncheria
- Alummottil Kochu Kunjuchannar
- Sahib Bahadur Athan Ahamed : Kunnathunad Taluk Group II
- A. R. Raman Pillai : Parur Taluk
- Narayana Pillai Krishna Pillai : Kunnathunadu Taluk Group I
- Aipe Antony : Muvattupuzha Taluk
- Kavarikulam Kandan Kumaran, member from 1915 to 1932

Bicameral Assembly

The Legislative Council of Travancore and Sri Mulam Popular Assembly were replaced on October 28, 1932, with a formal bicameral system consisting of an upper House, the Travancore Sri Chitra State Council, and a lower House, Sri Mulam Assembly.³

It was specified that not less than 55 per cent of the members should be elected and no more than one third should be officials. In the case of the Assembly, not less than 48 members were required to be elected. Of not more than 24 nominated members, 12 should be officials. The franchise was restricted and this invited strong protests from the Ezhavas, Christians and Christians and the

³ Ibid

Muslims who constituted 70 percent of the population.⁴

The new bodies started functioning from January 1, 1933. They enjoyed more powers than their predecessors. The Assembly could vote on the budgetary demands for grants with powers to reduce and omit items. For the first time, a Public Accounts Committee was created making the executive increasingly accountable to the legislature. The Dewan was the ex-officio President of both the Houses. The Assembly elected its own Deputy President. Its term was four years. Foundation stone for a new building for the Assembly was laid on December 12, 1933 by the Viceroy Lord Wellington on the northern side of the Secretariat. Dewan C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer opened the building on February 8, 1939 and the Second Sri Mulam Assembly (in its fourth session) met there the next day. A decision was taken the next month to style all regulations as Acts. The bicameral system continued to function till September 1947.

Despite progressive measures taken under public pressure including formation of the legislative bodies and effectiveness on the developmental front, the princely rule was grossly unpopular. Following intense agitations by the Travancore State Congress and an attack on Ramaswamy Iyer, the Maharaja of Travancore announced plans to establish a responsible Government "to build a new and in fuller amplitude the fabric of a great Travancore". As per the announcement on September 4, 1947, the new Assembly called the Representative Body was to function as a Constituent Assembly.

The Assembly held its first sitting on March 20, 1948 with President A. J. John in the chair. G. Chandrasekhara Pillai was the Deputy President. At the first meeting itself, the Assembly expressed the desire to be invested with powers and functions of a Legislative Assembly and to have a ministry responsible to it.

In accordance with that desire, the Maharaja promulgated the Travancore Interim Constitution Act on March 24, 1948, with provision for a Council of Ministers headed by a Prime Minister and collectively responsible to the Assembly. The Maharaja became the constitutional Head.

A council of Ministers with Pattom. A. Thanu Pillai as Prime Minister assumed office on March 24, 1948. In October 1948, T.K. Narayana Pillai succeeded him as the prime Minister.

⁴ Kerala Legislative –<http://legislativebodiesinkerala.nic> accessed on 13/03/2022

Chapter – III

KERALA LEGISLATURE

The Kerala Legislature has had three parallel courses of development in the three regions of Travancore, Cochin and Malabar until they were merged together on 1 November, 1956 to form the State of Kerala. The history of Kerala Legislature dates back to 1888, when on 30 March of the same year the Maharaja of Travancore, by passing a Regulation, established a Council for the purpose of making laws and regulations. The tenure of the Council was 3 years and composed of 8 members. The inaugural meeting of the Council was held on 23 August, 1888. The Regulation of 1888 was modified on 21 March, 1898 and the strength of the Council was raised to 15.⁵

In 1904 the Maharaja took another significant step to associate the people with the administration by creating the Sri Moolam Popular Assembly of Travancore in addition to the Legislative Council. The total membership of the Assembly was 100. The first meeting of the Assembly was held on 22 October, 1904. In 1907, the Assembly was empowered to elect four members to the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council was remodelled in 1919 and its strength was raised to 25. In October, 1921, the composition and character of the Council underwent further change. The total membership of the Council was raised to 50 comprising 28 elected and 22 nominated members (including 7 non-official members).

On 28 October 1932, the Travancore Legislative Reforms Regulation introduced a bicameral set up with the creation of a Lower House, Sri Moolam Assembly, and an Upper House, the Sri Chitra State Council on 1 January 1933. The earlier bodies were abolished. The new Assembly had 72 members while the Sri Chitra State Council had 37 members. The bicameral Legislature continued till 4 September 1947. The new Assembly, called the Representatives Body was to function as the Constituent Assembly of Travancore. On the basis of the adult franchise, 120 members were elected. The Assembly (1948-49) held its first sitting on 20 March, 1948.

In Cochin State, the first Legislative Council was inaugurated in April 1925 under the Cochin Legislative Council Act 1923. In 1938, Cochin made a unique constitutional experiment under the

⁵ <https://niyamasabha.nic.in> accessed on 21/03/2022

Government of Cochin Act, 1938 by establishing a system of dyarchy by which a member of the Legislature was appointed Minister to administer certain transferred subjects. In 1946, the number of Ministers was raised to four, and more subjects were transferred. On 14 August 1947, the eve of Indian Independence, the Maharaja of Cochin, in a message sent to the Legislative Council announced his decision to grant full responsible government. In 1948, adult franchise was introduced and the Legislative Council was termed as the Legislative Assembly. The Assembly had 58 members.

On 1 July 1949, the State of Travancore and Cochin were merged to form the United States of Travancore and Cochin. The first Legislative Assembly (1949-51) of the United States of Travancore and Cochin was composed of 178 members who were members of the Legislative bodies of Travancore and Cochin immediately before integration. With the Constitution of India coming in to force, on 26 January, 1950, Travancore-Cochin became a constituent unit of the Union of India.

Malabar, which was a district of the Madras Province under British rule, had representatives in the Madras Legislative Assembly from 1920's. In the years from 1930 to 1936, Malabar used to send 5 members to the Madras Legislature. In the first Legislative Assembly of Madras (1937-46), created under the 1935 Act, there were 16 members from Malabar. The second Assembly (1946-47) had 20 members. The first general elections to the Madras Legislative Assembly, held in 1951, after the adoption of the Constitution of India, brought in 29 members from Malabar region to the Madras Legislative Assembly.⁶

Under the States Reorganisation Act of 1956, Travancore-Cochin State and Malabar were united to form the State of Kerala on 1 November 1956. The first General Election to the Kerala Legislative Assembly was held in February-March 1957. The strength of the House was 127 including one nominated member. The present Kerala Legislative Assembly consists of 140 elected members and one nominate member

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⁶ Ibid

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The first General Election to the Kerala Legislative Assembly was held in February-March 1957. The strength of the House was 127 including one nominated member. The present Kerala Legislative Assembly consists of 140 elected members and one member nominated by the Governor from the Anglo-Indian community. The normal term of the Legislative Assembly is 5 years.⁷

⁷ Digital Archive of Kerala Legislative Assembly Proceedings Technical Report. Vol. 44

Chapter – IV

Present Legislative Assembly

15th Legislative Assembly of Kerala

Type	Unicameral
Term limits	5yrs
Leadership	
Speaker	M.B. Rajesh, CPI (M) Since 25 May 2021
Deputy Speaker	Chittayam Gopakumar (CPI) Since 1 June 2021
Leader of the House	
(Chief Minister)	Pinarayi Vijayan CPI(M), Since 20 May 2021
Leader of the Opposition	V.D. Satheesan, INC Since 22 May 2021

The Kerala Legislative Assembly is the state Assembly of Kerala, one of the 28 states in India. The Assembly is formed by 140 elected representatives. Each elected member represents one of the 140 constituencies within the borders of Kerala and is referred to as Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) The present Kerala Legislative Assembly consists of 140 elected members.⁸

The current Legislative Assembly is the 15th Assembly since the formation of Kerala. The Speaker is M B Rajesh of CPI (M). The Deputy Speaker is Chittayam Gopakumar of CPI. The leader of the Assembly is Pinarayi Vijayan from CPI (M). The leader of opposition is V.D., Satheesan. The Government Chief Whip is Dr. N. Jayaraj of KCM.

⁸ State Legislative Assemblies of India –<https://en.m.wikipedia.org> assessed on 25/03/2022

Council of Ministers

	Ministers	Designation
	Shri. Pinarayi Vijayan	Chief Minister
	Shri.K. Rajan	Minister of Revenue and Housing
	Shri Roshy Augustine	Minister of Water Resources
	Shri.K. Krishnankutty	Minister for Electiricty
	Shri.Ak. Saseendran	Minister for Forests, Wild life protection
	Shri.P. Prasad	Minister for Agriculture
	Shri.K. Radhakrishnan	Minister of Welfare of Scheduled castes Scheduled Tribes and Backward classes

		devaswoms
	Shri.P. Rajeev	Minister for Law and industries
	Shri. Saji Cheriyan	Minister for fisheries, Harbour Engineering Culture and Youth Affairs
	Shri. V. Sivankutty	Minister for General Education ad Labour
	Shri V.N. Vasavan	Minister for Co-operation and Registration
	Smt. Veens George	Minister of Health, Women and Child welfare
	Shri. Ahammad Devarkovil	Minister for Ports, Museums, Archaeology Archives
	Shri Antony Raju	Minister for Transport
	Shri. Abdulrahiman	Minister for sports, Posts and Telegraphs, Railways
	Shri. G.R. Anil	Minister for food ad Civil Supplies
	Shri. K.N. Balagopal	Minister for Finance
	Smt. R. Binu	Minister for High Education ad Socil Jutice
	Smt. J. Chinchurani	Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development⁹

⁹ Ibid

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The starting point of formation a legislative body in Travancore one he traced to January 1888 when the dewan T Ram Rao proposed to Maharaja the organization of a Legislative Council so that the dewan would gain the benefit of discussing with an taking the opinion of responsible officers assisted with him matters of legislation. One of the most important functions of government. This proposal was ready approved by sreemoolam Tunnel Maharaja and a regulation was passed on 30th March 1888 creating a legislative Council of three tenure and composed of 8 members of whom were to be officials and non officials nominated by the Maharaja the divan was to precede over the meetings.

The inaugural meetings of Legislative Council was held at 12.00 am on 23rd of August 1888. In the dewan room in the first Council (1888-1891) there were 32 sittings although the passed were to the 9. The select committee constituted to study and report on the introduced to marked the organ of committee system. Being the primogenitor the legislative council though not only freely demo creative was a hold step.

In order to widen the opportunities for increased association of the people of the people with administration on the 1st October 1904. One more representative of landlords and merchants aimed at giving the people an opportunity to bringing to notice of government their requirements wished or grievances on the one hand and on the floor to make the poly and measure of Government better known to the people so that all possible grounds of misconception many be removed. The members were to be selected by the Dewan the two representative were to be chosen for each talk from among land hare who pay on their own account an annual and revenue of not less than Rs.100 ad land holders or traders whose net annuval income Rs.6000 or above on October 22 1904. The Victoria Town Hall of Trivandrum became the venue of first meeting sreemoolam popular Assembly.

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