

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT IN MALABAR**

**A Study of the Municipalities and District Board (1866-1956)**

**SUMA NARAYANAN C.**

*Thesis*

*submitted to the University of Calicut*

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**IN**

**HISTORY**

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**1999**

## **DECLARATION**

I, Suma Narayanan, C, do hereby declare that this thesis "The Development of Local Self Government in Malabar : A Study of the Municipalities and District Board (1866-1956)" has not been submitted by me for the award of a degree, diploma, title or recognition before.

Calicut University,  
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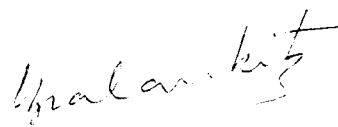
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## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that this thesis, "The Development of Local Self Government in Malabar : A Study of the Municipalities and District Board (1866-1956)," submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History of the University of Calicut is a record of bonafide research carried out by Mrs. Suma Narayanan. C under my supervision and that no part of this thesis has hitherto been submitted for a degree in any university.

  
Dr. K. GOPALANKUTTY  
(Research Supervisor)

## PREFACE

The present work is an attempt to examine the development of local self government in Malabar from 1866 to 1956. No detailed research work has been undertaken so far to analyse the various facets of the development of local self government in Malabar. An analysis of working of the Municipalities and District Board, the British policy regarding the development of local self government, the causes for the policy changes, increasing association of Indians in administration, the various legislations which were the result of popular pressures etc., are some of the issues the present study focus on.

The present study is based on the British Indian Government records in Directorate Archives of Thiruvananthapuram, Archives of Tamil Nadu and Regional Archives of Calicut. However the archives in Tamil Nadu is transferring the files relating to Kerala and it is my deep regret that I could not consult some of the files which the TNA authorities stated have been transferred to Kerala and which have not been listed yet in Kerala. I am more than any one else, aware of this omission and hope to rectify it later. This study is based on Newspapers and other publications, memoirs of participants, interviews of veteran political activists and secondary text book sources. Since no work has been done in this topic, no

discussion is possible of previous works in this subject. Even though writers like C.A. Innes had mentioned about local self government, they were written with the British administrative perspective.

Among the various sources, the Newspaper Mathrubhumi (Malayalam), governmental reports, local and municipal orders, and manuals have been the main sources. The autobiographical writings and memoirs of leaders, and participants have been of great use in understanding the various features and the working of local self government. Among these particular mention should be made of the autobiographies of E. Moidu Moulavi, Moyarath Sankaran and A.K.Gopalan. Individual experiences and view points could also be collected through interviews. I should mention the interviews with P.P. Ummer Koya and M. Kamalam who are the remaining council members of local bodies in the period under discussion, because these contain much information about the reactionary attitude of British Indian Government towards local bodies in the National Movement.

Secondary sources which have been consulted are listed in the bibliography. Among these particular mention should be made of V. R. Menon, *Mathrubhumiude Charithram, Vol. I* (Malayalam), C. Uthama Kurup, *Mathrubhumiude Charithram Vol. II* (Malayalam), C. K. Moosath, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan* (Malayalam),

M.P. Manmathan, *Kelappan* (Malayalam), S.K. Pottekkat *et al.* (ed.), *Muhammad Abdu Rahman* (Malayalam), K.K.N. Kurup, *Quit India Samaravum Keralavum* (Malayalam) and Andalath (ed.), *Sakhakale Munnote*, two volumes (Malayalam). Besides P.T. Bhaskara Panikker's Seminar paper on local boards, the presidential address of Dr.C.N. Somarajan in the S.I.H.C. Session, 1999, and the unpublished Ph.D. Thesis of Dr. Gopalankutty on the National Movement in Malabar (1930-47) contained much information.

The arrangement of the thesis is as follows. The first chapter covers the period of development of local self government from 1865 to 1882. It contains details like the geographical position of Malabar, the beginnings of local self government, the background for introducing local self government, the different municipal and local acts passed on different stages in earlier period, the resolutions passed by the government for introduction of local administration, the appointment of commissioners, the structure of local self government, different source and expenditure of local bodies, the qualification of voters for election, the formation of the municipality of Calicut, Tellicherry, Palghat and Cannanore, the formation of the Malabar District Board and the consequences of various Acts.

The second Chapter covers the period from 1882 to 1919, in which the beginnings of nationalist activity in Malabar is described.

The chapter contains the resolutions of Lord Ripon, the financial and political activities of local bodies, several acts passed in the earlier period, the policy of successors of Lord Ripon towards local self government, the appointment of Municipal officials, the Madras District Municipalities Act IV of 1884, the growth of local bodies after 1884, the budget estimate of local bodies and background for the introduction of 1919 Act.

The third chapter extends the period from 1919 to 1934. It covers the period from the framing of Montford Act, the passing of Local Boards Act of 1920, the mismanagement of finances of local bodies, the constitution of District Board, the rise and growth of leftist movement, the constitution of local funds, sources and expenditure of local boards including provincial grants, several works undertaken by district and municipalities, the powers and functions of District Board President and Municipal Chairman, the national sentiments political mobilisation of local bodies, the national resolutions, caste feelings, submission of Mangala pathra, Government Restriction placed on local bodies, Abolition of taluk boards, the involvement of Municipal council members and District Board members in political activities, the argument for the use of indigenous language, the boycott of Simon Commission, the problem of Mananchira, the Civil Disobedience Movement and the background for the introduction of 1935 Act.

The fourth chapter covers the period from 1935 to 1956. This chapter deals with the introduction of 1935 Act, the contesting of elections in the legislative Assembly by political parties, elections to the District Board, Kelappan as District Board president, the second world war events and the resignation of Congress Ministry, the Quit India Movement, the resignation of Kelappan from presidentship of District Board, the interim government period, the period of independence, the District Board elections in 1949, introduction of village panchayat act of 1950, the District Board elections of 1954, the events of the formation of Aikya Kerala and the final end of District Board, the progressive work undertaken by Municipalities after independence period and the inauguration of Indian Republic, the introduction of five year plans and the appointment of various committees after 1950.

The conclusion draws the various strands of analysis together and also indicates certain specific features of development of local self government in Malabar. The work completed within the framework set by the requirements for Ph.D. thesis, which had to be completed within a stipulated time schedule, suffers from many drawbacks. It is hoped to rectify them at the time of its publication.

In an endeavour of this kind, the researcher is naturally indebted to several helping hands. I am deeply grateful to my

guide Dr. K.Gopalankutty for the precious hours spent in discussing the various aspects of the topic and giving attention to this writing. My first intellectual indebtedness is to him. I am much obliged to Dr.K.K.N.Kurup, present Vice-Chancellor and former Head of the Department of History, Calicut University, for the encouragement given to me. I am indebted to Dr. S. Mohammed Koya for the generous help offered to me. I remember with particular gratitude and pleasure those helping hands like Mr.Varghese, Regional Archives, Calicut, Dr. M. Sundara Raj, Tamil Nadu Archives and Mr. Prabhakaran Nair, the Record Keeper of Mathrubhumi file section for providing various files and materials which are really valuable for writing the thesis.

My special gratitude are due to Mr. P.P. Ummerkoya, Madhavettan, Smt. Parukutty Amma and Smt. M. Kamalam for granting me interviews. I also thank the library staff of History Department, Calicut University, Regional Archives Calicut, Directorate of Archives, Thiruvananthapuram, Tamil Nadu Archives, Malabar Christian College, Calicut and Sree Narayana Guru College, Chelannur.

I have received unstinted encouragement in my attempt from Dr. N. Raveendran, Principal, S.N.G. College, Chelannur and my numerous colleagues. I am indebted beyond words to all of them.

Throughout the writing of this thesis, my husband Neerajakshan has been by my side: encouraging me and always urging me to get it finished.

I am grateful to the Department of History, Calicut University for providing me an opportunity to prepare and submit the thesis. My gratitude is also towards Mr. C. Ramakrishnan (CR.COM, Calicut University) for secretarial assistance.

**SUMA NARAYANAN. C**

# CONTENTS

	Pare
PREFACE	i-vii
CHAPTER 1 THE BEGINNING OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT: GOVERNMENTAL ACTS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES (FIRST PHASE 1865-1882)	1-37
CHAPTER 2 HALTING STEPS TOWARDS SELF GOVERNMENT (SECOND PHASE 1882-1919)	38-75
CHAPTER 3 TOWARDS INCREASING AUTHORITY: MONTFORD REFORMS AND AFTER (THIRD PHASE 1919-1934)	76-121
CHAPTER 4 LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT IN PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY (LAST PHASE 1935-1956)	121-176
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION	177-197
BIBLIOGRAPHY	198-207
GLOSSARY	
APPENDICES	

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AICC	:	All India Congress Committee
CPI	:	Communist Party of India
DAT	:	Directorate of Archives, Thiruvananthapuram
KPCC	:	Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee
L&M	:	Local and Municipal
MAS	:	Modern Asian Studies
NNR	:	Native Newspaper Report
RAC	:	Regional Archives, Calicut
TNA	:	Tamil Nadu Archives

THE BEGINNING OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT  
GOVERNMENTAL ACTS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES  
FIRST PHASE 1865-1882

## CHAPTER I

### THE BEGINNING OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT: GOVERNMENTAL ACTS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES FIRST PHASE 1865-1882

Local self government means the management of local affairs by local bodies elected by the people in a particular locality. The importance of local self government has been stressed by administrators and political thinkers of all ages and its existence is necessary for the success of democratic institutions. In Malabar the local self government in modern times was introduced during the British period. Malabar initially was not a political or administrative term but was used as a geographical title.

About the origin of Malabar one view was that, a king said to have resigned at an early period, succeeded by a hierarchy of Brahmins by whom chiefs called Naduvalar and Deshavalalar were appointed.<sup>1</sup> Brahmins called on governors from the Anangandy Government called Perumals.<sup>2</sup> The last Perumal became a convert to Mohammedan and divided Malabar among ancestors of present Perumals and the Rajah's connection between Palghat and Mysore State provoked Hyder for invading Malabar.<sup>3</sup> At the end of the

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1. Abstract of the Report. *Origin of the Province of Malabar*, Malabar File. Directorate of Archives, Thiruvananthapuram. Hereafter DAT.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

conflict with the Mysore rulers the East India Company had captured the northern part of Kerala.<sup>4</sup> The British revived the old name of Malabar and organised it as a district which was called the British Malabar. The land of Malabar is a hilly area and so this land is known as a land of mountains. Gradually the term British dropped out and Malabar survived as the name of the northern half of Kerala. The geographical expression of Malabar is that it lies on the western coast of India which extends from 10° 12' to 12° 15' north latitude and between the parallels of 75° 10' and 76° 50' direction and forms a few head lands and small bays.<sup>5</sup> It is bounded on the north by the province of Canara, on the east by those of Coorg and Mysore to the South east by Coimbatore and to the South by the small province of Cochin.<sup>6</sup> The density of population was between 600 and 650, which was one of the topmost in the presidency.<sup>7</sup> Malabar was an agrarian society. The people cultivated mainly rice and cash crops like pepper, ginger, coconut and arecanut. The cultivation of paddy was carried through a tenurial hierarchical system.<sup>8</sup>

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4. William Logan. *The Malabar Manual*. Vol. I (Reprint). Calicut, 1985, p. 491.

5. Ward and Corner. *A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*. Calicut, 1906, p.1.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Census of India - 1931*. Vol. XIV. Part II. Madras , p.4.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

The existence of class and caste was a noticeable feature of Malabar.<sup>9</sup> Namboodiris - Kerala Brahmins - occupying the highest position in the caste hierarchy were also owners of land especially in south Malabar. The Nairs constituted another group, who were both land lords and tenants. Cherumans and Parayas occupied the lower strata of caste hierarchy and they constituted the agricultural labour forces.

The formation of modern industries was underdeveloped in the District and therefore the strength of the industrial work force was almost insignificant in the early decades of the twentieth century. The textiles, engineering firms, tobacco, food and drink, stone and glasses works, rope works, etc. formed different categories of factory.

Education was a prominent contributing factor in the process of social change and the emergence of a middle class. The growth of education, though very slow during the early period of British rule, picked up during the latter half of the Nineteenth century. In 1872-73 there were 34 primary schools with a total number of 1975

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9. The class-caste identify continued later and has been noticed by anthropologists who undertook field work in Malabar. Adrean C. Mayer, *Land and Society in Malabar*, p. 96; Eric J. Miller, "Village Structure in North Kerala." *Economic Weekly*, Vol. IV. No. 6, Feb 9, 1952, pp.159-64.

students.<sup>10</sup> But, the number increased and by 1940 there were 2,81,259 male students and 1,92,475 girls students in public elementary schools.<sup>11</sup> The percentage of male students to male population was 16.4 which was the highest in the presidency and the percentage of girl students to female population was 10.6 which was the second in the presidency.<sup>12</sup>

The Malabar district had four colleges, one of which was a first grade college. It had 15 students in the second year B.A. Class and 81 in the first year. There were totally 328 intermediate students in all the four colleges.<sup>13</sup>

High percentage of general literacy had prevailed in Malabar district. In 1931, there were 5,09,051 (14.40%) literate persons out of which 51,821 were literate in English. The number of literate persons among the Hindus, the Muslims and the Christians were as follows: Hindus 394,297 out of 2,303,745 or 17.11% Muslims 87,694 out of 1,163,453 or 7.53% and Christians 26,720 out of 65895 or 40.54%.<sup>14</sup>

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10. *Report on Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency for 1872-73*, No. XXXVIII, p. 63. Three schools admitted students up to fifth class.

11. *Report on Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency for the year 1939-40*, Vol. II, Parts I and II, p.35 and 51.

12. *Ibid.*

13. P.R. Gopinathan Nair. "Education and Socio-Economic Change in Kerala, 1793-1947." *Social Scientist*, March, 1976, p.33.

14. *Census, op. cit.*, p. 148.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the number of officials drawing a salary of more than 10, 20 and 50 rupees a month was 1,063,245.<sup>15</sup> Those who secured government jobs or practised as advocates, were a minority but were a significant social group in the society. It was the members of this rising class who questioned old values and customs and also became the supporters of the national movement.<sup>16</sup>

### Governmental Legislation

Initially Malabar was under the control of the Bombay Governor. But in 1800 Malabar District was transferred to the Madras presidency.<sup>17</sup> Later in 1865 the Town Improvement Act was introduced leading to the emergence of Municipalities in the area. The first five Municipalities were (1) Calicut (2) Palghat, (3) Tellicherry, (4) Cannanore and (5) British Cochin.<sup>18</sup> In the history of local self government the first small beginnings of Municipal action in Madras presidency was inaugurated by the introduction of

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15.K.N. Panikkar. "Land Control, Ideology and Reform A Study of Change in family Organisation and Marriage system in Kerala." *The Indian Historical Review*, Vol.IV, No.1 July, 1977, p. 38.

16.K.N. Panikkar. "Agrarian Legislation and Social Classes in Malabar." *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol., No.21, May 17, 1976.

17.William Logan. *op.cit.*, p. 584.

18. *Government Report of Local Self Government*, Madras, 1882. Tamil Nadu Archives. (Hereinafter TNA)

Act XXVI of 1850, which amended the provision of the Bengal Act of 1842.<sup>19</sup> The legislative enactment passed between 1842 and 1862 provided for setting up of municipal institutions in towns only.<sup>20</sup>

The history of municipalities in British India may be divided into 4 phases viz. The development of the period 1850 essentially a phase of voluntary association, 2) the period 1851-81 an element of compulsion introduced with emphasis on administrative efficiency and extension of Municipal services, (3) the period 1881-1919, a phase of development where efficiency was to be subordinated to the political consideration injected in 1882 and (4) from 1919 to 1947 a period of democratisation.<sup>21</sup> Act No.X passed on 14th October 1865 was an act to provide for the appointment of Municipal commissioners in towns in the presidency of Madras. Under the Viceroyalty of Lord Mayo an important step was taken in 1870. The new arrangements were transitional and looked forward to extension of democratic steps towards self governments on the responsible parliamentary model.<sup>22</sup>

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19. *Ibid.*

20. G.R. Madan. *Changing Pattern of Indian Village*. Delhi 1964, p.296.

21. A.S. Bhatia. *The Political Legal and Military History of India*. Vol.I, Delhi 1984, p.240.

22. *Ibid.*

The Act of a municipal nature was the Towns Improvement Act No.X of 1865. Our present municipal system owes much to this Act. The Act was not generally introduced until the end of 1866 at which time it was brought into force in 29 towns and by 1867-68 it was introduced in 41 towns. There was not an adopted definite system with administration of local concern in the rural areas. The Resolution of 1870 of the Government had a rousing effect to the development of local self government.<sup>23</sup> But the actual progress of local self government was made after 1870. Act X of 1865 (Municipal) was in force until 1871 when it was replaced by Act III of 1871 which again was replaced by Act IV of 1884.<sup>24</sup>

The Resolution of 1870 which was passed during Lord Mayo's government with decentralisation of finance, refused to the necessity of taking further improvement on local interest and supervision of funds spent to education, sanitation and public works. In various provinces between 1871 and 1874 new Municipal Acts were passed in which the elective principles were introduced. The main results of the policy of 1870 were described in the Resolution of local self government of 1882. Thus considerable progress had been made since 1870.

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23. *The Government Report of 1883*, Local and Municipal Department (TNA).

24. William Logan. *op. cit.* Volume II, p. 22.

A large income from local rates and cesses had been secured and in some provinces, the management of the income had been fully entrusted to local bodies. Municipalities had also increased in number and usefulness. But there was still a great degree of progress in different parts of the country than varying local circumstances seemed to warrant in many places, services admirably adopted for local government were reserved in the hands of central administration, but every where heavy charges were levied on municipalities in connection with the police over which they had necessarily no executive control.<sup>25</sup>

### Structure of Local Self Government

The structure of urban government in early nineteenth century India is derived from several sources - Hindu Mughal and British - whose common feature was a presiding officer with formal control over police and revenue functions.<sup>26</sup> It was also felt that Sec 29 of Municipal Act 1865, which permitted the commissioners at their option to levy further sums for such objects as lighting, sanitary inspection, vaccination, hospitals and dispensaries, registration of births and

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25. R.C. Majumdar. *The History and Culture of Indian People*. Bombay 1969, p. 794.

26. John G. Leonard. Urban Government and the Raj, A Case Study of Municipal Administration in 19th century, South India. *Modern Asian Studies* 7, 2 (1973), p. 229.

deaths etc., was practically inoperative that the services thus supported to be provided for either starved or altogether neglected.<sup>27</sup>

Certain rules regarding the establishment of Municipal Commissioners and constitution of Municipal funds had been laid down. In any town to which the operation of the Act extended, the Governor in council should appoint any number not less than five of the inhabitants thereof to be town commissioners for carrying out in such towns the purpose of the Act.<sup>28</sup> If it should be determined by Municipal commissioners, with the approval of governor in council levied for the purpose of this Act, to tax on Arts professions trades and calling should be levied as provided in Sec XLVI to XLIX of this Act.<sup>29</sup> If it should be determined by the Municipal commissioner with the approval of governor in council to levy for the purpose of this act, tolls, carriages carts and animals entering the municipal limits, such tolls should be levied as provided in Sec LI to LVI of this Act.<sup>30</sup> But no tolls should be paid for the passage of troops and military stores and espionage on their

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27. *The Government Report of the Committee of Local Self Government in Madras, 1883*, (TNA)

28. *The Assylum press Almanac and Compendium of Intelligence, Madras 1865* (TNA).

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

march or of police officers on duty or of any person or property in their custody, but no other exemption from payment of the tolls levied under this Act should be levied.<sup>31</sup>

Under the Act of 1865, the independence of commissioners was restricted in more than one direction. They were bound to raise the amount fixed by Government and if they failed to do so, the District Magistrate was empowered to raise the sum himself.<sup>32</sup> The Act was not generally introduced until the end of 1866, at which time it was brought into force in 29 towns, then the number rose to 41 by the period of 1867-69.<sup>33</sup> The Administrative Report of 1868-69 stated that the introduction of the Act at the close of the year 1866, which was a period of extreme disfavour; but except at Vellore and Cuddalore, the Act had been worked in that overt resistance being experienced.<sup>34</sup> But the operation of voluntary education of the Act was uncertain and unsatisfactory. Similarly as per Section 29 of the Municipal Act besides the sum compulsorily fixed by Government, the Commissioners were with sanction of Government empowered to raise sums for other municipal purposes.

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31. *Ibid.*

32. *Annual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency*, Vol.I, Madras, 1885.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

Eventually a new Act known as Towns Improvement Act No.III of 1871 was brought. By the middle of nineteenth century the financial pressures had compelled British officials to seek ways of lightening the demands placed on imperial revenues.<sup>35</sup> Officials believed that local government did not pay its own way and so the provincial governments made several laws permitting towns to form municipal boards and pay for their civic improvement such as roads or schools.<sup>36</sup>

#### Act No.III of 1871

Although financial decentralisation had been in practice, the British financial officials hoped that a further grant of power might stimulate local initiative. A new Act known as Town Improvement Act No.III of 1871 was brought in and it included objects required for the existence of a municipality. Experience had shown that as a rule occasional presence of a European officer as working member of the commission was essential to the efficient working of the Act.<sup>37</sup> It had decided the appointment of government officers to inspect and supervise working of the Act, but no special appointment had been made under this section.

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35. S. Gopal. *British Policy in India 1858-1905*. Cambridge 1965, p. 93.

36. K.K. Pillai. *History of Local Self Government in Madras Presidency 1850-1919*. Bombay 1951, p. 156.

37. *Government Report on Local Self Government, 1882* (TNA).

The most important step towards local self government in large towns was the choice of indigenous members of Municipality by popular election. It was desirable that power of choosing their own rulers should be given to the people irrespective of the question whether the rulers they elected would be as good as or better than those chosen for them. But certain objections had been raised against this decision viz., that the inhabitants of the municipality had no public spirit and also that elected members had endeavoured the reduction of taxation.<sup>38</sup>

But the legislative decision in 1865 showed that the municipalities had not grown for the application of legislative principle even in specially selected localities. The legislature had forbidden its introduction as premature and dangerous. Six years of experience of the working of the Municipal Act enabled legislation in 1871.

Introduction of elective system in municipalities of Malabar district was under discussion. Strong representation in favour of it was made by Balleard, the collector of Malabar and by Ranga Charlu, Diwan of Mysore and others.

The the municipalities in Malabar district with the population according to census of 1881 are given below.<sup>39</sup>

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38. *Ibid.*, p.4.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<u>Name of Municipality</u>	<u>Population</u>
Calicut	57085
Cannanore	26387
Cochin	15698
Palghat	36333
Tellicherry	26410

The collector of the district was the ex-officio president for all the towns within the district under his charge.<sup>40</sup> As a rule however the working executive officer of every municipality had been vice-president.<sup>41</sup> The collector could appoint and dismiss any overseers, clerks or other servants as he pleased. The president of the municipality conducted all correspondence with the government and the Head of the Department. The Vice-president must be one of the commissioners and to be granted the right or he was appointed by government on recommendation of the president.<sup>42</sup> The Act No.III of 1871 had been superseded by Madras Act IV of 1884.

Certain rules regarding the establishment of Municipal Commissioners and Constitution of Municipal funds had been laid down in the Town Improvement Act in 1866. In any town to which operation of the Act had been extended the governor in Council

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40. *Manual of Administration, op. cit.*

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*

could appoint any number not less than five of the inhabitants as town commissioners for carrying out in such towns for the purpose of the Act.<sup>43</sup> Besides the following officers should be ex-officio commissioners for every town within their jurisdiction in which this Act extended i.e. To say the Magistrate of the district and the officer of the public works department with executive charge of the range.<sup>44</sup>

All moneys, rents and profits received by the Municipal Commissioners of any town and all fines, fees and penalties paid or levied under this Act constituted a fund which should be called the Municipal fund of such town and should together with all property of every nature or kind which might become vested in the said commissioners be under their control and should be applied for the purpose of this Act.<sup>45</sup>

The following table shows the number of commissioners in towns of various size according to the size of population.<sup>46</sup>

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43. *The Assylum Press Almanac and Compendium of Intelligence for 1866*, Madras, 1865.

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Ibid.*

46. Local and Municipal Department, Government order No. 668 dated 7-4-1877 (TNA).

<u>Size of population</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
Under 25,000	6	8
25,000 to 50,000	98	12
50,000 to 75,000	12	16
Above 75,000	16	20

Accordingly, the first election of Commissioners in Calicut municipality took place in 1882. Gradually the election system was introduced in other municipalities of Malabar district. There were also representation based on Community profession and trade. Karunakaran Menon, the Vice-president of the Calicut Municipality had written about the first election of Commissioners in the municipality in 1882 as follows:

“There were six vacancies and nineteen candidates for election. Of the latter, four were already Commissioners under nomination system. There were 10 Hindus (of whom 2 were Brahmins), 4 European, 3 Mohammedans, 1 Euroasian and 1 Parsi. Seven of them were non-officials and the rest officials. By profession 9 were merchants, 3 vakkils, 2 cultivators and 2 school masters. One was a landed proprietor, another a missionary and third a bank cashier.<sup>47</sup>

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47. *Government Report of the Committee on Local Self Government, Madras 1883* (TNA).

### Sources of Income to the Municipality

Taxation was the main source of income to the municipality. Tax rate imposed on houses and lands according to annual value tax upon arts professions trades and calling, tax on carriages, horses and other animals, fees in registration of carts, tolls upon carriages carts and animals, entering municipal limits, fees for licenses to carry on offensive or dangerous trades formed different source of income on taxes to the municipality.<sup>48</sup> Other sources of income were fee on rents for use of municipal gardens, choultries markets, slaughter houses, cart stands, ferries and forfeiters, payment for municipal services rendered to private persons and other miscellaneous items and grants in aid from local and provincial funds.<sup>49</sup>

All sums collected under this Act and all funds appropriated by government were paid into the nearest government treasury of district and credited to an account called municipal fund of the town.<sup>50</sup> As per Sec 58 of the Act, the persons who in the town exercised any of arts profession trades calling specified in Schedule B of the Act were arranged in eighth class and paid annual rents shown in the margin for licenses to carry on their respective occupation.<sup>51</sup>

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48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Government Act No.III of 1871 (Madras 1883), L & M Department, TNA.*

		Rs.
Class	I	100
	II	50
	III	25
	IV	12
	V	6
	VI	3
	VII	2
	VIII	1

Under the provisions of Sec 38, Act III of 1871 (Town improvement Act) Governor General in Council authorised the Municipal Commissioners for the town of Calicut in Malabar district to levy during the year beginning 1st May 1871 and ending 30th March 1872.<sup>52</sup> A portion of area of Cannanore municipality was given for cantonment purpose. By Section 24 of the Cantonment Act No.III of 1880 the Governor General in Council exempted all Government Buildings and property situated within a military cantonment from all municipal taxes and this power exercised by order number 163 dated 18th November 1881 government of Indian Home Department.<sup>53</sup> But the municipality could not claim

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52. *Proceedings of Madras Government Public Department*, 6th July 1871, Madras (TNA).

53. *Government Act No.III of 1880 (Madras 1883) (L&M Department)*.

compensation on account of such exemption, but they could protect themselves from loss by restricting municipal expenditure in the cantonment limits.<sup>54</sup>

### Expenditure of Municipal Budgets

In the Municipal budgets the expenditure was distributed into 5 heads as follows.<sup>55</sup>

Grant I - public works of various kinds, both new works, repairs undertaken in connection with communication, building, drainage, water supply, etc.

Grant II - education, including expenditure of training schools, municipal schools, salary and result grants schools on combined system, inspection and other miscellaneous items.

Grant III - Sanitary and medical included hospitals, dispensaries, vaccination, registration of births and all conservancy charges.

Grant IV - Lighting markets, slaughter houses, choultries, protection from fire and many other sundry items.

Grant V - Establishment for ordinary office work in the Town, collection of taxes, cost of controlling establishment in government secretariat. Besides

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54. *Ibid.*

55. *Government Report of the Committee on Local Self Government, Madras 1883 (TNA).*

these heads there were charges for payment of debt or interest.<sup>56</sup> Certain rules were framed by government under the Act for election of municipal councillors. For electoral purposes, the municipalities enumerated in the schedule were divided into wards.

#### The qualification of voters

The following persons were entitled to have their names registered as voters, viz.

- A) All persons owning buildings or lands situated in the limits of municipality, who were liable to pay to municipality a tax on buildings or on lands amounting either separately or in the aggregate to Rs.4/- per annum and above provided, such ownership was evidenced by registration in the municipal limits.
- B) All persons who was in the current financial year had paid profession tax of not less than Rs.2/-.
- C) All persons who in the current financial year had paid income tax.
- D) All government pensioners drawing Rs.15/- per mensem or above.
- E) All persons drawing a salary of Rs.30/- per mensem or above.
- F) All persons paying a house rent of Rs.25/- per mensem or above.

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56. *Ibid.*

G) All graduates of any recognised university, provided that no person should be entitled to have his name registered as voter under the rule unless he had been resident in the town or possessed of any necessary property qualification in the town, at least six months immediately preceding the day of publication of the register of voters.<sup>57</sup>

The following persons were disqualified from being registered as voters viz., (A All persons of female sex (13) persons who were less than 21 years of age (C) persons who have been convicted of any such offence or subjected by a criminal court to any such order as implied in the opinion of collector which made them unfit as voters and (D) persons of unsound mind and deaf mutes.<sup>58</sup>

Qualification entitled to be registered as eligible for election as councillors

A) All persons who owned buildings or lands situated in the limits of the municipality, who were liable for payment to municipality a tax on buildings or on lands amounting either separately or in the aggregate to Rs.10/- per annum and above provided such ownership was induced by registration in the municipal books.

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57. H. Hamick. *The Madras Municipal Manual*. Madras, 1903, p.186.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

- B) All persons in the current financial year had paid profession tax to the amount of not less than Rs.8/-.
- C) All persons who in the current financial year had paid an income tax of Rs.20/-.
- D) All government pensioners drawing Rs.30/- per mensem and upwards.
- E) All persons drawing a salary of Rs.60/- per mensem and upwards.
- F) All persons paying house rent of Rs.70/- per mensem and upwards and
- G) All graduates of any recognised university.<sup>59</sup>

The financial qualification of voters made a clear picture that the council members so elected represented the upper section of the society. The local bodies whom the voters elected had faced many handicaps. There was all embracing control by the government in every sphere of their activities. This was a restricted electorate, i.e. far away from adult suffrage. The debarring of women from franchise is also noteworthy though it introduced the elective principle.

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59. *Ibid.*

Bye-laws were forwarded by presidents of Municipal Commission, which were proposed by Commissioners to be sanctioned by government. Accordingly some of the bye-laws forwarded by president of Calicut Municipality were as follows:

1. No persons occupying a shop, house or other building or the public road shall fry or roast or cause to be fried or roasted any fish in public view.<sup>60</sup>
2. Persons were strictly prohibited from beating tom toms and playing musical instruments of the harder kind between hours of 10 PM and 4 AM whether in public thoroughfares or in private dwellings except after getting written permission of the President, Vice-president or any two commissioners; musical instrument of a softer kind may be used without restriction except in such places as commissioners may decide.<sup>61</sup> In the case of municipalities Act, the commissioners were in charge of civil dispensary, financial activity, public works department imposing tolls etc.

The above descriptions pertain to the general conditions under which the local bodies developed. Now a brief account of the municipalities in the Malabar area is discussed.

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60. *Government proceedings of Madras Government*, Financial Department, 1874 (TNA).

61. *Ibid.*

### Calicut

Among the municipalities, the largest and most important in Malabar was Calicut, the head quarters town with an income amounting to upwards of two and a half lakh of rupees derived mainly from taxes. The Municipality administered an area of 25.48 sq. Kilo meters with a population of nearly a lakh and maintained 98 KM of road.<sup>62</sup>

The town of Calicut was raised into a municipality in the year 1866. In 1882 the rate payers of Calicut were allowed for the first time to elect one half of the councillors and in 1886-87 the full complement of elected councillors viz. 18 out of 24 was secured.<sup>63</sup> The council enjoyed certain privileges like electing its chairman and some other items.<sup>64</sup>

### Cannanore

As per a government order the town and cantonment of Cannanore was treated as a separate municipality.<sup>65</sup> Certain land

62. C.A. Innes. *The Madras District Gazetteers, Malabar*. Madras, Reprint, 1951, p. 400.

63. A. Sreedhara Menon. ed. *Kerala District Gazetteers. Kozhikode*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1962, p.112.

64. C.A. Innes. *op. cit.*, p.401.

65. Government of Madras, Public Department, G.O. 939 dated 17-9-1866 (TNA).

portion of municipality of Cannanore being a cantonment area, many of the provisions of cantonment rules were applicable in Cannanore region. With reference to paragraph 5, 6 and 7 of the order of Government submitted for consideration of the Honourable governor in council, a draft of rules framed under clause 4 to 11 of Section XIX of Act of 1866 proposed for adoption in cantonment to which the above Act had been extended, but the Municipal Act of 1865 was also in force.<sup>66</sup> The appointment of cantonment committee, in addition to Municipal Commissioner, was made and supreme, government had repeatedly urged adoption in code of rule for all the cantonment areas. Unlike other municipalities Cannanore was not a centre of thriving and progressive trade.<sup>67</sup>

The town was not situated upon a river or back waters, offered few natural advantage to trade. But its forts and healthy open plain around it provided an ideal site for a cantonment and for many years Cannanore was the headquarters of the Malabar and South Canara brigade.<sup>68</sup> The town of Cannanore was separated by a small inlet from the sea for some distance from the cantonment limit while the

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66. Government order No.3716 dated 27th September 1867 (Local and Municipal department) From Correspondence relating to cantonment rules and introduction of theMunicipal Acts in the Cannanore Cantonment from Sept. 1867 to Feb.188) Regional Archives, Calicut.

67. C.A. Innes. *op. cit.*, 404.

68. *Ibid.*

town bazaars and cantonment bazaars were kept entirely distinct by extensive intervening parade ground and a tract occupied by gardens and detached dwellings.<sup>69</sup> This might be due to government policy of separating the army from the civilians.

In 1866 the town contained a population mostly of moplabs, some 8600 inhabitants and was under an Indian sub magistrate.<sup>70</sup> The cantonment had a population of 8000 inhabitants and its cantonment magistrate had nothing to do with the town.<sup>71</sup> This was to keep the army intact and aloof from political influences. The government did not want the soldiers to mingle freely with the common people.

### Tellicherry

As per government order No. 925 dated 13-9-1866 Tellicherry became a Municipality in 1867.<sup>72</sup> The government order had submitted notification about the proposed limits of the municipality of Tellicherry with a view to the introduction of Towns Improvement Act.

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69. L & M Department, Government order No 939 dated 28th September 1867 (TNA).

70. *Ibid.*

71. *Ibid.*

72. Government of Madras, Public Department Government order No. 925 dated 13th September 1866 (TNA).

The estimated amount raised for the purpose specified under Sec 25 of the Act and the limits of the proposed municipality were well defined in the Act. The total sum required to be raised was Rs.11,000 or deducting 25% i.e. Rs.2775/- and the Government contribution Rs.8325/- from the Municipality.<sup>73</sup> The limits of the municipality was Tellicherry town and suburbs. The population was a mixed one and included Moplahs, Thiyyas, Nairs etc. Members had been selected from each of these castes to serve in the municipal commission.<sup>74</sup>

The Tellicherry municipality's estimated income was derived from the following sources.<sup>75</sup>

<u>Source of income</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Tax on houses at 5%	Rs. 3565
Tax on profession, etc.	Rs. 4066
Tax on carriages	Rs. 450
Registration of carts	Rs. 244
	<u>Rs. 8325</u>

73. *Ibid.*

74. *Ibid.*

75. *Ibid.*

By notification the Governor of Council had rendered to extend the provisions of the Town Improvement Act 1865 and in accordance with provisions of Sec 4 of the Act, the town of Tellicherry together with several towns, villages suburbs stations and bazaars which were called and known by several names of (1) Tellicherry (2) Mylanjenmum (3) Tiruvengad and other places situated within the boundaries herein after specified that the north the Iranjoli river as far as the old bridge on the Coorg road, east and south - the Iranjoli old road as far as the Tiruvangad Covil large tank and the cross road, thence to Kodapallikunu on the sea shore - the sea.<sup>76</sup> Those boundaries were united for the purpose of the Act by the name of the town of Tellicherry.

### Palghat

In the case of Palghat local self government consisted of three important institutions viz. The Municipality, district Board and Panchayaths. But after the abolition of district board, only the panchayath and the municipality remained. As per government order 665 dated 3-7-1866, Palghat became Municipality by the Town improvement Act.<sup>77</sup> The municipality of Palghat was with an area

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76. *Ibid.*

77. Government of Madras, Public Department, *Government Order 665, dated 3-7-1866.*

of 10 sq. Miles, a population of 44, 177 and an income only slightly less than that of Calicut.<sup>78</sup>

The conditions of the town were favourable for the growth of municipal institutions. Its situation with railway in the middle of a rich taluk with roads converging upon it from every direction enabled the municipality to levy contributions in the shape of tolls upon a large volume of trade passing through the town and in spite of the share of receipts paid to local boards, the councils income from this source was nearly double that of Calicut, where so much of the trade was sea borne.<sup>79</sup> The funds of the municipality was proposed to be raised by firstly from tolls entering municipal limits, secondly a rate on houses shops etc. and thirdly a tax on arts and professions etc. The population of Palghat was estimated at around 30,000 and the amount expected from each source was as follows; estimate being of course only approximate.<sup>80</sup>

Tolls	Rs. 3000
House tax	Rs. 2400
Licence tax	<u>Rs. 1800</u>
	<u>Rs. 7200</u>

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78. C.A.Innes. *op. cit.*, p. 402.

79. *Ibid.*

80. *Ibid.*

In accordance with provision of Sec 4 of the said Act, the town of Palghat in the district of Malabar in the presidency together with several towns, villages suburbs stations and bazaars which hitherto had been called and known by several names of (1) Palghat Bazaar (2) Sulthan Petta (3) Kalpatti (4) Ambikapuram (5) Kumarapuram (6) Lakshmi Narayanapuram (7) Sekharipuram (8) Puten Kuricci (9) Toni palayam (10) Puttur Tira (11) Vetta Karuman Kavu (12) Rama Nathapuram (13) Kunnathur Medu 14) Vadakantara (15) Nellicery 16) Pallipuram (17) Nurani and (18) Tairunillai and all other places situated and lying within the boundary in the north as the railway in the east, a line from a point on the Railway in the South, the Kanara river and west a line from a point in the Kannadi river west of Triennialli gramam.<sup>81</sup>

The government in its annual review, had not pointed at any mistakes in the general administration of the Palghat municipality and the experiment of local self government was stated to be a success.<sup>82</sup> All the members were nominated to the council whose term of office was one year. The first nominated official chairman was William Logan and Chinna Swami Pillai was the first non-official nominated Chairman.<sup>83</sup>

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81. *Ibid.*, p.403.

82. *Ibid.*

83. C.K. Kareem. ed. *Kerala District Gazetteers: Palghat*. Ernakulam 1976, p.529.

Apart from municipalities, other local bodies were also part of local self government. The District Boards, the taluk Boards and the Panchayaths formed these bodies. A brief description of the development of other local bodies is given below.

### Local Boards

The origin of District Boards as local self governing bodies may be traced to the consultative committees which assisted district officer in the management of funds to local schools and dispensaries.<sup>84</sup> Outside the five municipalities of Malabar area, local affairs were managed by District Board, Taluk Boards and Panchayaths. Originally there were five taluk boards viz., Tellicherry, Calicut, Malappuram, Palghat and Wynad Corresponding to the revenue division of the same name by the introduction of Madras Local Boards Act in 1884.<sup>85</sup>

The term Local Boards was used in the Madras presidency in a restricted sense, to denote the authorities exercising jurisdiction in matters of local government outside the municipalities under the district municipalities act and the city of Madras. There were institutions concerned with affairs of rural parts as distinguished

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84. G.R. Madan. *op. cit.*, p. 296.

85. C.A. Innes. *op. cit.*, p. iix

from urban centres. Their exact position would be better understood by an expression like Rural Boards, but in spite of high authority of the Royal Commission on Decentralisation, this change in nomenclature had not found acceptance.<sup>86</sup> The local board of each district dealt with aggregation of villages compressed within it.<sup>87</sup> The income of each district was collected and spent within it which was derived from the tolls, ferries and fees of various kinds. The revenue which was supplemented to a considerable extent by grants in aid from provincial funds were applied for most part to the repair and maintenance of roads. So divisional boards like urban municipalities were in course of gradual development from an agency purely or mainly officials to bodies in a certain degree of village communities.<sup>88</sup> Probably a good number of persons might have served on these boards and one half were non-elected.<sup>89</sup> The success of administration by local boards depended upon a variety of factors and the most prominent of them were:

- 1) the area created for the purposes, 2) constitution of boards,
- (3) kind and degree of State control exercised over them, (4) the

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86. *Ibid.*

87. Sir George Chisney, *India Polity - A Review of the System of Administration in India*. London, 1894, p. 153.

88. *Ibid.*

89. *Ibid.*

functions for which they were entrusted, (5) the financial resources and (6) the general interest prevailing among the people in the working of all political institutions.<sup>90</sup>

Though local boards were set up by Local Funds Act of 1871, local taxes spent on local requirements were collected for some years previous to it. An education rate was raised under Education Act of 1863, road cess under Road Cess Act of 1866. To administer these Acts, the village was taken as the unit for the purpose of education and district for the purpose of road.

Thus various governmental measures for the development of local self government meant increasing intrusion of government into the Indian society. In the earliest period of Municipalities of Malabar district, there had been trading activities. The emphasis on Panchayath Raj after independence had tended to take away the importance of municipalities and other bodies in the development of local self government.

#### Consequences of the various Acts

The consequences of various Acts were numerous. The British Government had introduced Acts at different stages not with the

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90. A. Venkata Rangaya. *Development of Local Boards in Madras Presidency*. Bombay, 1938, p.2.

intention of better administration from the point of view of efficiency in municipal administration but as an attempt of getting support of the native people of India though the British had done under the guise of political and popular education. Initial failures were found in this new field. Due to the qualification imposed on voters the municipal councils constituted in earlier period could not reflect the aspirations of the local population in the area of the municipalities and the district board. Whatever be the importance of various acts it could not be denied that the provincial governments and the government of British India could not fulfil the policy imposed through various Acts. This could be clearly seen from the passing of resolutions at various times that no substantial progress had been made in the field of local self government. Local bodies in British India had faced many handicaps which undoubtedly destroyed initiative on the part of members of local bodies. The annual reports of British government contained many instances of ever increasing burden laid upon the shoulders of local officers.

The main features of local government during the first phase of its development were as follows (1) Local government in India was introduced mainly with a view to promoting British interest rather than to promote self governing bodies in the country. (2)

The local government institutions were dominated by the Britishers and the Indians were not permitted to participate in its working (3) The chief motive for introduction of local government was to provide financial relief to imperial government and (4) The local bodies were primarily nominated bodies and the principle of election did not exist except in central provinces.

Table showing the details of the Composition of Board, Taluk Board and Union Panchayats

No.	Maximum strength	Ex-officio members	Proportion of officials to non-officials	Proportion of elected to non-elected members	President elected or nominated	Vice-President elected or nominated
1	District Board 24	1. Collector 2. Divisional Officer	1 : 3	1 : 3	--	--
2	Taluk Board 12	Divisional Officer	1 : 2	1 : 2	Divisional officer elected or nominated	Divisional officer elected or nominated
3	Union Panchayats 5	Headmen of the village	-	-	Nominated or elected	Nominated or elected

Source: Rules for the conduct of Elections of Municipal Councillors. (Connected up to 1-2-1940). As per GO No. 2629 L&M dated 21-7-1931 No. 789 L&M dated 7-2-1932, No. 1214 L&M dated 25-6-1934, No. 3505 L&M dated 30-8-1933, No.4463 L&M dated 23-10-1934, No. 449 L&M dated 5-2-1935, No. 3679 L&M dated 20-8-1936, No.1047 L&M dated 24-3-1938, No.4122 L&M dated 5.10.1938, No. 3696 dated 22-9-1939, No. 4263 dated 1-10-1939 (TNA)

Table showing the Number of Voters at the  
Election of 1882 Malabar District of Municipal limit

Name of Municipality	Population in Municipal limit	Voting	Voting percentage
Palghat	36339	584	1.60
Tellicherry	26410	465	1.76
Calicut	57085	865	1.50
Cannanore	26386	546	2.00

Source: MacLean, *Manual of Administration of the Madras Presidency*.  
Madras 1893 (TNA), p. 226.

Particulars of the Trade of the Ports in the Madras Presidency for the Official Year 1865-1866 Malabar District

Name of the Ports	BRITISH					FOREIGN					COUNTRY OF NATIVE				
	Vessels	Tonnage	Dues			Vessels	Tonnage	Dues			Vessels	Tonnage	Dues		
			Rs.	A	P			Rs.	A	P			Rs.	A	P
Cannanore	144	64387	2210	12	0	3	1571	98	3	0	1353	27228	495	9	9
Tellicherry	103	38745	1285	4	9	14	-	256	11	0	1247	17855	217	3	4
Kalay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	415	6085	-	-	-
Baragaree	12	5839	-	-	-	1	998	-	-	-	646	16891	-	-	-
Quilandy	11	4205	-	-	-	3	2124	-	-	-	276	5249	-	-	-
Calicut	148	62046	1911	7	0	5	2495	155	15	0	2044	74465	1843	1	4
Bey pore	32	15664	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	735	25054	-	-	-
Tanore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	222	6177	-	-	-
Ponani	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	584	21521	-	-	-
Chowghat	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	63	4890	-	-	-
Cochin	241	81308	6778	4	-	9	3527	418	4	6	1182	36888	1601	12	9

Source: The Reports on the Administration of Madras Presidency 1865-66 (TNA)

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CHAPTER 2

HALTING STEPS TOWARDS SELF GOVERNMENT  
SECOND PHASE 1882-1919

## CHAPTER 2

### **'HALTING STEPS TOWARDS SELF GOVERNMENT' SECOND PHASE 1882-1919**

The second stage in the development of local self government in India started with Lord Ripon's Resolution of 1882. The financial and political aspects were neatly combined in the development of local self government and the process really began under the conservative Mayo and not the liberal Ripon.<sup>1</sup> The major motive was to tackle financial difficulties by shifting charges for local requirements on to new local taxes.<sup>2</sup> Lord Mayo through his resolution intended association of native element in the local government, whereas Lord Ripon's resolution promised elected majority and Chairman in the local bodies. Lord Ripon was sympathetic to the growing aspirations of Indian people to acquire a share in the administration of their affairs and decided to make local government self governing.

Lord Ripon believed that local government was predominantly an instrument of political and popular education.<sup>3</sup> The Resolution

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1. Sumit Sarkar. *Modern India 885-1947*. Delhi, 1983, P. 19.

2. *Ibid.*

3. S.C. Raychoudary. *History of Modern India*. Delhi, 1992, p. 216.

of 1882 marked a fundamental change in the basic approach to the system of local government in India. It had envisaged certain principles that the object of local self government should be promoted on political education of the natives rather than administrative efficiency, local bodies should be created for rural areas, democratisation of local bodies with non-official in the local council and a non-official chairman, provisions of sufficient financial resources to local bodies enabled them to shape their budgets as they like, complete control to local bodies over their staff, control of government over local bodies to be exercised from without rather than from within.<sup>4</sup> But the scheme envisaged could not progress as desired by Lord Ripon.

Several Acts were passed between 1883 and 1885 which introduced important changes in constitutional powers and functions of municipal bodies, but the unhelpful attitude of Indian bureaucracy prevented those attempts from progressing any further. The successors of Lord Ripon were not liberal and were not willing to part political education above administrative efficiency. A dreary picture of petty quarreling in municipal government and stagnation in urban services prevailed, alleviated only by the appearance of

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4. *Ibid.*, p. 217.

Lord Curzon as viceroy in 1899 and his efforts to instill some dynamics influenced the local government.<sup>5</sup> Humdrum matters were dressed up as a great experiment in freedom. The Resolution of Ripon stated that the 'extension of Local Self Government was not primarily to improve the administration, but rather to foster the political education of that growing class of public spirited men whom it would be bad policy not to utilise.'<sup>6</sup> Municipal and local rural boards should be established, wherever possible with a large preponderance of elected non-official members and government control over the local bodies should be exerted from without rather than from within official chairman being avoided, so that they should be encouraged to manage their own affairs.<sup>7</sup> It was felt that local boards should be given control of all local rates and taxes, the assessment and collection of unpopular licence tax must be one of their useful tasks and they should be allowed to initiate and direct construction of local works.<sup>8</sup> But every where Lord Ripon acted safely by reserving large discretionary powers to government by

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5. John G. Leonard. Urban Government Under the Raj - A Case Study of Municipal Administration in Nineteenth Century South India. *Modern Asian Studies*, 7,2(1973), p.227.

6. Anil Seal. *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism - Competition and Collaboration in the Later 19th Century*. Cambridge 1968, p. 155.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

giving the local administration considerable scope over the details of the provincial scheme.

The successors of Lord Ripon were not liberal and were not willing to part political education above administrative efficiency. The Government used the term local self government to mean panchayath municipality, district boards and city corporations for which the regional local administration should be conducted at the regional and local level. Under the British local Government came to designate the district and local bodies, that were instituted as a first halting step towards local self government.

The British point of view was that the Indians should be trained in the art of self government, but this was not a deliberate plan of the early rulers of India. They came out to trade and acquired territory with a view to the promotion of trade. But in the course of their conduct of government and of the people they were thus thrown among, they struck certain paths, which led them ultimately to introduce the natives of India to the business of government charging themselves, to put it more correctly charged with the duty of administering commercial military and revenue affairs, they were forced by the facts and circumstances of life in India to associate

the natives of India in their business.<sup>9</sup> This view governed the British policy.

Their lack of knowledge of vernaculars and of the customs and use of alien civilization and culture compelled the East India company to employ the native people. The need to raise additional revenue from the localities was another reason which influenced the governmental policy. Apart from this, there was another important reason which was political in nature. After the revolt of 1857, which shook administrative control in some areas, statesmen and political leaders in England felt that India could be governed better by developing local self government. Yet another was that it was felt that political education should be fostered and a class of full spirited Indians allowed to develop it.

Ripon believed that there was a potentially powerful instrument of political education which, he thought, could bring fresh life into torpid system, which at present exist by training Indians to manage their local affairs by themselves. Since provincial governments were unlikely to take kindly to a new

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9. M. Ruthna Swami. *Some Influence that made the Administrative System in Indian*. London, 1919, p. 645.

departure, the main line of advance would have to be laid down by central government.<sup>10</sup> It was also stated that municipal and local rural boards should be established whenever possible with a larger preponderance of elected non-official members and the system of election wherever local circumstances permitted.<sup>11</sup> Ripon introduced reforms of decentralisation system of finances in a uniform and extended basis. He introduced in his local Self government policy political element to which he subordinated administrative considerations.

The first Resolution of Lord Ripon's government was in 1881. It was declared that the time had come up to take steps to develop further Lord Mayo's idea of local self government. The provincial governments were to be directed to make a careful study of provincial and municipal acts to enable them to decide upon revenue sources that could be transferred from the provincial to local municipal management. The central government worked on Resolution and issued letters to provincial governments.

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10. Note by L. Ripon, 27th April 1882. R.P. Add MSS 43576 cited in Anil Seal, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

The Resolution of 1882 stood out as a land mark in the history and development of local self government. Reviving the progress in the field, since Lord Mayo's Resolution of 1870, the Government of Lord Ripon noted in satisfaction. A large income from local rates and cesses had been secured and in some provinces the management of this income had been freely entrusted to local bodies. The municipalities had increased in number and usefulness.

But it was felt that there was a greater inequality of progress in different parts of the country. Many services adopted for local management were still reserved in the hands of the provincial governments. The expenses for the watch and ward were a great burden on the resources of municipalities. The financial decentralisation of lord Mayo's period was applied by the central government.

Even before the resolution of Lord Ripon severe criticism had been raised against government schools in the municipal areas. It was said that there were large government schools and government normal schools at Tellicherry, Calicut and Palghat where learning was progressive in the state. But the rapid progress of education mentioned was attributed to the fact that majority of the population

of the place were Brahmins.<sup>12</sup> The report had indicated that lower caste were minority in group so also they were educationally backward.

Certain functions had laid to the executive officers of Government by the Resolutions. They should watch especially the proceedings of local boards. They should point out matters called for consideration and drew their attention to any neglect of duty on the part of local bodies. They should check any attempt which exceeded their proper function. They should note whether the local bodies acted illegally or arbitrarily or in any unreasonable manner. Further, the Resolution said wherever possible a non-official chairman should be preferred to an official one. The Indians were to be encouraged to become members of the local bodies and the government was to help them in performing their duties. The Resolution laid down which of those institutions were to be developed and provisions were made for Indians to 'train themselves for democracy and political knowledge.' But there was no popular enthusiasm for election. Inadequacy of funds might have been a reason for this. These local bodies derived income

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12. *Native Newspaper Report*, Paschema Taraka and Kerala Pataka, dated 1-8-1878. (Hereafter N.N.R.)

from other sources, such as tolls public ferries, cattle ponds, etc. So within a short time those institutions became quite useless and it looked as if the whole purpose of Lord Ripon's reforms had been defeated. Yet the lines laid down for the development of those institutions were important because of the promising future laid before them.

But there was hope among the people and following observation, reported by newspaper Mazhar-ul-Ajaib, indicated that "we have thought that the local governments are not empowered to an extent sufficient to render the administration of the country efficient."<sup>13</sup> Sir Charles Trevelyan, then governor of Madras, took the initiative in the matter and in the year 1870 the late Viceroy Lord Mayo gave his attention to the subject of making the local governments independent, but was not fortunate enough to carry out his object. The report was that the liberal party at home had reviewed the subject, hence strong hopes were entertained of the local governments being vested in the necessary powers.

But there were several criticisms about the Municipalities Act even before the introduction of the Act of 1884. There was no

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13. N. N. R, Mazhar-ul-Ajaib, dated 11-11-1884.

increase in elected number of members in the municipalities and as regards the chairmanship of Municipalities Act "unless otherwise directed by the government, the municipal chairman should be elected."<sup>14</sup> This Act was highly criticised on the ground that it still left the collectors with immense powers over the Municipal Council.

The Nationalists remarked that local self government was not worth having with the appointment of collector as the president of municipality and the commissioners were either his subordinates or dependents. This kind of official control was done and argued that Municipal councils were still denied the right to move their budget and to raise their revenue. Many of the municipal officials like secretary, Engineer Health Officer etc. were outside the control of municipal councils as they were appointed by the Governor.

There was no women representation to the municipal council. The non-officials further pointed out the property qualification for voting to the council must be abandoned. However the nationalist criticism was not considered by the government.

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14. *Ibid*

In reviewing the results of Local Fund Administration of 1889-90 the then Madras Government remarked that "these results are to a great extent due to the exertions of the Taluk Boards and Union Panchayaths which worked on the whole in the considerable success and energy and has thus amply justified the action which called them into existence."<sup>15</sup> It was hoped that in course of time all these local bodies would become still more efficient. However the Resolutions constituted another aspect in which the development of spirit of local self government in district towns had emerged.

### Government Legislation and Its Impact

The Madras government had introduced legislation for the enactment of the Act of 1884. For electoral purpose the towns were divided into as many wards as there were elective members, each ward being more or less equal, representation being given to its population, wealth and intelligence and also to the necessity for attempting to secure some representation for really important minorities.<sup>16</sup> The Commission, exclusive of ex-officio members

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15. S. Sreenivasa Ragava Iyengar. *Memorandum on the progress of the Madras Presidency during last fifty years of the British Administration*. Delhi 1988, p.222.

16. Local and Municipal Department. *Government Report of Local Self Government Committee*. Madras 1882.

should be consisted of not more than 24 members of whom three fourth should be elected.<sup>17</sup> The governor in council should fix the number of elective commissioners for each town and ward and might from time to time vary the number.

Government legislation relating to the persons entitled to be voted was that (1) every owner of houses and lands situated within the limits of the town, who was liable to pay a house or land rate or aggregate house and land rate amounting to rupees three and three-fourths if the rate be fixed at a lower percentage on rental provided that such ownership was induced by registration in the municipal books. (2) all persons liable to payment of a profession tax of Rs.6/- per annum or upwards, (3) all government pensioners drawing Rs.16/- per mensem and upwards (4) all persons drawing a salary of Rs.30/- per mensem and upwards, (5) all person who paid house rent of Rs.5/- per mensem and upwards and (6) all graduates of any recognised university.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly disqualification was mentioned as those persons who were less than 21 years of age, persons who had been sentenced to

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17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*

rigorous imprisonment for one month and upwards and persons of unsound mind.

Certain qualifications were required of commissioners in the Act. Every owner of houses and lands situated within the limits of the town, who was liable to pay a house or land rate or an aggregate house and land rate amounting to Rs. 7½ if the rate be fixed 7½% on rental or proportionately lower if the rate be fixed at a lower percentage provided such ownership was evidenced by registration in the Municipal books.<sup>19</sup>

Certain demands were raised that election of the members of the council must be done by tax rate payers of the local areas. One newspaper report was that two thirds of the members of municipalities in the Mofusil should be elected by the people and that the president if possible should not be an official (in the service of government). At present one half of the municipal members were appointed by government and other half elected by the people and there was no reason why two thirds of members should not be elected by the tax payers themselves.<sup>20</sup> Further it, was criticised

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19. *Ibid.*

20. N. N. R., Swadesamithram, 19-80-1882 (TNA).

that the Government of Madras appointed only rich persons to be members of the legislative council and the result being that those members of legislative council were neither remarkable for intelligence nor well acquainted with the framing of laws.<sup>21</sup> It was also suggested that instead of appointing five or six members of legislative council, two representatives at least from each district of the presidency be elected by people, the attention of the mass of people would not only be engaged in the affairs of legislative council, but the council would also be a source of popular political education.

#### Madras District Municipalities Act IV of 1884

The Madras District Municipalities Act IV of 1884 laid down the details of the Municipal Administration in chapter II of the Madras District Municipalities Act. The Act narrated the establishment of Municipal councils and their constitution. The Revenue officer in charge of the Division was to be the ex-officio Municipal councillor. The Act laid down the appointment of other Municipal Councillors, penalties for consumption practices at Municipal election etc. The Governor in Council was to declare

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21. *Ibid.*

what maximum number of Municipal councillors and proportion of councillors appointed by election.<sup>22</sup>

Under Act IV of 1884 the collector had no longer any direct connection with the municipal councils in his district, but he had ample powers conferred on him to exercise external control.<sup>23</sup> The duties performed by the president and vice-president under the former Act had now been imposed on a chairman and he would be executive officer of the municipality and as such carried out resolutions of the municipal council. He could authorise a municipal councilor to exercise any of the powers conferred on him by the Act. In him vested the appointment and dismissal of the municipal servants. In any Municipality where office of chairman became vacant by removal, death or resignation of a chairman, the revenue officer in charge of division of district assumed office until a successor was duly appointed.

The Board of councilors consisted of one ex-officio member and a certain number of ordinary members. Ex-officio member was

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22. L & M Department, *The Consolidated Draft Report of Local Board in Malabar Area for the Year 1928-29* (Regional Archives, Calicut). Hereinafter RAC.

23. *Manual of Administration of Madras Presidency*, Vol. I, Madras, 1885.

the revenue officer in charge of the division of the district in which the town was situated. By virtue of the power, it had been usual to appoint chief local representatives of educational, medical and public works department and the boards thus had the advantage of free of cost of the advice and assistance of the professional officers of government on all technical questions which came before them from time to time.<sup>24</sup> A section of the new Act further provided that a civil surgeon of the district, the executive engineer of the division and inspector of schools of the circle, when such officer was not a municipal councillor, might with previous sanction of the chairman could attend any meeting of the municipal council and address the council on any matter affecting sanitation, public works department and public instruction.<sup>25</sup> Number of councillors must by law be not less than 12 including the ex-officio member.<sup>26</sup> In April 1883 a fresh scale was laid down as shown below.<sup>27</sup>

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24. *Extract from the Report of Madras Committee on Local Self Government, 1883* (TNA).

25. *Madras District Municipalities Act IV of 1884* (R. A. C.)

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*

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Classes of towns according to population	Minimum	Maximum
Under 20,000	12	16
20,000 to 30,000	14	18
30,000 to 40,000	16	20
40,000 to 50,000	18	22
Above 50,000	20	24

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Several sources of revenue of the municipalities are shown below. Taxation viz., a yearly tax on arts profession trades and callings and on officers and appointments, a yearly tax on land and buildings not exceeding 4% on their annual value; a half yearly tax on vehicles with springs palanquins and animals; a half yearly tax on carts and other vehicles without springs; tolls on vehicles and animals entering into municipalities, licences to carry on offensive and dangerous trades and other sources; fines and forfeitures; payment for municipal services rendered to private persons and other miscellaneous items and grants in aid from provincial or local funds.<sup>28</sup>

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28. *Manual of Administration of Madras Presidency.*

The funds under the Act were utilised for various activities and this was subject to such rules and restrictions as in governor in council prescribed from time to time. The funds utilised for such purposes like construction repair and maintenance of streets bridges and other means of communication, hospitals, dispensaries, lunatic asylums, choultries, markets, poor houses tanks wells, etc. Payment of all charges connected with drains sewers, etc., training and employment of medical practitioners and vaccinators, sanitary inspectors etc. The fund was also utilised for other resources of public utility services, payment of salaries, leave allowances, pensions granting and such other allowances to servants employed by municipal councils.

By section 14 of the Act the Governor in council appointed chairman and authorised his election and Sec.14(3) carried out the election of vice chairman.<sup>29</sup> The vice chairman or revenue officer in charge of division assumed the charge of office of chairman when post fell vacant.<sup>30</sup>

The Act laid down details of Municipal property and municipal fund. Sec 22 laid down the power to vest the property of government in a municipal council.<sup>31</sup> The report indicated that the public streets

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29. *Consolidated Draft Report of Local Board.*

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

sewer drains, etc. vested in the municipal councils. According to section 29 of the Act, the code of transaction of business was done by municipal council, which meant to keep on office, to meet once a month etc. The chairman had to furnish progress reports and also he had some emergency powers.

The Act provided the Collector with powers which included delegation of powers of collector. He delegated powers to other public officers and forwarded the copy of order to Governor in council and municipal council. Sec 36 of the Act marked extra ordinary powers enjoyed by the collector and revenue officer in charge of the division of the District in case of emergency.<sup>32</sup> There were provisions to fix the number and salary of permanent servants with the sanction of the governor in council. The chairman had got the right to punish the employees. The council sanctioned contractual powers and no municipal councilors were to be personally liable for contracts. Chapter III of the Act referred to the taxes and tolls and mode of realising them. There were various kinds of taxes which included levy of water drainage tax and levy tax on servants.

The tax was also imposed on Arts professions and callings. It laid down tax on buildings and lands and the rate was fixed with

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32. *Ibid.*

reference to the area. No tax was imposed on huts. Sec 75 of the Act laid down the levy of water and drainage tax. Taxes on vehicles with the spring palanquins and animals were imposed even though with the certain exemption.<sup>33</sup>

Chapter IV of the Act maintained the purposes to which the funds raised under this Act should be supplied.<sup>34</sup> The Municipal council was given the provision for public instruction of children by maintaining schools or by grants in aid or by contribution: Provision was also made in Sec 125 of the Act for hospitals and dispensaries to be supplied with medicines.<sup>35</sup> The Act provided for employment of medical officer, treatment of patients vaccination etc. Penalty was imposed for signing false certificates. The council provided for water supply and penalty was imposed for wasting and misuse of water.

The maintenance and repair of streets and footways was undertaken by the council. The streets were watered and lighted. The council was given power to erect buildings on vacant grounds but instructions were given not to use inflammable materials for roofs and extend walls.

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33.*Ibid.*

34.*Ibid.*

35.*Ibid.*

According to the provision of the Act of 1884, certain taxes should not be exercised without license which was to be applied 30 days in advance<sup>36</sup> Section 19 of the Act provided that slaughter houses and business should be licensed and prohibited sale in the street. The council was entrusted with the inspection of weights and measures, general sanitary regulations were imposed by Madras district and Municipalities Act IV of 1884.

The Chairman possessed enormous powers as per the Act. He could enter and inspect sale centres, storage of articles of food and drink. He inspected whether people were provided with public latrines and urinals. The municipal council was to provide burial and burying ground and if the burial and burying grounds were dangerous to health, another convenient place must be provided.<sup>37</sup>

The number of municipalities at the end of the official year 1884-85 in the Madras presidency was 47, with a population of 1323970 according to census of 1881.<sup>38</sup> The town improvement Act

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36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*

38. Maclean. *Manual of Administration of Madras Presidency*. Madras 1893 (TNA).p.226.

of 1866 was introduced and by Sec. 297 of the towns improvement Act of 1871 the towns had hitherto been constituted municipalities and this Act had been superseded by Madras Act IV of 1884.<sup>39</sup> For the management of local affairs, every large town had its municipality, the members of which were chiefly natives of the place and not in the service of Government.<sup>40</sup> In each case the council consisted of a Chairman board of councillors and the collector of the district had been the ex-officio president for all towns in their the district under his charge.<sup>41</sup> Generally as a rule the working executive officer of every municipality had been vice-president.

Under the Madras Act IV of 1884, the collector had no longer any direct connection with the Municipal council in his district but he had ample powers conferred on him to exercise external control. Through this Act the duties performed by president and vice-president had been imposed on a chairman. The collector was the chief executive officer of the municipality and carried out resolutions of the municipal council. By the Act he could authorise a municipal councillor to exercise any of the powers conferred on him. He had the power to appoint Municipal employees and the power of dismissal of them also vested in him.

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39. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid.*

But the councillors at a meeting decided the number of employees and salaries paid to them.<sup>42</sup>

In order to transact the greatly increasing business of the country large powers had been delegated to local bodies. Further charges with same direction had been recommended by the Royal Commission upon decentralisation in India. The Government Report had pointed out that the past fifty years had brought a great increase in the multifarious duties devolving upon the governments and their officers in India. Probably administrative, judicial, revenue and executive business to be performed, had more than doubled. The due transaction of these affairs had required and continued to be required in an increasing degree, the delegation of power and responsibility by the Supreme Court to local governments and by local governments to subordinate authorities. Likewise engagement of financial powers of local governments, creation of municipal and other bodies had been done. The local bodies had given the management of local roads, streets, hospitals, schools and other improvement constituted under legislative enactments.<sup>43</sup>

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42. *Ibid*

43. Government Department, *Memorandum of Some of the Results of Indian Administration during past 50 years of British rule in India*. Calcutta 1911, p.1. (TNA).

The Act passed in that connection had placed the municipalities and local boards under the control of collector of district. The collector was the president of the local board. Most of the members of the District Board were rich natives but with little or no education.<sup>44</sup> The collector was the authority that nominated persons as members of local boards and only a few members of Malabar District Board appeared to be educated.<sup>45</sup> The fact appeared to be that such men were not appointed because they might not submit to the wishes of official members. It seemed that municipal bodies would be in a little better condition as the members thereof were elected by inhabitants of locality and probably comprised competent men.

#### Actual working of the Act

The Collector had the power over these local bodies and tried to crush them when opportunity favoured. The European officials of the country did not relish the idea of the natives exercising any power. Some times it happened that collector exceeded their powers and acted on their own. At the same time it could be seen that after

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44. N. N. R., *Kerala Pathrika* dated 1-9-1875.

45. *Ibid.*

the introduction of the District and Municipalities Act of 1884, certain improvements had occurred in the municipalities of Malabar. In the case of Municipality of Calicut income had been rendered from various kinds of taxes viz. tax on arts, tax on buildings, tax on lands, tax on vehicles, and springs tax on animals, tax on carts, fines under Police Act, distraint fees, fees on schools and training institutions, income from markets, traveler's bungalow, private scavenging avenues, etc.<sup>46</sup>

Among the various charges of Calicut Municipality on which grant I included new works like communication, buildings, drainage repairs, construction buildings, water supply, etc. Grant II included training schools. Grand III included hospitals and dispensaries, vaccination, registration of births and deaths, conservancy (road cleaning), private scavenging and grant IV consisted of lighting markets, choultries, avenues and watering roads, traveler's bungalow and other miscellaneous items.<sup>47</sup>

In Cannanore Municipality during the year 1892-93 the main receipts were tax on arts amounting to Rs.3000/-, tax on buildings

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46. *Revised Estimate for the year 1891-92* as sanctioned in G.O. No.770 Local and Municipal dated 27-5-1871 (R. A. C.).

47. *Ibid.*

amounting to Rs.7000/-, tolls amounting to Rs.2775/-, income from licenses, fine and penalties private scavenging, etc.<sup>48</sup> The record had clearly shown that there was a slight improvement in the sources of income of municipality. About the expenditure met by the municipality including new works construction of buildings, expenditure on health improvement, sanitation and educational activities.

In the revised estimate of the Tellicherry municipality the budget estimate had shown an increase of amount chiefly under taxes on vehicles and animals and few from private scavenging.<sup>49</sup> The fee income from Brennen College, Thiruvengad Middle School and 18 Hindu Salary Result School was estimated as Rs.9240/-.<sup>50</sup>

In Palghat Municipality the year 1888-89 opened with a balance of Rs.6910 and the receipts for the year together with the sum were estimated at Rs.52,920/-.<sup>51</sup> There was considerable decrease in toll receipts caused by the opening of the Palghat extension of Madras

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Revised Budget Estimate of Tellicherry Municipality for the Year 1891-92*, Government of Madras L & M Department (R. A. C.).

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Budget Estimate of Palghat Municipality for the year 1888-89*. Municipal Government Orders, L & M Department (R. A. C.).

Railway into the town which was estimated at Rs.2000/- and to make up the loss of revenue, the council proposed to tax all vehicles in springs as per schedule rate and all other carts.<sup>52</sup>

There were demands raised from Government side to reduce its expenditure. The Editor of the *Swadeshimithram* observed that the finance committee was instituted with the object of ascertaining the best way of renewing the provincial contracts so as to afford the government of India, a large surplus of revenue.<sup>53</sup> By the new condition of contract the revenue of local governments had been reduced and provincial expenditure increased. The local governments were therefore necessitated to reduce the expenditure.<sup>54</sup> But it was insisted by the Government that the diminution of expenditure must be done so as not to affect the welfare of the public. Instead of reducing expenditure on unnecessary items, where majority people were uneducated, they had reduced expenditure under education.

The local bodies which were lower tiers of constitutional pyramids suffered neglect at the level of implementation. Due to

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52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*

54. N. N. R., *Swadeshimithram*, dated 1-9-1885.

various causes, the local bodies did not become arenas of political activities. The policy of local self government satisfied neither official aims or nationalist aspirations which required major reassessment role. The problem of local bodies in the 19th century was a familiar one with growing population without much economic resources. By the middle of 19th century, the financial pressures had compelled British officials to such ways of lightening the demands placed on imperial revenues.<sup>55</sup> This caused provincial governments to make several laws pertaining to the towns to form municipal boards and pay for their own civic improvements such as roads or schools.<sup>56</sup> Controlling the municipal administration meant governing the towns as well as trying to stay in power.

There was another problem. Every politician found that once he assumed office, his predecessor's budget contained items that could not be cut and commitments to continued salaries and projects had assumed, which resulted in financial limitation inherited to municipal budgets. The municipality's inability for issuing bonds and raising loans also constituted another important

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55. S. Gopal. *British Policy in India 1858-1905*. Cambridge, 1965, p. 93.

56. K.K. Pillay. *History of Local Self Government in the Madras Presidency 1850-1919*. Bombay, 1960, p. 92.

crisis for the slow advancement of local bodies. Also the local bodies were not in a position to increase income under existing sources of taxation.

Another consequence was that centralising political power locally was crucial to building the kind of political net works between urban and political levels of politics that developed in South India during the early 20th century.<sup>57</sup> The elected chairman could accommodate demands of political leaders in a way not possible with the previously less centralised municipal administration.<sup>58</sup>

After referring to the improvements recently effected, it was said that district and taluk boards had not yet derived the benefit of L. Ripon's scheme of Local Self Government as much as members of those boards were appointed on the recommendation of collectors, divisional officers and tahasildars respectively.<sup>59</sup> One view point was the wish that the procedure obtaining in case of municipalities as regards election of members and presidents should be observed in case of taluk and district boards.

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57. John G. Leonard, *op. cit.*, p.249.

58. *Ibid.*

59. N. N. R., *Kerala Patrika*, dated 5-5-1887.

Referring to the Malabar district Board meeting on 11-5-1887, at which for the first time a non-official member presided and discharged his duties satisfactorily, it was observed that an old member whose term of office expired, and to whom no notice of the meeting had therefore been issued, attended the meeting and drew his allowance.<sup>60</sup> The member in question was a European and so there was no error of procedure.<sup>61</sup> This Act indicated the point that such preference was not allotted to a native member.

Controversial views had been expressed about the taluk Boards. The condition of the Wynad Taluk Board had somewhat improved by appointment of its members of the deputing, Thahasildar of Vythiri and of the Sub Registrar of the same place.<sup>62</sup> Another blame for local fund boards responsible for the unsatisfactory state of certain roads in the Walluvanad taluk and the bridgeless condition of certain canals over which the road from Tirur to Malappuram to pass, was said that it was because the members of the local fund board were exempted from payment of ferry charges and that they were indifferent about ferry charges.<sup>63</sup>

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60. *Ibid.*

61. *Ibid.*

62. *Ibid.*

63. *Ibid.*

Most probably finance from local fund budget was not used for public utility purposes. A provision of one and a half lakh rupees in the local fund budget was utilised for rebuilding the bridge over the Ponani and no attempt was made for utilising imperial funds for such purposes.<sup>64</sup>

There was a tendency for gaining selfish advantage from the public institution of the municipality. One proposal of Tellicherry municipality was to raise the standard of local municipal school to a F.A. Class, when the condition of other public institutions such as hospital was very poor. It was said that the proposal seemed to have emanated from some of the councillors who had sent up their sons or nephews to the late entrance examination and wanted to get higher education at a cheap rate.<sup>65</sup>

Favouratism and nepotism were common among the municipal councillors. Generally, the well being of the inhabitants of Calicut municipality was not enough because of the fact that it was due to electing men on the principle of mere favouratism and not on their real qualification.<sup>66</sup> Some of the non-official members of the local

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64. N. N. R., *Desahimani* (Tamil) 24-12-1887.

65. N. N. R., *Kerala Sanchari*, dated 2-1-1887.

66. *Op. cit.*, *Kerala Pathrika*, dated 19-1-1888.

fund boards never expressed their opinion on any matter for fear of incurring displeasure of the president and loosing their travel allowance.<sup>67</sup> Also indifference was shown by official members to the well being of inhabitants.

By the middle of 1889, the government ordered that if the members of local and municipal boards required names of those voting, should be recorded in each proceedings of the meeting.<sup>68</sup> The order was very desirable because a fear of public exposure of their names would prevent competent members from electing an undesirable candidates and also the government would particularly weigh the merits and demerits of a proposal carried according to a majority consisting more of official members than of non-official. It was also strongly argued that elective system should be observed in the constitution of taluk board as the evils arising from nomination was very numerous. Fear and suspicion had emerged among the people that the nomination of council members from advocates, pensioned judicial officers and merchants, whether such were right men in the right place. It appeared from the government remark on Calicut Municipal report for 1888-89, that the councillors

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67. *Ibid.*, dated 29-12-1889.

68. *Ibid.*, dated 26- 6-1889.

were asked to attend punctually every meeting and take an interest in the municipal administration.<sup>69</sup> There was no financial liability for the municipalities. Because it was seen from the report of the Cannanore municipality that no loan was raised by the municipality during the year 1889 or in previous year.<sup>70</sup>

The emphasis from the popular section towards the Madras District Municipality bills was that the people in every municipality should be allowed to elect one half or at least one third of the Municipal councillors and if the rest were nominated by Government there would be sufficient safeguard against municipal council.<sup>71</sup> Several works that had been undertaken by the municipalities and district board failed to get appreciation from the native people of the locality. Discrimination prevailed in almost all sections of the local administration. Regarding the system of roads, sanitary condition and water supply, the local boards never found funds, but it was said that only the roads generally used by the Europeans to a certain extent kept in good

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69. *The Government Report for the Year 1888-89*, Calicut Municipality (Local and Municipal departments) (TNA).

70. *Administrative Report of Cannanore Municipality* dated 15-8-1889 (L & M) TNA.

71. N. N. R., *Swadeshi mithra*, dated 10-3-1883.

order.<sup>72</sup> With regard to the functioning of the municipalities and district board existing in the period of 1884, it was expedient that control was largely in the hands of the government.

The great increase of non-official agency, which had been a consequence of the new Act had not led as to administrative efficiency as anticipated.<sup>73</sup> The non official chairman had generally done their work well through the office in large towns.<sup>74</sup> The district boards drew the attention of the government to unnecessary difficulty, which attended the preparation of the budget owing to the order of government that expenditure under marginally rated items should be divided between local board in proportion to the proposed out lay of each board on public works.<sup>75</sup>

Whatever might have been the intention of Lord Ripon, his reforms in the sphere of local self government did not make it free from official control and there was no true attempt made to begin a system suitable to the will of local inhabitants. The defects were

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72. N. N. R., *Malaya Manorama* dated 4-2-1895.

73. Municipal Government orders from January to June 1888. *Constitution of Municipal Councils* (R. A. C.).

74. *Ibid.*

75. *Municipal Government Orders from January to June 1890.* (R.A.C.).

clearly recognised by the Montagu Chelmsford Report and Lord Chamberlain's Government issued a resolution declaring the policy of gradual removal of unnecessary control of Government over local bodies. Whatever be the importance of Lord Ripons Resolutions, it could not be denied that provincial governments and government of India did not carry out well the policy laid down in the resolution. The result was that even after the lapse of 36 years when another resolution was passed in 1918 no real progress had been made in the field of local self government. Men like Lord Curzon were bitter enemies of local self government. The British bureaucracy in India was determined to see that local bodies did not succeed in their work. Through the official control over local bodies, the British government was well intentioned to bring local bodies under their control.

**THE CONSTITUTION OF MUNICIPAL IN 1889**

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<b>Ex-officio</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Nominated officials</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Nominated non-officials</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Elected official</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Elected non-official</b>	<b>8</b>

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Source: L & M Dept. G.O. No. 1501 dated 7-11-1889. Local and Municipal Order, Government of Madras (RAC)

**CANALS AND PUBLIC FERRIES ACT**

**ACT NO. II OF 1890**

**PUBLIC WORK DEPARTMENT (IRRIGATION)**

**NOTIFICATION DATED 23-7-1890.**

The following lines of Navigation in the Malabara District subjected to the provisions of the Act.

1. From Kavvaye to Azhikkal (via) Elimala river Sultans Canal and the Mattool river.
2. From Badagara to the Beypore river (via) the Cotta Agalapuzha and Korapuzha rivers, the Conoly canal and the Kallayi river.
3. From Tirur to Ponnani (via) Tirur and Ponnani.
4. From Ponnani to Ala (Via) the Canoly Canal and the connected back waters.
5. From Irikkur to Azhikkal (via) Baliapattam river.
6. From Edavanna to Beypore (via) Beypore river.

Source: Act No. II of 1890. Local Rules And Orders made under Law Drafting Department (RAC)

**RAILWAYS ACT 1890**

**Railways Act of 1890 laid down the schedule of taxes payable by Railway Administration to local bodies. Under section 135 of Indian Railway Act 1890, the following taxes were paid to local bodies.**

**House and land taxes and cart stand licence fee paid to Calicut Municipal Council. House and land taxes and scavenging fee paid to Cannanore Municipal Council. Southern Railway House tax and general property tax on land paid to Palghat Municipal Council.**

**Southern Railway paid house, water, drainage and land taxes and cart stand licence fee to Tellicherry Municipal Council. Southern Railway paid House tax to Badagara Union.**

**Source: Railways Act of 1890, Madras, 1924. Regional Archives Calicut.**

TOWARDS INCREASING AUTHORITY  
MONTFORD REFORMS AND AFTER  
THIRD PHASE 1919-1934

## CHAPTER 3

### TOWARDS INCREASING AUTHORITY: MONTFORD REFORMS AND AFTER

#### THIRD PHASE 1919-1934

In November 1919, Lord Montague, the Secretary of State came to India to discuss his scheme of reforms with Lord Chelms Ford, the Viceroy of India, Indian politicians and British Civil servants. After prolonged discussions with people of different shades of opinion and touring for long, Lord Montague submitted the report in 1918, which was published in July 1918.<sup>1</sup>

The Recommendation of Montague formed the basis of Government of India Act 1919 which was also popularly known as Montford Reforms in 1919.<sup>2</sup> The Preamble of the Act declared that the policy of the British parliament was to provide for the increasing association of Indian in every branch of administration and for gradual development of self governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in British India as an integral part of the British empire.<sup>3</sup>

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1. J. Allen. *The Cambridge Shorter History of India*. New Delhi, 1964, p. 683.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Sumit Sarkar. *Modern India 1885-1947*. New Delhi, 1983, p. 165.

The statement indicated that the Government of India was in complete accord with the task of increasing association of Indians in every branch of administration and gradual development of self governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British empire. The Resolution further insisted that the progress in this policy could be achieved by successive stages. The Montford Report was regarded as the most momentous utterance as far as constitutional advancement in British India was concerned and this marked the end of one epoch and the beginning of a new one. The 1919 Act made a beginning in responsible government in province by introducing the scheme of dyarchy. Under the scheme of dyarchy the provincial subjects were divided into two parts viz., Reserved and Transferred.<sup>4</sup>

#### Local Self Government and the Montford Reforms

Local Self Government in the 1919 Act belonged to the transferred subjects which was under the Governor with the help of ministers in the provinces. The report suggested complete popular Control over local bodies and the largest possible independence

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4. Perceival Spear. *The Oxford History of Modern India. 1740-1975.* Delhi 1965, p. 343.

for them of outside control. For giving effect to the new policy outlined, the Resolution suggested that local bodies must be made as representative of the people as possible. It also suggested that all unnecessary official control should be checked and local bodies allowed to learn from their mistakes.

The Government of India no longer issued any instruction to Provincial Governments and each provincial Government was allowed to develop local self governing institutions according to provincial needs and requirements. The taxes which could be imposed by the local bodies were separated from those which fell within the competence of provincial Governments. However the Indian ministers could not do much work in the sphere of local self government due to lack of funds since finance was a reserved subject under the charge of an executive councillor.

With the passing of Madras Village Panchayath Act 1920, Panchayath Boards and District Boards were set up in almost all parts of Malabar. All five Municipalities of Malabar District constituted under Town Improvement Act of 1865, were governed by District Municipalities Act of 1920, as amended by Act X of 1930.<sup>5</sup>

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5. C.A. Innes. *Madras District Gazetteers: Malabar District*. Vol. II, Madras, 1933, p. ix.

On passing of the Local Boards Act of 1920, seven taluk boards were constituted for the revenue taluk of Calicut, with Kurumbanad, Ernad, Valluvanad, Wynad, Palghat, Ponnani, Chirakkalwith Kottayam, but owing to the mismanagement of the finances the administration of these areas had been taken over by the District Board.<sup>6</sup>

#### Constitution of District Board

The history of the local board served as a mirror in which the course of evolution of political ideas in the country during the past years were reflected. It had a special interest in which one could see the working of an experiment which combined democracy and devolution at the bottom with bureaucracy at the top.

The basic principle of responsible institution would not be stably rooted until they were broad based and that the best school of political education was the intelligent exercise of the vote and the efficient use of administrative power in the field of local self Government. In the case of the District Board the members were elected from taluk boards with some members being nominated. The elective strength of the District Board was raised from 18 to 24.<sup>7</sup>

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6 . *Ibid.*

7 . Local and Municipal Department, GO No.753, dated 1st June, 1918 (TNA).

The elective strength of the taluk board was raised as shown below.<sup>8</sup>

Tellicherry	}	from 12 to 16
Malappuram		
Palghat		
Calicut	—	from 7 to 10
Wynad	—	from 5 to 6

In order to reach the sanctioned elective strength as early as possible nominated vacancies of the board were filled by election. F.B. Evans was the President of the Board up to January 1919 and J.P. Hall was the President for the remaining portion of the year.<sup>9</sup> G.T. Varghese was the Vice-President throughout the year.<sup>10</sup>

In this period almost all Taluk boards had non-official presidents. The change from official to non official control had proceeded along correct lines and it was gradually with the assistance, advice and encouragement of the officials who were displaced.<sup>11</sup>

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8. Local and Municipal, GO No.1527, dated 13-11-1919 (TNA).

9. Local and Municipal, GO No.1534 dated 9.12.1919, Administration Report of Malabar District Board for the year 1918-1919 (TNA).

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

In the District Board the Vice-President was appointed by nomination and in Taluk Board by election. There were four union Panchayaths during the year 1919, two major - Ponnani and Badagara and two minor - Mannarghat and Chowghat. Both local Boards and Union Panchayaths worked 'satisfactorily'.<sup>12</sup>

Though the Collector was the ex-officio President of the District Board, the Governor in Council, by notification from time to time, authorised members of District Board to appoint their Presidents by election from among them, subject to the approval of Governor in Council and in accordance with such rules and conditions as might from time to time be prescribed by him.<sup>13</sup> Though normally District Board president was appointed by the Government from 1925 onwards the President could be elected by members of District Board.<sup>14</sup> Such elected Presidents mostly belonged to rich and influential class, Madhava Raja was the first President who was elected by the District Board members.<sup>15</sup> The selection of the District Board members was that one fourth members were nominated by District Board President and three fourth members were selected

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12. *Ibid.*

13 . Revenue Code, Madras Presidency (1802-1889) (TNA).

14 . *Mathrubhumi*, 3-10-1925.

15. *Ibid.*

from Taluk Road to District Board.<sup>16</sup> Nomination of the members to the District Board by the President provided better chance for the introduction of misrule in the Board. The President would always nominate his own henchmen to the Board. The Board had faced financial difficulty in 1925 and the Board Administration was highly unpopular during the Presidentship of Madhava Raja.<sup>17</sup>

Where there was no Taluk Board, the authority of selecting members rested with Panchayaths and tax payers and inhabitants of such part of the District subject to such rules and conditions from time to time were prescribed by Governor in Council.<sup>18</sup>

Where there was no Taluk Board, the authority of selecting members were laid by Panchayaths and tax payers and inhabitants of such part of the District. Subject to such rules and conditions from time to time were prescribed by Governor in Council.<sup>19</sup>

The District administration in modern India had changed from time to time in terms of both its goal and structure, a change resulting from an interaction between the exigencies of regulating

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16. *Ibid.*

17. The President could always nominate his own henchmen to the Board.

18. *Ibid.*, 19-12-11925.

19. Revenue Code, *op. cit.*

functions and demand for development to satisfy emergent social and political usages.<sup>20</sup> But in spite of periodical changes the general executive administration of the Districts had remained the core of the central agency invested with an over all responsibility under Collector or District Magistrate functioning as the head of the executive administration.<sup>21</sup>

### Local Funds

The Revenue Department of Government had suggested that receipts from finances, cart stands etc might be credited to a special head viz. 'Local Fund' and regularly disbursed on sanction and accordingly decided that all sums of money collected for local purposes should be credited to local funds.<sup>22</sup>

The British Indian Government had intended to convene a conference for the purpose of discussing matters connected with local fund and Municipal Administration in 1920. From Malabar District Madhava Raja, the President of District Board, R. Sekhara Menon, Chairman of Municipal Council, Palaghat, C.V. Narayana

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20. B.B. Misra. *District Administration and Rural Development*. Delhi, 1983.

21. *Ibid.*

22. Ramnath Aiyer and Rama Swami Aiyankar. *The Madras Local Boards Manual*. Madras, 1937, p.3.

Menon, the Chairman of Municipal Council, Calicut and P. Raman, President Taluk Board, Tellicherry were invited.<sup>23</sup> The following demands were incorporated in Resolutions drafted in the conference:

The Resolution contained the provincialisation of the post of Health Officers and non-provincialisation of sanitary inspections and suggestion for the increase of their salary.<sup>24</sup>

The conference also recommended increase in the salary of secondary school masters, local fund Engineers, Assistant Engineers and Overseers and demanded that provincial cadre be provided for District Board Engineers, Assistant engineers and Municipal Engineers.<sup>25</sup>

### Sources of Income

Tolls on vehicles, tax on motor vehicles, tax on finances, tax on companies and professions, licence fee for dangerous and offensive trade and house tax formed the important sources of income of the District Board. Market was another source of income of the Board.

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23. Local and Municipal Department, GO No.839 dated 25-6-1920, Local and Municipal Conference, 1920 (TNA).

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*

A number of Secondary, Middle and High Schools were run by the District Board. Several works like registration of births and deaths, running of maternity and child welfare centres, sanitary and scavenging works, sanitary arrangements for fairs and festivals etc. were under taken by the board. Principal sources of revenue were Government grants.

The Government allowed funds to the district in aid of panchayaths and the grant of Rs.2,000/- was distributed as follows.<sup>26</sup>

Valiaparamba	}	Rs.250/- each
Baliapatanam		
Quilandy		
Kuthuparamba		
Manjeri	}	Rs. 300/- each
Perinthalmanna		
Mananthody	—	Rs.400/-.

Provincial grants were allotted for educational purposes, minor sanitary works, improvement of roads, medical buildings, bridges etc to the local boards. In 1919, in the field of education,

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26. G.O. No.278. Financial, dated 18th March 1919 from Administration Report (L & M Malabar District Board) TNA.

the total receipts amounted to Rs.212089 which included a provincial grant of Rs.26863/- for school buildings.<sup>27</sup>

The District Board had other sources of income seasonally. Money was collected from footpath sellers by the District board on the occasion of festival seasons. Also sanitation work was undertaken by the Taluk Board and this yielded money on festival occasions. These activities were undertaken by Valluvanad Taluk Board and money was collected by District Board to meet sanitary expenses.<sup>28</sup>

Sources of income was a topic on which debates and discussions were conducted. This, in turn, led to discussions on how to spend the money collected. A District Board meeting held at Palghat took some decisions relating to the sources of income to the District Board and also the main works to be undertaken by the board.<sup>29</sup> The main decision was that the amount must be utilised for the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges of the board. Accordingly, Board collected an amount from traders

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27. L&M Department Administration Report of Malabar District Board for the year 1918-19 (Regional Archives, Calicut).

28. L & M Department. Consolidated Draft Administration Department of Local Boards in Malabar for the year 1928-29 (Regional Archives, Calicut).

29. *Mathrubhumi*, 12-11-1928.

who sold items in the foot path during the festival seasons of Angadipuram.<sup>30</sup>

Whenever Taluk Board found it difficult to construct roads and bridges, due to shortage of funds, the District Board had taken up those works. For example, the construction of a bridge across the river from Chalissery to Nanipuzha had been undertaken by District Board due to lack of fund in the Ponnani Taluk Board.<sup>31</sup> The local boards received financial help from the Government. The Government also insisted that the local boards collect money from the people equal to Government contribution.<sup>32</sup>

The Government was not willing to increase the allotment of funds or alleviate the financial difficulties of the local boards. Its recommended solution was to reduce expenses. In 1933 it appointed a Special Officer, Siva Rama Sethu Pillai, to investigate and after making a close study of the local boards he recommended that the local boards must find out financial resources and cut down their expenditure.<sup>33</sup>

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30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*, 9-2-1926.

32. *Ibid.*, 10-3-1928.

33. *Ibid.*, 22-7-1933.

Another method of reducing expenditure was harsh and unpopular. This was by cutting down the salary of its employees. The taluk board to reduce expenditure decided to stop the functioning of elementary schools in 1932.<sup>34</sup> Even after such drastic actions the budget did not balance. During the budget session of Malabar District Board, it was stated that even if the expenditure was cut down, it would be a deficit one.<sup>35</sup>

The maximum rates of tolls prescribed in rule 26 of schedule Madras Local Boards Act 1920 were levied at all toll gates in the District. The gross income from tolls amounted to Rs.2,35,910/- and net income to Rs.1,94,121/- against Rs.1,87,671/- and Rs.1,48,866/- respectively in the previous year.<sup>36</sup> All tolls in the District except those in Tellicherry-Coorg Road, and Calicut-Mysore frontier road maintained by Public Works Department and one newly opened by Palghat Municipality at Olavakkot (with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1928) were managed by District Board. The contributions paid to Municipal Councils and Forest Departments. The details are given at the end of this chapter.

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34. *Ibid.*, 28-3-1932.

35. *Ibid.* 21-6-1932.

36. Consolidated Draft Report of Local Board 1928-29, *op. cit.*

### Expenditure

The District Board maintained elementary and secondary schools. Elementary education had marked progress as is evident from the number of schools at the end of the following years as shown below.<sup>37</sup>

Year	Number of School	Percentage of Increase
1923-24	455	
1925-26	774	38
1927-28	1045	33
1928-29	3336	66.5
1930-31	4134	19

The above table shows an increase of 88.72 per cent from 1923 to 1931. The expenditure of the District Board in the field of education amounted to Rs.2,58,158/- distributed as follows in the year 1918-1919.<sup>38</sup>

37. C.A. Innes. *op.cit.*, p.ix.

38. Administrative Report of Malabara District Board (1918-19) *op.cit.*.

Secondary Schools	Rs. 48,489/-
Elementary Schools	Rs.2,02,755/-
Sessional Schools	Rs. 6,854/-
Contributors	Rs. 50/-
Total	<u>Rs.2,58,158/-</u>

The administrative report of 1919 showed that the District Board maintained seven hospitals and fourteen dispensaries in various parts of Calicut District during the year. The expenditure under the head medical also included sanitation expenditure. Almost the whole expenditure of water supply was met from provincial grants.<sup>39</sup>

The financial summary of District Board and Taluk Board was that travelling allowance was given to President, Vice-President and Board Members.<sup>40</sup> Money was spent for the maintenance of roads, bridges, ferries and buildings. Roads were classified as trunk roads, district roads and roads other than district roads. The material available and used for road works were granite, laterite quartz and gravel. The roads were not generally

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39. *Ibid.*

40. The consolidated draft report of Local Board 1928-29 *op.cit.*

sufficiently wide and conditions of roads as a whole was fair, but there were certain roads which required substantial improvement. In a District like Malabar, where monsoon was heavy and where traffic steadily increased it was difficult to maintain roads in good condition unless the grants allowed by Government were substantial.

The local institutions were set up for improving existing crafts and industries, organising new industries, providing minimum essential health services etc.<sup>41</sup>

There was a dispute relating to the budget of District Board and the following account shows the income and expenditure of the board in the year 1927.<sup>42</sup>

The income	Rs.11,17,820/-
The expenditure	Rs.10,13,000/-

Shortage of funds affected the functioning of the District Board. It could not take up objects which were sure to bring 'benefits' to the people. The Railway Board in 1927 wrote to District Board proposing that it

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41. G.R.A.Madan, *Changing Pattern of Indian Villages*, New Delhi, 1930, p. 58.

42. L & M Department. *The Administrative Report of the District Board for the year 1927*. (Regional Archives, Calicut).

undertook construction of a Railway line in the land of the District Board. But the District Board could not undertake such a construction.<sup>43</sup>

The following statement shows the income and expenditure of the District Board of Malabar in the year 1930-31.<sup>44</sup>

The Balance amount of previous year	Rs. 1,80,700/-
Total income of the year 1930-31	Rs.15,34,910/-
Total expenditure of the year	Rs.15,06,960/-

#### Civil Work

Several works were undertaken by the District Board during the year 1918-19. This included finance spent for tolls buildings communications, etc. The report showed several undertaking and constructions. The Yakkara Bridge was completed and opened for traffic. The Government had undertaken several construction works like Naragum Palli bridge, Pulamonthole bridge rebuilding of the Kooda Cadava Bridge, construction and repair of several minor bridges.<sup>45</sup> The Board also sanctioned an amount for the

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43. *Mathrubhumi*, 30-3-1927.

44. L&M Department. The Administrative Report of the Malabar District Board 1930-31 (Regional Archives, Calicut).

45. Administrative Report of Malabara District Board 1918-19 . *op. cit.* 46

repair of Kiranallur bridge which was situated in the Parappanangadi Road.<sup>46</sup>

### Presidents and their powers

The President of District Board was a non-official appointed by Government. Like wise, the presidents of all Taluk and Union Boards were elected non-official. The president held office and the Vice-President during the temporary absence of the President. Meetings were held once in two months and in few cases two meetings were held.<sup>47</sup>

The nomination of the members to the District Board by the President was a great advantage to the President, because the nominated members were under the control and influence of the President. The nominated members of the District Board had remained according to the will and pleasure of the District Board President and this was contrary to true democracy.

The President of Chirakkal Taluk, Kozhikode Taluk Board and Kurumbanad Taluk Board were nominated as members of District Board. Also both Kurumbanad and Chirakkal Taluk Board selected

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46. *Mathrubhumi*, 12-11-1928.

47. The consolidated Draft Report of the Local Board 1928, *op. cit.*

six members each to the District Board. In 1935 the President of Chirakkal Taluk Board, Ammu Sahib was nominated to District Board and also 5 members of Taluk board nominated to the District Board.<sup>48</sup> Due to nomination of members of District Board, it could not reflect the real popular representation and thus local bodies almost lost its democratic nature.

One grouse was the appointment of District Board Presidents from feudal and land lord classes and the members of the Board were supporters of feudal classes. It was very doubtful whether the District Board functioned as an instrument of political and popular education or as an institution of self rule at that time.

Often, District Board Presidents exhibited a dislike of any expressions of nationalism and seldom missed opportunities to proclaim their loyalties to the British Raj. The suspension of a High School Teacher is a case in point. Moidu Sahib, the president of the District Board, suspended a High School Teacher of the Angadipuram High School which belonged to the District Board.<sup>49</sup>

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48. *Mathruhumi*, 2-8-1925. The five members nominated were Andy, Sankaran Chirakkal Kerala Varma Raja, K.T.Kumaran Nambiar and A.K. Krishnan Nambiar. Among them A.K. Krishnan Nambiar and K.T. Kumaran Nambiar were representatives of Land lord class. See – Moyarath, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*, Calicut, 1965, pp.205-206.

49. *Ibid.*, 12- 1-1928.

The complaint against the teacher was that he had participated in the boycott of Simon Commission.

As the Presidents of Taluk Board and District Board were selected from influential classes, they tended to show their own class bias in the works undertaken by the Board. They also tended to act in a despotic way. Complaints were often raised against the arbitrary and despotic way in which the president acted. This was a complaint not confirmed to the District Board. For example, a no confidence resolution was raised against the President of the Calicut Taluk Board because he was acting against the will of people and trying to nominate members of his own choice.<sup>50</sup>

Often, local bodies acted as supporters of the British Government. In the last few months of 1925, there arose allegation against the working of the District Board for its poor financial condition and despotic nature.<sup>51</sup> G. Sankaran Nair, a member of the local board, demanded the appointment of advocates as the members of the local boards to the exclusion of the land lords.<sup>52</sup>

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50. *Ibid.*, 10-10-1929.

51. *Ibid.*, 3-10-19125.

52. *Ibid.*

In a meeting held at Calicut by Swarajists in 1925, it was deplored that nothing beneficial had been done by the local board.<sup>53</sup> This was ascribed to the poor financial conditions of the board and the Swarajists suspected that how much beneficial the educational activities of the board and whether the cleaning and sanitation works in the rural areas was fruitful to the rural areas.<sup>54</sup>

Many problems arose out of the system of dyarchy. To cite an example, the local bodies were controlled by Indian ministers in the provinces. But the Indian ministers could not do much work in the sphere of local self Government due to the shortage of funds as finance was a reserved subject under the charge of an executive councillor. Lot of complaints had been raised against the District Board. The District Board was facing financial difficulty and there was a complaint against District Board regarding allotment of schools.<sup>55</sup>

#### Expression of National Sentiments

Most of the members of the District Board and Local Boards belonged to the Congress Party. There was increasing opposition

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53. *Ibid.*, 19-12-1925.

54. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.*

from the Government side towards the spirit of nationalism. The government had ordered that 'mangalapathra'<sup>56</sup> should be submitted for honouring Governor or some other prominent persons, but such an honour should not be accorded to nationalist leaders.<sup>57</sup> When one mangalapathra was submitted to the Education Minister by the Chirakkal Local Board in October 1925, the demands of the local boards were put forward. The mangalapathra had referred to bad conditions of the roads. In reply to the mangalapathra the minister remarked that local body members belonged to Congress and that roads belonged to and are used by the people. Since the stated aim of the congress was to serve the people, the members should well maintain the roads even if there was no fund.<sup>58</sup> The Government ordered that national flag be pulled down if not the municipality would be suppressed.<sup>59</sup> However, the Government restrictions continued over local bodies. As per L & M order No.2116 the Government insisted that general fund must be utilised only for submitting Mangalapathra to

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56. Novel ways of putting forward the demands of the local boards were thought of, one was the submission of 'mangalapathra' which was traditionally presented on auspicious occasions.

57. *Mathrubhumi*, 7-7-1923.

58. *Ibid.* 29-10-1925.

59. *Ibid.*

Viceroy, Governor, Vicery Council Members, Governor Council Member and Ministers.<sup>60</sup>

### Political Mobilisation

Local Self Government as a conscious process of administrative devolution had evolved some political mobilisation. The Nationalist criticism revolved around inadequacy of reform. For example, C. Rajagopalachari criticised in a speech that the British were inefficient to take up self rule in India.<sup>61</sup> It was pointed out that the Britishers used to abuse each other when they took decision for a common matter in England. The Britishers became two rival sects and raised allegation against each other saying that they were inefficient C. Rajagopalachari pointed out that the Britishers were like wise inefficient even for taking administration in India.<sup>62</sup>

Jawaharlal Nehru who worked as the Chairman of the Allahabad Municipal Board in 1924 and 1925, while commenting on the cause of the failure of local Government institutions, observed that their failings were obvious enough, but little attention was paid to the frame work within which they had to function. Their frame

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60. *Ibid.* 30- 6-1935.

61. *Ibid.* 29-10-1925.

62. *Ibid.*

work was neither democratic nor autocratic, it was a cross between the two and had the disadvantage of both.<sup>63</sup> He had also remarked that the local bodies were not as a rule "Shinning examples of success and efficiency though they might even so be compared with some municipalities of advanced democratic countries."<sup>64</sup> The British Government tried to suppress the rising national spirit in the local bodies. The whole steel frame of the Municipal administration as erected by Government presented radical growth and innovation. The Department of local self Government was presided by a minister, who was supremely ignorant of municipal affairs or any public affairs. He was largely ignored by his own department, which was run by permanent officials of the Indian Civil Service.

The main interest of the Government in Municipal administration was that politics should be kept out. Any resolution of sympathy with national interest, was treated scornfully. Text books which had a nationalist touch were not permitted in the local

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63. Jawaharlal Nehru. *An autobiography*. London 1936, p.144. C.A. Baily observed that financial problems of Government gave rise to a whole variety of solutions from direct taxation to local self government. C.A. Baily. *The Local Roots of India Politics*. Allahabad 1881-1920. London, 1975, p. 93.).

64. *Ibid.*, p. 146.

and municipal schools. The pictures of national leaders were not allowed to be printed in them.

The majority of the local boards were dominated by Congress party in the Madras state. A concerted attempt seemed to have been made by several provincial government to hound out Congress men from the service of municipalities and boards. Pressure was imposed by the Government on municipal bodies which was accompanied by the threat of withholding various government grants for municipal purposes. The object was purely political and an attempt to keep out political opponents from all municipal and local services. Still nationalism was a spirit the British could not completely keep of local bodies. It found expression in more ways than one.

#### Nationalist Resolutions

The Mont Ford reforms had given increasing opportunities for popular representatives to move resolution in the legislative councils and to place before the Government the views of educated public on this subject. Nationalism formed expression in these resolutions. For example one of them insisted that the language used in the sessions of discussions and passing resolutions must be regional languages and English should be used only in unavoidable

circumstances. The local bodies insisted that the uniform of the municipal workers should be made of Khadi. It also emphasised that spinning should be introduced in schools, which would be of great benefit for the natives instead of imported foreign made cloths.<sup>65</sup>

The national feeling could be seen in one of the resolutions passed by the District board in 1928.<sup>66</sup> The resolution proposed that the items purchased by the board should be of Swadeshi made. Another resolution also reflected national sentiments. Some of the Board members objected to the proposal for submitting a mangalpathra to the minister while the majority of the Congress leaders including the Congress President were in Jail.<sup>67</sup> Great protest was shown by the District Board by proroguing its session and passing resolutions, condemning the imprisonment of Gandhiji without trial.<sup>68</sup>

### The District Board and Caste Feelings

One area where there was not much determined opposition from the Government was the promotion of Harijan Welfare.

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65. *Mathrubhumi*, 9-2-1926.

66. *Ibid.*, 12-1-1928.

67. *Ibid.*, 19-4-1930.

68. *Ibid.*

Nomination of lower castes and minority communities had been introduced by the amendment of local Boards Act 1930. A resolution was passed by the District Board requesting the Government for exempting the lower caste from payment of fees in the schools.<sup>69</sup> Demand was raised for the representation of women in the local boards.

In 1932 R.M. Palat and Attakoya Thangal were selected as President and Vice-President of the Board respectively. The District Board passed a resolution in 1933 that all roads, ponds and wells which were maintained out of the funds of the board be opened for all castes. This showed the impact of the nationalist propaganda on even non Congress men, as both President and Vice-President were not Congress members. The Congress at this time was conducting a temple entry campaign and R.M. Palat, the President though he was opposed to the Congress could not ignore it.<sup>70</sup>

The Malabar District board whole heartedly greeted the Government decision of passing the temple entry bill and the removal of untouchability Act. A District Board member Kannan introduced

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69. *Ibid.* 27-1-1931.

70. For details of temple entry see, K. Gopalan Kutty. "The Guruvayur Sathyagraha," in T.K. Ravindran, ed., *Journal of Kerala Studies, Vol. VIII, Parts 1-4, 1981.*

resolution in 1933 demanding reservation of 50 per cent seats to the minority communities viz., Mohammedans, Europeans, Anglo Indians and Adivasis in the District board.<sup>71</sup> Though it was not fully granted, its influence could be seen on the amendment of the local boards Act by giving representation to the minority communities in the year 1934-35.

Backward classes, minorities Europeans and Anglo Indians were represented in the Board as shown in the table below.<sup>72</sup>

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71. *Mathrubhumi*, 10-3-1933.

72. From the Consolidated Draft report 1928, *op. cit.*

Classes	District Board	Taluk Board	Union Board
Adidravidas	1	3	-
Mukkuvas (Fishermen)	1	3	-
Ezhavas	1	3	-
Mappilas	15	36	17
Vaisyas	1	1	-
Kshatrias	1	1	-
Samenthas	1	1	-
Nambudiri Brahmins	2	12	-
Chalia (weavers)	1	-	2
Kania (Astrologer)	-	1	1
Ezhuthasan	1	1	1
Europeans	3	1	-
Anglo Indian	-	1	-
Indian Christians	3	2	1
Veluthedan (Washermen)	-	1	-
Peruvannan	1	1	-

Several problems were caused by religious and caste sentiments in the local boards. For example, there were some difference of opinion among the members of the Ernad Taluk Board relating to some decision in 1923. This taluk board had decided not to kill any cow or bull below 4 years of age. But a European member and a Mohammedan member objected to it.<sup>73</sup>

The Chirakkal Taluk Board School faced a problem of caste and religious discrimination. When one Pulaya student was admitted to the school, parents of Mohammedan and Thiyya Communities immediately withdraw their children from the school. When the authorities happened to hear about it, they allowed admission to more pulaya students.<sup>74</sup>

A demand was raised by one Muslim member of the District Board in 1927, that the Muslim students must be exempted from payment of school fees because of the educational backwardness prevalent among them.<sup>75</sup> But the Government was not in favour of it because of financial stringency.

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73. *Mathrubhumi*, 24-3-1923.

74. *Ibid.* 3-10-1925.

75. *Ibid.* 20-4-1927.

### Later changes in the structure of District Board

In Malabar, the Taluk Boards viz., Chirakkal, Kottayam, Kurumbanad, Calicut, Ernad, Valluvanad, Ponnani and Palghat ceased to exist from 1st April 1934 with the commencement of Madras Local boards and Elementary Education Act of (Amendment Act) 1934 and by Madras Act II of 1934, all powers and duties of Taluk Board devolved on the District Board.<sup>76</sup>

The Village Development Fund maintained by District Board was abolished by the amendment Act and all rights and liabilities attaching to the fund also passed to the District Board.<sup>77</sup> The electoral circles for the District Board consisted of members of backward classes, minorities and women who were represented on the District Board as shown below.<sup>78</sup>

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76. L & M. Department, Consolidated Administration Report of the Local Boards in Malabar for the year 1934-35 (Regional

77. *Ibid.*

78. *Ibid.*

Classes	District Board Members
Adidravidas	2
Ezhavas	3
Mappilas	3
Samanthas	4
Nambudiri Brahmin	4
Europeans	1
Indian X'ians	1
Kshatrian	-
Women	2

There were 41 electoral circles for the District Board and there were three union Panchayath boards, viz., Badagara, Chowghat and Ponnani. There were also nine minor panchayath boards, viz., Vythiri, Kalpetta, Perinthalmanna, Kavakkode, Andathode, Attupuram, Vadakkekad, Chittatukara and Meppadi at the commencement of the year 1935. Twelve Panchayath boards were newly constituted during the year 1933-35, viz. Shornur, Ottapalam, Peringottukuruss, Puli nelli, Kottayi Thiruvagapura, Cheruvannur, Payyannur, Ramanthali, etc.<sup>79</sup>

79. *Ibid.*

After 1935, certain restrictions were placed on the powers of the local bodies to levy and entrance terminal taxes on trades, callings, profession and municipal property. The provincial government ignored the liberal policy of granting wide powers of taxation to local institution as recommended by the Decentralisation Commission.<sup>80</sup> The provincial autonomy introduced under the Act of 1935 had set up the department of local self government.

#### Abolition of Taluk Boards

Experience of the working of local boards from 1921 onwards reopened controversy as to whether there was any need for both Taluk and District Board in any scheme of rural self government. The general opinion of the Government was that it should be entrusted to District Boards. This view was the outcome of financial deficits that several Taluk Boards had to face and the difficulty they experienced in maintaining their financial equilibrium. There was allegation against Wynad Taluk Board because the clerks of this Taluk Board had to work even on Sundays. The Wynad Taluk Board was suspended and a request was made to send six members of Taluk Board to Calicut District Board.<sup>81</sup> In 1928, the Government

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80. Local Finance Enquiry Committee Reporting 1951 (TNA).

81. M. Venkata Rangayya. Development of Local Boards in Madras Presidency. Bombay, 1938, p. 196.

consolidated a bill to amend the Local Boards Act of 1920 with the object of combining two or more Taluks for forming an administrative area. The bill roused considerable opposition from several quarters. Because of the pressure of arguments, the ministry ultimately withdrew the bill circulated in 1928 and introduced a fresh bill in 1929. The new bill proposed the abolition of Taluk Boards. The Amending bill was passed into Law and became Amending Act of 1930.<sup>82</sup> Thus the Taluk Board ceased to exist. Since they were not truly representative and autonomous, the nationalists were not perturbed by the abolition. Thus the abolition of Taluk Board did not evoke much opposition or protest.

### Municipalities

The whole frame work of municipal administration as erected by Government prevented its growth and restrictions were imposed by Government frequently for preventing its smooth working. The municipalities were dominated by Congress men in 1920s and 1930s. The Resolution passed by various municipalities showed nationalist fervour among them, large scale arrest, victimisation through repression and lathi charge had been practised by Government towards those people who wore Khadi cloths and Gandhi cap.

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82. *Ibid.*

The council members of municipalities and District Board held meetings frequently. If any member of the council and District Board was absent regularly for 3 months, the particular member was removed from the council. Several procedures were undertaken by the council. The government orders were read out and recorded. Initiatives were made by municipal and District Board members for the improvement of sanitary conditions, functioning of Schools etc. Some times the councilors' passing of no confidence resolution against Chairman resulted in the resignation of Chairman. The Chairman could not act independently and he had to seek the advice and opinion of the councilors.

#### The Councilors of Municipal Board and Participation in Political Activity

When the non co-operation movement was started under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, some of the members of local bodies had expressed doubt whether they would follow proceedings of the movement like resignation from local bodies.<sup>83</sup> But the functioning of legislative bodies and local bodies were entirely different. When one member entered the municipal council he could render many services which were useful and fruitful to the welfare of the people.

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83. *Mathrubhumi*, 2-8-1923.

But this could not be done in legislative bodies, because it was only an advisory body and not a decision making one.

When the elections were held to the municipalities the national spirit among the people was comparatively weak. They were not strong enough to overcome caste feelings. The Congress as an organisation was free from the caste or communal feelings but such feelings cropped up during election. There was communal and group quarrelling in the Tellicherry municipal election in 1925.<sup>84</sup>

### Caste Feeling

There was great difference of opinion among the councillors in the Calicut municipality relating to social evils and untouchability. There were public ponds in Mankavu and Panniyankara which were available for the public to take bath. But some high caste members of the municipality were dead against permitting lower caste people from taking bath in these ponds. The District Collector had expressed his view that disputes must be settled through courts.<sup>85</sup> But the court decision was always on the side of the conservative group. Great protest was expressed by the Mathrubhumi newspaper

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84. *Ibid.*, 19-9-1923.

85. *Ibid.*, 19-9-1925

which noted that the initiative for allowing the use of public baths by lower class must be taken by high caste group.<sup>86</sup> The council had appointed a committee for taking a decision on this matter. The Committee consisted of one Thiyya, one Mappila and one Brahmin and some other municipal members. Though there arose an opinion for allotment of ponds on caste basis ultimately a decision was taken that the public ponds are the property of the public.<sup>87</sup> Eradication of social evils was one of the objectives of the Congress party. However caste variation could be seen in municipalities and local boards even during the period of 1925. Separate cementries were allotted for Pulaya community in the Cannanore municipally in 1925. This was objected to by the Congress members. Still it became an order due to the support of other members in the meeting.<sup>88</sup>

The Government order on the administrative report of Calicut municipality was interesting. The income of the municipality which was collected from the people by way of taxation was ordered by the Government to be kept for emergency needs. An amount of Rs.73,272/- was collected from the people and Government tried to keep this money for emergency needs, instead of it being used for

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86. *Ibid.*

87. *Ibid.*

88. *Ibid.*, 25-10-1925.

their welfare. The Collector of Malabar also insisted that the money collected from the people must be utilised for the welfare of the people. The councillors protested the Government decision. By passing a resolution in the meeting of the Council it was decided to spend the money for comfort stations near the main roads of the city.<sup>89</sup>

#### The Problem of Language

English language was used by the municipalities for official purposes and this was opposed by some members of the Council. By the end of 1927, both Calicut and Cannanore municipality decided to the indigenous language for official purposes. The Cannanore municipality had passed a resolution for introducing some progressive measures in the elementary schools. The Resolution wanted the introduction of spinning by Charka in elementary schools.

#### The Issue of Mangalathras

In 1928 there arose great dispute among Council members of Cannanore municipality regarding the submission of mangalathra to Jawaharlal Nehru during his visit to the area. Some other members opposed it saying that popular leaders should not receive

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89. *Ibid.*, 30-10-1925.

any consideration and they should serve the people without accepting anything. But the views of the nationalists prevailed and it was decided to submit a mangalapathra to Jawaharlal Nehru on his visit to Cannanore.<sup>90</sup>

National spirit and commemoration of national leaders were taken up by the local bodies though there was great opposition from the Government side. For example the municipalities and local boards had decided to observe November 29th as the day of Lala Lajpath Rai.<sup>91</sup> In Tellicherry Municipality for the first time lady Mrs. Vas was elected as the Vice-Chairman and this was for the first time that such a thing happened.<sup>92</sup>

#### Protection of Mananchira

An attempt was made by Calicut municipality to repossess the ownership of Mananchira maidan by the municipality in 1928. One member of the council viz., U. Gopal Menon, a Congress leader, argued that the mananchira maidan was the property of the municipality and it was in the possession of the government in an unauthorised way. C.V. Narayana Menon, the Chairman of the

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90. *Ibid.*, 9-10-1928.

91. *Ibid.*, 27-11-1928.

92. *Ibid.*, 9-10-1928.

Council described the history of the maidan and how it came under the control of Government. When Wood was Collector of Calicut, he had written a letter for the appointment of a commission for its administration and accordingly.. But gradually the committee disappeared and the administration of Mananchira was taken under the control of Government. Mannanth Krishnan Nair, the then Chairman of the Council, took up the case and complained for many times, but it was futile. Narayana Menon, who was the council Chairman, had also complained against it. When Thorne was the Collector of Calicut, he had promised to hand over it to the municipality. Eminent political leader C. Raja Gopalachari at the time of his visit to Calicut had expressed his opinion that such places like Mananchira Maidan should be controlled by the Municipality.<sup>93</sup>

Lastly in 1928 a resolution was passed by the municipality for the repossession of the maidan. A Committee consisting of Chairman and K. V. Surya Narayana Aiyyer, K. Madhava Menon and U. Gopala Menon was formed for further action.<sup>94</sup> Later the maidan was taken under the control of Municipality.

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93. *Ibid.*, 19-1-1927.

94. *Ibid*

### Boycotting of Simon Commission

There was difference of opinion among the councilors of various municipalities about the matter as how to react to the visit of the Simon Commission. Seniors members of the council made an attempt to include the Schools, dispensaries in the boycott. But some other members opposed and they complained that those institutions were existing with Government grants and opposed the boycotting.

The swarajist supported members of Calicut Municipality who had decided to boycott government aided schools and dispensaries as a protest against the appointment of Simon commission by passing a resolution.<sup>95</sup> But the Collector of Malabar district had sent an order for the suspension of the resolution.<sup>96</sup> The members also decided to install black flag as a protest to the Simon Commission.

For boycotting Simon Commission, it was decided to observe hartal on 3rd February 1928. As decided earlier, Calicut Municipal Chairman E. Narayanan Nair had given instruction to close down the Municipal office and schools on that hartal day.<sup>97</sup> Eventhough

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95. *Ibid.*, 28-2-1928.

96. *Ibid.*

97. V. R. Menon, *Mathruhumiyude Charithram*. Vol.I. Calicut, 1973, p. 161..

the district collector had ordered in a proceeding to reject the municipal decision that was not obeyed by the Chairman. On the same day of the hartal, a procession had been conducted under the leadership of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and other members of the council.

In May 1930 it had referred to wide financial powers exercised by the local bodies. It was however, observed that village panchayath had not shown any marked progress except in UtharPradesh, Bengal and Madras. The Simon Commission suggested retrograde steps for increasing the control of provincial governments over local bodies with greater efficiency and quoted the example of England whereby numerous administrative devices by inspection by audit by giving grants in aid on condition, ensuring efficiency and by insisting on standards of competence in the Municipal Staff, the local Government Board and its successors the Ministry of Health and steadily revised the standards of administration in local authorities.<sup>98</sup>

### The Civil Disobedience Movement

When the Civil Disobedience movement was started under the leadership of Gandhiji in 1930, the repercussion of this movement

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98. L & M department as cited in Local General Enquiry Committee Report, 1951 (TNA).

could be seen in Malabar. The Payyannur Salt Satyagraha under the leadership of K. Kelappan, was a great move towards national spirit and in several parts of the Malabar, the Salt Satyagraha was undertaken.<sup>99</sup> The Payyannur march under the leadership of Kelappan, was greeted by people, in various parts of Malabar while it was passing.<sup>100</sup> While leaders were arrested great protest had expressed by the municipalities of Palghat, Calicut, Tellicherry and Cannanore by passing resolutions and boycotting the Municipal Session.<sup>101</sup>

The Government restriction on local bodies continued even in 1930s. The police arrests and oppression continued and municipalities and local boards had reacted sharply. The general feature of legislation enacted on the subject in the several provinces after introduction of dyarchy was relative democratisation of local and municipal bodies, reservation of seats for backward and scheduled caste, provision of seats for labour, elected president and vice-president etc.<sup>102</sup> Most of the legislation enacted to democratise

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99. V.R. Menon. op.cit., p. 235. K. Gopalan kutty. "Mobilisation against the State and not against the landlords. The Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 26, 4 (1989), pp.459-480.

100. Moyarath, *Ente Jeevitha Kadha*. Calicut, 1965, p.247.

101. *Mathruhumi*, 27-9-93.

102. B.B. Misra. *The Administrative History of India 1884-1947*. Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 612.

municipal government was introduced by the first provincial councils under the reformed constitution.<sup>103</sup>

At the national level many developments were taking place. Inside the legislature, the swarajists pleaded for autonomy in the provinces and introduction of responsible government in the centre. The failure of dyarchy was becoming clear to many. The report of the Muddiman Committee reflected this popular view. The report of the Simon Commission also recommended the giving up of dyarchy.

The Nehru Report of 1928 could not be implemented because of the different stands by various political parties. The conclusion and findings of Third Round Table Conference was incorporated in a white paper, which provided the details of the working of a new constitution for India with dyarchy at the centre and responsible governments in the provinces.<sup>104</sup>

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103. *Ibid.*

104. S.C. Roy Choudhari. *History of Modern India*. Delhi, 1992, p. 276.

DETAILS OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS PAID TO MUNICIPAL  
COUNCILS AND FOREST DEPARTMENTS

I. MUNICIPALITIES

1. In the case of Koduvally and Kuttiadi tolls, on the border of Tellicherry Municipality, the net income was shared between municipality and district board in proportion of 2 : 1 vide Government order No. 2849 Lt. M. dated 8th August, 1925.
2. In the case of Mundur tolls, situated 8 miles away from limit of Palghat Municipality, net income shared between district board and municipality in proportion of 1 : 3.
3. In the case of Olavakkottu toll managed by Palghat Municipality the net income shared between district board and municipality in proportion of 1 : 3.
4. In the case of remaining tolls of borders, of municipal towns net income was shared equally by municipal councils concerned and district boards.

II. THE FOREST DEPARTMENT

Net income from Dhoni toll or Dhoni Forest road was paid to Forest Department.

### III. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Irritti toll on Tellicherry-Coorg road, a contribution of Rs. 700 was appropriated by District Board from the net income of the toll when it was managed by District Board under Government Order No. 7445 dated 27th September, 1926.

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CHAPTER 4

LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT IN PROVINCIAL  
AUTONOMY  
LAST PHASE 1935-1956

**CHAPTER 4**  
**LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT IN PROVINCIAL**  
**AUTONOMY**  
**LAST PHASE 1935-1956**

By the Government of India Act of 1935, provincial autonomy was introduced which gave further impetus to the development of local institution. Popular ministries controlled finances and could make available adequate funds for the development of local bodies. The demarcation of taxation between provincial and local finances which was provided by the reforms of 1919 was done away with. New Acts were passed in every province giving more functions to local bodies. However the financial resources of local bodies and their powers of taxation remained more or less the same as in the days of Lord Ripon.

Significant steps were taken in the provinces where dyarchy was replaced by responsible government, theoretically in all departments and the electorate was increased from 6½ to about 30 million.<sup>1</sup> The 1935 Act has been described as a 'land mark in the development of government of India' but its complications and

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1. Jawaharlal Nehru thought that the only good thing to be said in favour of the Act was that it created a wider electorate. See Sarvepally Gopal. *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*. Vol. I. Bombay, 1975, pp. 200-201 and 207.

hesitations marked a point of no return in constitutional development which the Montford Reforms did not make. The Act of 1935 provided a chance to the congress to acquire some experience in the art of administration. The elections were contested in 1937 under the Act and the Congress succeeded in forming ministries in seven out of eleven states. The congress ministry formed in the Madras presidency under C. Rajagopalachari remained till 1939. On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939, the viceroy unilaterally associated India with Britain's declaration of war on Germany without bothering to consult the provincial ministries or any Indian leader. This led to the resignation of the congress ministries in the provinces.<sup>2</sup> The developments after the passing of the Government of India Act of 1935 can be taken up for discussion here.

The provincial autonomy introduced under the Act of 1935 had set up the department of local self government under the control of a popular minister.

#### Elections to the District board

In Madras province the Act of 1935 rendered further impetus to the development of local institutions. Elections were held in

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2. Pattabi Sita Ramayya. *History of Indian National Congress*. Vol. II, Reprint. Bombay, 1969, pp.52-53 and 124-130.

Malabar District Boards local legislation's in 1937. The congress had decided to take up administration of District Board and so the congress candidates contested in various circles viz. from Chirakkal, Kurumbranad Kozhikode Ernad, Ponnani, Palghat and Valuvanad.<sup>3</sup> Like the legislative Assembly elections, the congress secured majority of seats in the District Board. Out of the 52 seats, 29 seats were secured by the congress.<sup>4</sup> The congress candidate won from the following places<sup>5</sup> as shown in the table.

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3. *Mathrubhumi*, 27-3-1937.

4. *Ibid.* Before the Introduction of the Act of 1935. District Board president was nominated and there was no election to the post

5. *Ibid.* *see* Table..

## Seats Secured by Congress in the District Board Election in 1937

No.	Circle	Furka	No.of members won by Congress
1.	Chirakkal	Payyannur Madai Thaliparamba Kannur Kottayam Chavassery Mattannur	7
2.	Kozhikode	Chevayur Kunnamangalam Koduvally Ernad Kondotty	5
3.	Kurumbanadu	Nadapuram Payyoli Naduvannur Quilandy	4
4.	Ponnani	Chavakkad Ponnani Tirur Thrithallur Kurttipuram	5
5.	Palghat	Elappully Kollengode Kuzhelimannam	3
6.	Valluvanad	Sreekrishnapuram Mannarghat Perinthalmanna Pattambi Ottapalam	5

Source: Mathrubhumi, 27-3-1937.

K. Kelappan was unanimously elected as the president of the District Board and Katalassery Muhamud Musaliar was elected as the vice president of the District Board.<sup>6</sup> For the first time the district board came under nationalist leadership.

### Growth of Socialist ideas

Meanwhile, the rapid growth of socialist ideas was witnessed within and outside the congress. Within the congress, the left wing tendency found reflection in the election of Jawaharlal Nehru as president for 1936 and 1937 and of Subash Chandra Bose for 1938 and 1939.<sup>7</sup> Outside the congress, the socialist tendency led to the growth of communist party under the leadership of P.C. Joshi and the foundation of congress socialist party under the leadership of Acharya Narendradev, Jayaprakash Narayanan and others.<sup>8</sup> The congress socialist party discarded the government of India Act 1935, emphasised the necessity of unity of Hindus and Muslims on the ground of common interest, opposed what they called the policy of appeasement of the congress towards Muslim league and asked for rejection of partition plan of India.<sup>9</sup> Later, the communist party

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6. C. Uthama Kurup, *et. al. Mathrubhumiyyude Charithram.*

7. Bipin Chandra. *Modern India.* Delhi, 1971, p. 292.

8. *Ibid.*

9. See for details L.P.Sinha. *Left Wing in India.* Muzzaffarpur, 1965. Satyatvarta Rai Choudhari. *Leftist Movement in India, 1917-47.* Calcutta, 1977.

was formed and it started getting a good following. In Kerala leaders like P. Krishna Pillai, EMS Namboodripad and A.K. Gopalan were by 1930s simultaneously rebuilding a congress organisation shattered by repression.<sup>10</sup> The new spirit of unity among left nationalist socialists and communists found expression through the formation of All India Kisan Sabha. Nehru's working committee after Lucknow session of congress included three socialists viz., Jayaprakash Narayan, Narendra Dev and Achyuth Patwardhan.<sup>11</sup> Through the peasant struggle civil disobedience movement and labour movement, the congress socialist party had grown into a powerful organisation which later formed into communist party in 1939.<sup>12</sup> The KPCC under the leadership of leftist and communist group had observed September 15<sup>th</sup> 1940 as a black day to protest against oppressive nature of government and famine.<sup>13</sup> The communists opposed the Quit India Movement following the Peoples War Policy.<sup>14</sup> A new awakening

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10. K.Gopalan Kutty. "The Task of Transforming the Congress." *Studies in History*, 5.2.1989, p.177,194

11. Sumit Sarkar. *Histuory of Modern India*. Delhi, 1983, p. 344.

12 K.K.N.Kurup. *Quit India : Samaravum Keralavum*. Trivandrum, 1993, p. 41.

13 . *Ibid*

14 . For an exposition of the P.W.P. see P.C. Joshy, *Communist Reply to Congress Working Committee Charge*. Bombay, 1945, K. Gopalan Kutty. *Rise and Growth of the Communist Party in Malabar, 1934-47*. Unpublished M.Phil. Thesis submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 1978, Chapter III.

manifested among the masses and the communist party was responsible for this change and was actually the driving force behind it.<sup>15</sup> The congress socialist party which could legitimately be called a fore runner of the communist party opened a new vista in the individual life of many among the leaders even as in the case of political life of Kerala.<sup>16</sup>

#### Functioning of Local bodies

The government had attempted to divide the District Board into South Malabar District Board and North Malabar District Board in 1937. The government aimed at the formation of South Malabar District Board, by joining together the following places viz. Calicut , Ernad, Valluvanad, Palghat Ponnani and 15 Amsoms of Wynad. But Kelappan as district board president opposed this. The district board attempted to generate popular resentment and protest against the government intention of dividing the district board. Attempts of dividing the board had already made in 1935, when R.M. Plat was the district board president and he had objected to it.<sup>17</sup> But

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15 .A.K.Gopalan. *In the Cause of the People*. Madras, 1973, p.154.

16 E. M. S. Namboodiripad. *How I became a Communist*. Trivandrum, 1976, p. 161.

17. C. Uthama Kurup. *op. cit.*, p. 275.

later when he was a member of interim minority ministry, he favored the division of district board.<sup>18</sup> The attempt for dividing the district board was finally dropped by the government.

The period of Kelappan as district board president had witnessed reforms in the district board. Hindi and spinning were introduced in the board schools. Dalit students were exempted from entrance fee and special fee. Physical education and Kalari<sup>19</sup> were introduced in the schools. The district board also requested the congress ministry in Madras to introduce adult franchise system in the local boards and municipal elections. An attempt was made to increase income and reduce expenditure.<sup>20</sup>

At the same time certain reform of District Board were not welcomed by all. The enhancement of secondary school fee, reduction of the salary of board employees, abolition of the post of leprosy officer, and stopping of the functioning of some high schools were some of the unpopular steps taken by the District Board during the presidentship of Kelappan.<sup>21</sup> But he demonstrated that he was

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18 . *Ibid.* Also in *Mathrubhumi*, 24-9-1937.

19. Kalari is a form of Martial art. It also involves physical exercise.

20. C. Uthama Kurup. *op. cit.*, p. 272.

21. C.K. Moosath. *Kelappan Enna Maha Manushyan*. Kottayam, 1982, pp.152-153.

an able administrator by taking up several measures in different branches like education, health and public works departments. A concerted attempt was made to improve transport facilities and two important bridges which laid on the high way viz. The Moorad bridge and Korapuzha bridge were constructed during the presidentship of Kelappan.<sup>22</sup> For meeting the cost of construction he corresponded with the Madras Government seeking allotment of funds and an amount of Rs.10 lakhs were allotted from the National Development Board for the same.<sup>23</sup> For enhancing the income of District Board it had decided to impose tolls on various bridges like Mayyazhi bridge, Panampuzha bridge, Puliampully bridge and Puthur bridge.<sup>24</sup>

The District Board requested the Government for the union of Kasaragod in the Malabar District.<sup>25</sup> The attempt made by Kelappan for improving the financial condition resulted in the reduction of expenditure on secondary schools. The following details show the reduction of expenditure on secondary schools in the year 1937 and 1938.<sup>26</sup>

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22. M.P. Manmathan. *Kelappan*. Trivandrum, 1984, p. 197.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Mathrubhumi*, 15-5-1938.

25. *Ibid.*, 25-11-1937.

26. *Ibid.*, 22-1-1938.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount spent for Secondary Schools</u>
1936-1937	2,39,554
1938-1939	2,37,884

Another attempt for reducing the expenditure made by the district board was through population control. Leftists were advocating the practice of birth control in Travancore and in Malabar. A resolution was passed in the District Board which demanded the Madras Government to open birth control clinics in its hospitals.<sup>27</sup> Arrangements were made in the district board hospitals for giving publicity and awareness for the family planning measures gratuitously.<sup>28</sup>

However the period of district board administration during the year 1937-38 resulted in a surplus budget as it is shown in the table below.

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27. Robin Jeffry. *Politics, Women and Well Being: How Kerala Became A Model*. New Delhi, 1993, p.194.

28. C. Uthama Kurup. *op. cit.*, p. 279.

Year 1937-38<sup>29</sup>

The balance amount of the year 1936-37	37507
Total income	1483115
Total	1520622
Total expenditure	1447757
Balance	72865

The above table shows an increase of 94.27 per cent in the balance amount of the year 1937-38 when compared to the year 1936-37.

A journal in Malayalam was published under the auspices of the district board, which was mainly intended for giving instruction to the district board officers and for conveying to the people the measures taken by the district board.<sup>30</sup> The journal was edited by A.K. Kunhikrishnan Nambiar and the editorial board consisted of the following members viz., M.C. Narayanan Namboodiripad and K.T. Ramunni Menon.<sup>31</sup> The expenditure for editing the journal was met from the primary education fund.

Resolutions for the promotion of language and social upliftment were passed by the district board during the presidency of

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29. *Mathrubhumi*, 22-1-1938.

30. *Ibid.*, 16-3-1938.

31. *Ibid.*

Kelappan. Accordingly resolutions passed for introducing temple entry legislation and temple entry.<sup>32</sup> The incidence of caste feelings had been noted by the District Board. The District Board had requested the Government to cancel the registration of those hotels and restaurants who had not allowed entry to the lower castes.<sup>33</sup> The Government order to the District Board was that the bill for removing social evils from society was under consideration of the legislative assembly and insisted the district board to wait, till it becomes law.<sup>34</sup> Another resolution relating to social improvement, was that it passed a resolution for introducing prohibition in the Malabar area.<sup>35</sup>

The Board had taken up the matter of promotion of Malayalam language. A resolution was passed for the formation of Malayala Basha Poshana Committee on the model of committees formed in Travancore and Cochin.<sup>36</sup> The District Board had even decided to introduce a press with the excess fund of the board.<sup>37</sup> The District

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32. *Ibid.*, 13- 5-1938.

33. *Ibid.*, 22-12-1938.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*, 25- 8-1938.

36. *Ibid.*, 13- 5-1938.

37. *Ibid.*

Board extended its assistance to the cultivators of the Malabar area. Due to shortage of rainfall, the cultivation yield was very low and the tenants were not in a position to give due share to the Government. The District Board took up the decision for rendering financial assistance to the tenants and appointed a committee of 15 members to enquire about the situation.<sup>38</sup>

#### Resignation of Kelappan from the District Board

The resignation of the Congress Ministry in the provinces and the assumption of charge of local Governments by Governors created a set back to the growth of local bodies. In Malabar a dead lock occurred following the resignation of Kelappan from the presidency of Malabar District Board. This had taken place mainly due to difference of opinion between Kelappan, the district board president and Muhammed Abdu Rahiman, the KPCC President. When the KPCC was summoned in 1934 at Shornur, the difference of opinion among Kerala Congress men had emerged and one section expressed the difficulty of following Gandhian peaceful measures for attaining the goal of independence. This had resulted in the rise of Gandhian group and socialist group in Kerala Congress.<sup>39</sup>

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38. *Ibid.*, 20-12-1938.

39. S.K. Pottakkat *et al.* *Muhammed Abdu Rahiman*. Calicut, 1978, pp. 438-439.

These groups, which were later known as leftist group and rightist group, had engaged in competition for capturing the leadership of Congress in Kerala. When the election for presidentship of KPCC was held in 1938, Abdur Rahman, the leader of the leftist group, was elected as the KPCC President and E.M. Sankaran Namboodiripad was elected as the Secretary of KPCC and also P. Narayanan Nair was elected as its treasurer.<sup>40</sup> The Kerala Congress became a powerful party under the leadership of Mohammed Abdur Rahman and in the Municipal elections of Calicut, Tellicherry, Palghat and Cannanore, the majority seats were secured by Congress Party in the year 1938.<sup>41</sup> A resolution was passed by the KPCC on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1938, for strengthening the party relationship with municipal bodies, which contained the fact that the town congress committee members should also be members of the KPCC.<sup>42</sup>

While there was ideological difference between Kelappan and Abdu Rahman, a secret circular listing complaints against Kelappan as District Board president and asking Congress men to enquire into them was sent to Taluk Congress Committee in June 1938 by Muhammed Abdu Rahman the KPCC President.<sup>43</sup> Kelappan

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40. *Ibid.*, p. 442.

41. *Ibid.*, p.444.

42. *Ibid.*, p.445.

43. *Ibid.*, p.451.

then sent an appeal to All India Congress Committee and J.B. Kripalani the then Congress President took up the issue. As per the direction given by All India Congress Committee (AICC), the circular was withdrawn by Abdu Rahman . These were the circumstances under which Kelappan resigned from the Presidentship of the District Board.

The elections to the District Board were declared in 1940 and K.V. Nuruddin was declared elected as President after the formalation of the Committee of the Board.<sup>44</sup> In the 1940 elections the following members were declared elected viz., K.V. Sankaran Nair from Madai farka. M.T. Aboobacker from Cannanore farka, K.P.R. Gopalan from Taliparamba, Kallinggal Muhammed from Perinthalmanna, K.T. Moosakutty from Vandur Farka, Ahamed kutty from Kottakkal farka, K.P. Kunhikelu Kurup from Nadapuram farka, Machalathu Raghavan from Permbra farka, K.V. Chamu from Parali farka, T.K. Gopalan from Kuzhalmannam farka, Abdullakutty from Tirur farka, Moidu Molulavi from Andathode farka, Neela Kanten Bhattariripad from Chavakkad farka, K.O. Kiunhikrishnan Nambiar from Tellicherry farka, Kunhikannan from Kuthuparamba farka and Moyurath Sankaran from Mattannur furka.<sup>45</sup> It could be seen that most of the members were

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44. *Mathrubhumi*, 22-3-1940.

45. *Ibid.*

nationalists and had undergone imprisonment for several times for participating in nationalist struggles.

The District Board administration in 1940 came under the control of leftist group, but this Board with K.V. Nuruddin as its president continued only for one year.<sup>46</sup> Often the leftist group came into conflict with the rightist group, which was known in another name as 'Chalappuram' gang, because most of them belonged to the Chalappuram area of Calicut.<sup>47</sup> Restrictions on the District Board were continued by the government. The Board protested against the government order of stopping the journal of the Board. Complaints of malpractices were raised against the Board during the presidentship of K.V. Nuruddin.

#### Textbook Bribery Allegations

A complaint against the president K.V. Nuruddin and text book committee member Brahmadattan Namboodiri was raised. It was alleged that the two had taken bribes for introducing particular text books in the Board schools.<sup>48</sup> A case filed against the president and

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46 . E. Moidu Moulavi. *Moulaviyude Atma Katha*. Kottayam, 1981, p. 195.

47. *Ibid*.

48. *Mathrubhumi*, 9-2-1941.

text book committee member in the court. U. Gopala menon, the then Government Advocate, argued strongly that both of them were guilty of the charge. Later, both were declared as offenders. The Board administration became miserable and the government took up steps for the dissolution of the Board and the appointment of an officer in charge of the District Board. The Madras Government Advisor Rutherford enquired about the conditions of the Board. Due to financial crisis the District Board had decided to close 109 schools functioning under the Board and also decided to entrust some good schools to managers.<sup>49</sup>

Another allegation was also raised against the District Board. It was alleged that the Board conducted its meetings in interior areas of the district to facilitate the participation of the political workers wanted by the police.<sup>50</sup> This had not actually happened but it was only an allegation for finding out a chance for the suspension of the board. The allegations raised against the board president resulted in his suspension and the appointment of collector as a special officer in the District Board.<sup>51</sup>

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49. *Ibid.*, 16-4-1941.

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*

### The District Board Administration Under Special Officer

When the District Board was under the control of special officer Machiavel it had taken case of sanitation and worked to prevent food adulteration, dangerous and offensive trades and to provide water supply, drainage, remunerative enterprise, transport services, markets, cart stands, bus stands factories and industries, tree planting, land developments, etc. Food adulteration was controlled by the Board by licensing hotels, restaurants, eating houses, etc., under Local Boards Act.<sup>52</sup> New conditions were laid down in the licence. These required that the articles of food should be well prepared, there should be good supply of fresh water, vendors should always be neat and free from infectious diseases, floors and premises should be neat and tidy, etc.<sup>53</sup>

Bye Laws were framed during the year 1942 to regulate hotels lodging houses, refreshment rooms, coffee houses, etc. The manufacture of fish oil was the most dangerous and offensive trade in the district. The factories were allowed to be located only near the sea shore so that they might not become a source of nuisance to

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52. Government Order No.4489/42 dated 3-12-1942, Dept. Of Office District Board (Calicut) 1942 (Regional Archives, Calicut)

53. *Ibid.*

the public. Licences were issued for all dangerous and offensive trades and precautionary measures were enforced by all Boards as far as possible.<sup>54</sup>

Sanitary arrangements were made at the festival centres in accordance with the construction outlined in Government order No.1723 P.H. Dated 13<sup>th</sup> December 1922. The arrangements made were reported to be generally 'satisfactory' and there was no outbreak of epidemic during any fairs of festivals.<sup>55</sup>

The district board spent Rs.984/- and panchayath board of Badagara, Ponnani, Chaqghat and Vythiri spent Rs.210 each to repair tanks wells in 1942.<sup>56</sup> The Administrative Report of 1942 had remarked that no local board had engaged or protected water supply except one or two panchayath board. No drainage works were taken by any of the panchayath boards so also no measures were taken for fire protection. The District Board had no railways of its own and none of the local boards in the district owned any motor bus service but private cars, buses and lorries were placed for hire in all parts of the district. No contribution paid to panchayath boards in respect of

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54. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.*

56. L & M Dept. Administrative Report of Malabar District Board, 1942 (RAC).

markets treated as district board markets and there were 127 private markets licensed by boards at the beginning of the year 1942.<sup>57</sup>

The Administrative Report of the District Board after 1940 was greatly criticised by the government for the 'unsatisfactory condition of roads, corrupt practices and disorder in its functioning.'<sup>58</sup>

Meanwhile great efforts were made for the unity of Congressmen in Kerala and in 1940 the KPCC decided to form a satyagraha council with equal participation of the leftist and rightist groups in the Congress. But it proved futile and no such task was undertaken. The difference of opinion manifested even in selection of candidates in the election.<sup>59</sup>

### The Quit India Movement in Malabar

The Quit India Movement began in August 1942. Several congress men were arrested and imprisoned. The congress organisation was banned and nationalist work was done by congress men in the label of several other organisational names.<sup>60</sup> Kerala

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57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid.*

59. See for details of left and right squibbles. K. Gopalan kutty. "The Task of Transforming the Congress." *op. cit.*

60. M.P. Manmathan. *op. cit.*, p. 245.

Congress Samithi was formed in the place of KPCC. Other organisations viz., Grama Seva Sangam, Kerala Kesari Congress, Kerala Labour Congress, National Mahila Sangam, and Kerala Youth Congress also emerged as forefront organisation of KPCC.<sup>61</sup>

When the District board administration was under the supervision of a special officer, not much reaction was seen from the Congress men of Kerala. One reason was that the majority of them were in prison, in consequence of participating in the Quit India movement.<sup>62</sup> Curfew was declared by Machiavel, the Malabar District Magistrate and following this hartal was observed in various places of Malabar viz. In Kozhikode, Payyannur, Kannur, nilswaram and Trichur.<sup>63</sup> Prominent Congress leaders like K.Kelappan, K. Madhava Menon, K.A. Damodara Menon, M.P. Narayana Menon, etc. were arrested and put behind the bars.<sup>64</sup>

But work under District Board had continued even when it was under the supervision of a special officer. From the general

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61. *Ibid.*, V.A. Kesavan Nair. *Irumbazhikkullil* (Second Edition). Calicut, 1954, p. 180.

62. P.T. Bhaskara Panikkar. *Malabar District Board*. Paper presented on Seminar session of History of Political Development in Kerala, held on 11th and 12th December 1985 organised by Department of Political Science, University of Kerala.

63. K.K.N. Kurup. *Quit India. Samaravum Keralavum*. Trivandrum, 1993, p. 43.

64. *Ibid.*

conditions observed it was stated that no building should be constructed on the land without previous permission of Collector of District and the Government might resume the land wholly or in part with any building thereon in the event of the infringement of any of the Government grant.<sup>65</sup> The construction of market stalls at Malappuram had taken place and the new markets were ready for occupation.<sup>66</sup> Licence of metal works of private parties, plans of buildings and factories, buildings for scrutiny and approval were sanctioned by Special Officer, District Board, Calicut.<sup>67</sup> The public wells belonging to District Board were transferred to Trikkandiyur Panchayath Board on 23-12-1942.<sup>68</sup>

Though the assumption of administration by the special officer was done under special conditions, it resulted, as can be seen from the above, in bureaucratisation of administration. Democracy and popular participation were greatly affected by this.

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65. 1942. Department of Office of District Board, Calicut (File No.4489/42 dated 3-12-1942) RAC.

66. 942. Dept. Of Office Malabar District Board, File No .6797/42 dated 30-5-1942 (RAC).

67. *Ibid.* No.3741/42 dated 13-8-1942 (RAC).

68. 942. Dept. of LA, Office of Malabar District Board, Calicut, dated 13-2-1943 (RAC).

### The Change of Administration From Special Officer to President

After the suspension period, the first meeting of the district board was held under its new president V.K. Unnikammu Sahib.<sup>69</sup> He was elected by the council members and he was also a staunch nationalist.<sup>70</sup> One board member Moideen Kutty Gurikkal insisted that special prayers should be conducted for the victory of allied powers in the war. This was against existing practices. The day to day session of the district board used to begin with a prayer of peace which was written by the nationalist poet Kattamath and this had strengthened nationalist fervour. The war period witnessed several national calamities and famine, and district board requested the Government to take necessary steps to solve these problems.<sup>71</sup>

By 1944, the Government had imposed much power on the district board. The Government had ordered the municipal taluk board medical officers for undertaking medical activities in the Malabar area. It was also decided to erect hospitals at a rate of one hospital for each 500 people. Order was made exempting school fees for the children of soldiers. The war period witnessed shortage of

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69. *Mathrubhumi*, 15-9-1943.

70. E. Moidu Moulavi. *op. cit.*, p. 221.

71. *Mathrubhumi*, 17-12-1943..

food and necessaries by the people of Malabar area. A request was made by the District Board to the Government not to transfer employees from their home station to far away places, whose monthly income was below Rs.25/- till the end of the war. It also requested the Government to include the post of District Board Secretary, Education Officer, etc. in the State Service. For the progress of the villages, it had recommended the introduction of five year plans giving preference to water supply sanitation, medical facilities, village rural communications public health activities etc. For irrigation facilities the District Board had decided to undertake the construction of Malampuzha dam in the year 1944.<sup>72</sup>

Some feeling had been felt among the District Board members, that the Board had neglected the welfare of Malabar people. When the Mangala Pathra was submitted to Sree Vasthava, the Food Member of Governor General's Executive Council and Ambedkar the Labour Member, several demands of the District Board were included in it.<sup>73</sup> Another resolution was also passed by the District Board demanding that the amount received from ferries must be utilised for the construction of roads and dykes in Malabar area.

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72. *Ibid.*, 25-5-1944.

73. *Ibid.*, 9-12-1944

Another decision was also taken by the District Board in 1945, that an amount of Rs.500/- from the District Board was to be utilised for the family members of soldiers who were residing in Cannanore, Tellicherry, Malappuram, Palghat, etc.<sup>74</sup>

In 1945 the members of the District Board had demanded that their allowance should be raised. The agricultural tax policy of Madras Government was very harmful to the cultivators of Malabar. The District board had passed a resolution in 1945 to protest against the bill. Its cancellation was demanded.

For increasing the income of District Board they had demanded that the Government should grant the income from waterways to the Board. But it was not granted because both Collector and Revenue Board disagreed with it.<sup>75</sup>

The District Board authorities had taken interest in educational activities and had decided to introduce compulsory education in its 34 circles. By 1946 the District Board found it very difficult to manage its secondary and high schools and even thought of handing over the secondary schools to government

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74. *Ibid.*, 1-2-1945.

75 *Ibid.*, 2-1-1946.

or to private hands. This roused opposition of the teaching community.<sup>76</sup>

In 1946 election to the District Board was decided after dissolving the nominated circles. At that time the movement for the formation of Kerala State on linguistic basis by uniting Travancore, Cochin and Malabar had got underway.<sup>77</sup> However, C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar the Diwan of Travancore was opposed to such a unification.<sup>78</sup>

In 1946 the total strength of the District Board was determined as 52 and seats reserved for various communities and categories were as following.<sup>79</sup>

Muslims	-	7
India Xians	-	1
Scheduled Caste	-	2
European	-	1
Ladies	-	2

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76. *Ibid.*

77. For details see C.N. Somarajan. "*Movement for Aikya Kerala - A Survey.*" Presidential address. Political History Section, South Indian Congress XIX Session, January 24-26 1999 at Loyala College, Chennai.

78. *Ibid.*, 15-8-1946.

79. *Ibid.*, 28-8-1946.

It was ordered that the Collector was to be Special Officer till the elections of the district board were completed. The District Board had passed a resolution congratulating its President, V.K. Unnikamu Sahib and Vice-President, Sukumaran and other officers for their talented administration in 1946.<sup>80</sup> For improving the financial condition of the board, it had sought the permission of the government for running transport services which was not allowed by the Government. But after 1947, the Board had decided to run bus service in the area.

At the national level many developments were taking place. In the case of Indian independence, the British government had decided to fix a firm date for transfer of power. In February 1946 the British Prime Minister Attlee announced in the parliament that Britain intended to transfer power to responsible Indian hands not later than June 1948. The British Government therefore sent in March 1946 a Cabinet Mission to India to negotiate with Indian leaders the terms of transfer of power to India. In the elections held for the interim government, the Congress secured a majority of seats in the Central Legislative Assembly.

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80. *Ibid.*, 24-9-1946.

A Congress Ministry was formed in Madras State under the Prime Ministership of T. Prakasam in mid 1946.<sup>81</sup> But the Prakasam Ministry did everything in its power to repress mass struggle and mighty protest demonstrations were carried out when Prakasam visited Malabar.<sup>82</sup> In the case of the Malabar District Board the British Government was very vigilant to prevent agitations. The Government ordered the appointment of the Collector as Special Officer till the elections were held to district board.<sup>83</sup> The Government decision was to keep away the local boards from the involvement of agitation. There were mass struggles throughout the length and breadth of the country in the months of January and February 1947. The Madras Government released all those who had been imprisoned in connection with Independence day 1947.

#### Development After Independence

The period of independence and after promoted local government institutions in the administration of the country. In a meeting of the Ministers of Local Self Government of various provinces, held in 1948. Raj Kumari Amrit Kour, the Minister of

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81. K.A. Damodaran Menon. *Thirinja Nokkumbol*. Kottayam, 1981, p. 185

82. A.K. Gopalan, *op.cit.*, p. 161..

83 . Mathrubhumi, 30-10-1946.

Health and Chairman of the Conference said, "the subject of local self government is of such vital importance to the general well being of the people that I felt it would be definitely beneficial if a forum would be provided, where those responsible for this important arm of administration all over India could meet together periodically exchange ideas and discuss problems of common interest."<sup>84</sup>

In 1948 an attempt was made by Central province for the introduction of Janapada Sabha in the place of Local Boards.<sup>85</sup> But no such attempt was taken in the Madras state. In Malabar it was the time for preparation and conducting arrangement of district board election.

#### The District Board Election in 1949

The 1949 election to Malabar District Board was a very competitive one between the Congress and the Communist Party. By this period, the Communist party had grown into a wide organisation and its meetings used to draw large crowds.<sup>86</sup> The Communists determined to challenge the Congress supremacy. The

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84. As cited in S.C. Roy Choudhary, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

85. *Mathrubhumi*, 3-4-1948.

86. A.K. Gopalan, *op.cit.*, p.159.

KPCC had taken up active propaganda for securing a majority of seats. The socialist party intended to fight against land lords and capitalists. Even though there were independent members who did not belong to either the Congress, the Communist or socialist party, they were representatives of Communalist group.<sup>87</sup> The Muslim League was a party to the election, but they were in alliance with the Congress Party. When the Malayala Pradesh Congress Party was formed before the formation of Aikya Kerala it had alliance with Muslim League in the municipal and local elections of Malabar.<sup>88</sup> The District Board administration was captured by the Congress party and Mukundan was elected President of the Board.<sup>89</sup> The 43 members elected to the board consisted of Congress, Communist and Socialist Party members and also independents.

Even after independence the photos of British King and Queen were not removed from the District Board Office. One Board member A.C. Raman demanded in the session of the District Board, the removing of photos of British King and Queen from the Board

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87. *Mathrubhumi*, 17-9-1949.

88. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p. 229. See also *op. cit.* "Movement for Aikya Kerala," Presidential Address by C.N. Somarajan.

89. *Mathrubhumi*, 18-3-1950.

Office.<sup>90</sup> There was keen interest among Board members when a Congress Ministry was formed in the centre. The District Board, demanded more powers to the Board from Government. The Board demanded extension of authority of financial condition. It suggested that the roadwork of the area be undertaken by the workers under District Board Engineer for increasing the fund of the Board. The following were details from the budget of the District Board for the year 1951-52.<sup>91</sup>

1950-51 renewed budget	-	454490
1951-52 estimated budget	-	1657100
Income after expenditure	-	10672
Total income of the year 1950-51		
The total income and expenditure	-	2587790
for the year 1950-51	-	3042280
Excess expenditure than income	-	454490

The above details showed that the District Board was facing a deficit budget.

The Government decided to introduce a change in the administration of the District Board. An official committee was

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90 . *Ibid.*

91 . *Ibid.*, 28-1-1951.

appointed by K.Chandra Moulavi, the Minister of Local Self Government Department, to examine the situations after the introduction of Village Panchayath Act 1950.<sup>92</sup> Later in 1951 the Madras Government appointed a committee of seven members for reorganising the local boards and former Advocate General, K. Kuttikrishna Menon was appointed as its Chairman. The Chief Minister Kumara Swami had declared that the new Act would reconstruct the District Board by reducing its extent and by the formation of Grama Panchayath as self rule units.<sup>93</sup>

It was pointed out that the constitution of Village Panchayath should be purely on an elective basis, a close contact should be maintained between Grama Sevak and Village Panchayath, the main source of income would be property or house tax, tax on market vehicle, etc.<sup>94</sup> The compulsory duty of local boards would include water supply, sanitation lighting, maintenance of roads, land, management, etc.<sup>95</sup>

After the introduction of the panchayath board, several works of the Board were undertaken by it and the Board was seen as a

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92. *Ibid.*, 13-2-1951.

93. *Ibid.*, 20-5-1951.

94 . G.R. Madan. *Changing Pattern of Indian Villages*, p.301.

95 . *Ibid.*

surplus one. Both primary and secondary education was set up under the panchayath board. Hospitals under taluk board was divided between District Board and Panchayath board. The roads which connected more than two villages came under the District Board, whereas rural road construction was under panchayath board. The bridges and ferries were under the District Board whereas markets constituted under Panchayath Raj.<sup>96</sup>

Even at the critical situation the District Board demanded certain reform. In 1951 it passed a resolution for introducing provident fund system to the last grade employees instead of the existing Bonus fund system. The Madras Chief Minister Kumara Swami had clearly stated that when the panchayath system was to be introduced at the local level then the extent of the District Board would be shortened. The Government had decided to set up grama panchayaths as self rule organisation. The existence of District Board was very critical and doubtful and the Government had decided to set up an advisory board for the reorganisation of it. But the Chamber of District Board, first class panchayath and District Board Officers disagreed on the reorganisation of the Board. In the year 1952-53, the budget estimate of the board had shown

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96. *Ibid.*

that it was facing a deficit budget of an amount of Rs.200833.<sup>97</sup> For meeting expenses of primary and educational needs the District Board had even decided to acquire a loan amount of Rs.2 lakhs with an interest of 3½%.<sup>98</sup>

Even at the sinking stage the District Board had shown keen interest in international affairs. For example it was very anxiously watching the Sri Lankan Government's policy of refusal of citizenship to the Ceylon Indians.<sup>99</sup>

One District Board member A.C. Raman had sent notice to the Government for building Chettuvai Bridge near Guruvayur and for its expenses the Ponnani Pradesh Congress had deposited more than Rs.6 lakhs.<sup>100</sup> But the District Board could not take up the construction of it as its continuation was doubtful. As per the Government order the redivision of the circles of the Board was again done and the total circle of the Board was fixed at 43 and total membership was 52. The Madras Government extended the duration of the Board for one more year.

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97 . *Mathrubhumi*, 26-1-1952.

98 . *Ibid.*

99. *Ibid.*, 28-1-1952

100. *Ibid.*

By that period the Communist party had increased its strength. K. Damodaran was its secretary.<sup>101</sup> The Communist Party members won a tremendous victory in 1951 elections and leaders like A.K. Gopalan had taken up the election propoganda of the party.<sup>102</sup>

The District Board had tried to improve its financial conditions and the budget estimate of the year 1953-54 had shown the Board had a balance of an amount of Rs.49400.<sup>103</sup> The official resolution presented by Congress member U.Gopala Menon for extending the period of the District Board was rejected by the Madras Assembly. The District Board also demanded extension following the formation of Andhra State. In 1953 a new bill was introduced in the legislative assembly for the appointment of Special Officer in the District Board and accordingly the Malabar collector was appointed as Special Officer. There was much resentment against the delay in conducting the District Board election.<sup>104</sup> K.C. Gopalan, a Communist member, opposing the bill had stated that it was due to the fear of failure of Congress party that election was extended.<sup>105</sup> In contrast the

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101. P.T. Bhaskara Panikkar. Seminar paper of District Board, op. cit. M.Rashid. K. Damodaran. Kottayam, 1982, Chapter 18.

102. A.K. Gopalan, *op.cit.*, p.200

103..*Mathrubhumi*, 13-1-1953.

104. *Ibid.*

105. *Ibid.* 3-4-1953.

Congress party welcomed the new bill.<sup>106</sup> The nationalists had earlier criticised rule by special officer. When they had administrative powers, they did just the same albeit for a shorter period.

### Election of the District Board

When the Malabar District Board election bill was introduced in the Madras Legislative Assembly, certain demands were raised by the Congress and the Communist leaders. K.P.R. Gopalan, the prominent Communist leader, wanted public opinion to be sought for the bill.<sup>107</sup> Kalyana Sundaram, another Communist leader, demanded that the popular representation in the bill should be based on legal point of view.<sup>108</sup> S. Rama Lingam, Congress leader demanded that the bill should be extended for six months.<sup>109</sup>

However it was decided to conduct election to the District Board. C. Rajagopalachari the Chief Minister of Madras state and Sankar Reddy the Minister of Local Boards declared that election would be held within 6 months. There was great protest in the

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106. *Ibid.*

107. *Ibid.* 12-8-1954.

108. *Ibid.*

109. *Ibid.*

appointment of Special Officer. V. Palani Swami Gowder the District Board Mandalam President had made his declaration, that due to appointment of Special Officers in 23 District Boards of Madras state, all District Board Presidents should surrender their official powers to the collectors of the District. In the case of the Malabr District Board the collector had taken up the charge of special officer till the election of Malabar District Board in 1954.<sup>110</sup>

The 1954 election of the Malabar District Board had shown the tremendous growth of the communist party. For the first time in the history of Malabar District Board, a Communist member P.T. BhaskaraPanikkar became the District Board President.

The District Board Administration under him had begun from September 1954 and continued till September 1957.<sup>111</sup> Malabar was an area of Madras State till the formation of Aikya Kerala on 1st November 1956. After the formation of Kerala State the District Board members of Kasargode area (formerly these members belonged to South Canara District Board) became members of Malabar District Board. The total members of District Board had

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110. *Ibid.* 2-7-1953.

111. P.T. Bhaskara Panikkar, Seminar paper on District Board, *op. cit.*

opinion that increase in population would lead to a crisis and the only solution was to introduce industries and handicrafts work. At that time the State Congress was campaigning for responsible government in Trivandrum leading to repression. The municipality protested against this and passed resolution condemning the repression. Another resolution of the Calicut municipality demanded voting power to all persons who attained the age of majority.<sup>120</sup>

An order was passed by the Government to the effect that public prosecutors should not hold the post of Chairman or membership of local bodies which resulted in the resignation of U. Gopala Menon as the Chairman of Calicut Municipality.<sup>121</sup> K. Madhava Menon was elected as the new chairman of the Calicut Municipality.

Moidu Moulavi, a member of the Calicut municipality had introduced a resolution stating that the municipality should introduce matters in national language.<sup>122</sup> The municipal members also introduced resolution for the formation of Malayalam speaking state.<sup>123</sup>

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120. *Ibid.*, 28-9-1938.

121. *Ibid.* 20-12-1938. He was also the public prosecutor.

122. *Ibid.*

123. *Ibid.* A movement of unification of three states came up later. See 'Movement for Aikya Kerala' Presidential address by Dr. C.N. Soma Rajan, *op. cit.*

example in the case of Calicut municipality the area was not determined till 1936. After taking the recommendation of the town planning committee the boundary of the municipality was extended to Komery, Parayanchery, Kotuli, Chevayur and Nedungotur.<sup>114</sup> The Municipality was divided as industrial area and other as residential area.

Whenever the expenses of the municipality had arisen, then the taxation rate was also raised high. When the Calicut municipality had requested the Governments help for the construction of Mankavu bridge, and repairment of Mooriyad bridge in the year 1936, the Government imposed over taxation upon the people.<sup>115</sup>

The Cannanore municipality decided to submit a mangalapathra containing the demands of municipality to Madras Governor Erskin when he visited Malabar.<sup>116</sup> Likewise, when the Governor visited Calicut, the Municipality had submitted a mangalapathra written on khadi.<sup>117</sup>

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114. *Mathrubhumi*, 21-4-1936.

115. *Ibid.*, 11-8-1936.

116. *Ibid.*, 29-8-1936.

117. *Ibid.*, 10-9-1936.

Payment of taxes was one subject hotly discussed in Calicut municipality. The municipality had undertaken measures for the up keeping and improving the general conditions of the people like sanitation, water supply, etc. It was decided to undertake the construction of sanitation works for T.B. Patients and to improve the water supply scheme. Public health was viewed carefully and the municipality decided to fill Chakkorathkulam with soil as the pond had become a threat to public health. But due to popular protest the idea had to be dropped. The Cannanore municipality had shown interest in athletic and sports activities by felicitating the members of the hockey team who meritoriously participated in the Olympic games in Germany.<sup>118</sup>

There was protest from residents of the Cannanore municipality for extending its municipal area in 1937 because they knew the difficulty of municipal administration due to the imposition of taxes for raising municipal funds. The municipality had lost a vast area when the Contonment was established in the area.

Nationalism during this period acquired vitality and adaptability. The Congress was growing into a powerful

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118. *Ibid.*, 1-10-1936.

organisation and as a part of it in almost all elections of municipal chairman held in 1938 Congress candidates became successful. The following Congress candidates came out successful in the elections to the post of Chairman.<sup>119</sup>

U. Gopala Menon	- Calicut
R.V. Sarma	- Palghat
P. KunmhiRaman	- Tellicherry
N.K. Kumaran	- Cannanore

The various committees appointed under municipality drew their attention to their respective aspects and made detailed suggestions. An attempt was made by the Calicut municipality for enforcing prohibition and accordingly a request was made to the Government. The Puthiapalam cemetery was opened to all Hindus irrespective of caste and this was made in time with the Congress campaign against caste disabilities.

Under the chairmanship of U. Gopala Menon the Calicut Municipality undertook several measures to improve the conditions of the Municipality. The Chairman requested the government for the construction of a museum and library in Calicut. He was of the

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119. *Ibid.*

opinion that increase in population would lead to a crisis and the only solution was to introduce industries and handicrafts work. At that time the State Congress was campaigning for responsible government in Trivandrum leading to repression. The municipality protested against this and passed resolution condemning the repression. Another resolution of the Calicut municipality demanded voting power to all persons who attained the age of majority.<sup>120</sup>

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120. *Ibid.*, 28-9-1938.

121. *Ibid.* 20-12-1938. He was also the public prosecutor.

122. *Ibid.*

123. *Ibid.* A movement of unification of three states came up later. See 'Movement for Aikya Kerala' Presidential address by Dr. C.N. Soma Rajan, *op. cit.*

New measures were introduced in the Calicut municipality during the chairmanship of Madhava Menon. Financial help was given to the schools for poor students. Khadi cloth was introduced in the schools for needle work. The introduction of prohibition in the municipal area was also requested.<sup>124</sup>

In 1938, under the chairmanship of N.K. Kumaran, the Cannanore municipality had congratulated Madras Government for making temple entry proclamation in Malabar area. It also passed a resolution demanding that all savarna temples should be opened to all Hindus.<sup>125</sup>

The Administrative report of Cannanore municipality had shown that though a huge amount was spent the result of the municipal High School was very poor.

The cantonment area in Cannanore was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1938 and an area of 0,69 sq.miles was lost to the municipality.<sup>126</sup> A decrease in the taxation was felt for the municipality due to the formation of the cantonment area.<sup>127</sup>

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124. *Ibid.*, 27-8-1939.

125. *Ibid.*, 7-10-1038

126. L&M Dept. The Administrative Report. of Cannanore Municipality during the year 1937-38 (RAC).

127. *Ibid.*

For honouring Subash Chandra Bose, Cannanore municipality named the newly built building of municipality as 'Subash building' and it was inaugurated by Gopal Reddy the Minister of Local Administration in Madras Government.<sup>128</sup> On that occasion a lengthy memorandum was submitted in which several demands of the municipality were included. The municipality expressed its condolence on the death of Kamal Pasha the ruler of Turkey.<sup>129</sup>

The Municipalities had shown its protest against government order for banning the hoisting of National flag in front of Municipal Schools. It had also demanded the government to give priority to Muslims, scheduled castes and Christian community in the official level.<sup>130</sup>

The Government Report of Tellicherry municipality in 1939 stated that the Administration was 'satisfactory' while inaugurating the meeting at the Tellicherry town hall, Vendata Naidu, the Madras Mayor, had insisted that the Councilors should work for the Welfare of the people.<sup>131</sup>

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128. *Ibid.*, *Mathrubhumi*, 9-10-1938.

129. *Ibid.*, 11-10-1938.

130. *Ibid.*, 12-12-1938.

131. *Ibid.*, 15- 3-1939.

In Palghat, the whole municipality had been divided into 22 wards for election purpose and special seats were reserved as follows.<sup>132</sup>

Muslims	..	3
Indian Xians	..	1
Harijan	..	1
Lady	..	1

The council met twice a month and transportation works were undertaken by the public works department. Primary education was free and the municipality maintained a total of 21 schools which were divided into 13 Hindu schools and 8 Mappila schools. The financial details of the municipality during the year 1937-38. Were as following.<sup>133</sup>

<u>Year 1937-38</u>		<u>Rs.</u>
Balance	..	36409
Total Income	..	196509
Expenditure	..	188275
Balance	..	44639

132. L&M Dep. The Administrative Report of Palghat Municipality for the year 1937-38 (RAC).

133. *Ibid.*

When the second world war commenced in September 1939, the announcement of British government that India was on the side of allied powers provoked protest by the municipalities of Malabar. When the individual satyagraha was started by Mahatma Gandhi, the members of the local bodies kept away from Satyagraha due to the instruction of Mahatma Gandhi that members of local bodies need not get themselves involved in the individual Satyagraha.<sup>134</sup> The Calicut municipal council had stopped its session to protest the arrest of K. Madhava Menon, the Chairman of the Calicut Municipality.<sup>135</sup> By that period, the British Government had adopted the policy of arresting Congress leaders in the name of maintenance of internal security. As a part of it Kelappan was arrested on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1940 and following this, K. Madhava Menon, K.A. damodara Menon, A.v. Kutimalu Amma, P.k. Moideen Kutty, A. Karunakara Menon, R. Raghava Menon etc. were arrested and taken to Vellore Jail.<sup>136</sup> When the Quit India movement was begun several other leaders of Malabar area had courted arrest and imprisoned. When the people were facing famine and plague, the Calicut municipality took up the task of distribution of rice and preventive measures for

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134. E. Moidu Moulavi. *Muulaviyude Atmakatha*. Kottayam 1981, p. 194-195.

135. *Mathrubhumi*, 21-12-1940.

136. Dr.K.K.N. Kurup., *op. cit.*, *Mathrubhumi*, 2-7-1943.

epidemics.<sup>137</sup> The municipality also demanded the Government an increase in rate of rationing.<sup>138</sup>

The Palghat Municipal Council Congress Party Leader, Dr. A.R. Menon was appointed as minister for Village improvement in the Cochin state by the Maha Rajah of Cochin.<sup>139</sup> The council contributed an amount of Rs. 50/- towards cottage industries. The municipality submitted a memorandum to the government to introduce new Science Degree course in Victoria College.<sup>140</sup>

When the conference of Municipal Officers was held at Calicut, the following demands were put forward by the members viz. The Post of Municipal Officers were to be provincialised, the salary of municipal officers should become equal to government sanctioned amount, efficient persons must be appointed as commissioners, etc.<sup>141</sup>

The governments a attitude towards municipalities was oppressive in nature. The Palghat municipality in 1941 passed a

137. *Mathrubhumi*, 3-9-1944.

138. *Ibid.*

139. A. Sreedhara Menon. *Adunika Keralam*. Kottayam, 1988, p. 80. But, later he resigned his ministership when a no confidence resolution was passed in the Legislative Assembly.

140. *Mathrubhumi*, 6-11-1938.

141. *Ibid.*, 31-12-1941.

resolution against the government policy of oppression. The government dissolved the municipal administration as a punishment for passing such a resolution. Out of 28 councilors 24 resigned. The government criticised the municipality and stated that the councilors had not imposed their legal powers properly.<sup>142</sup> The Act of Government was an encroachment upon the powers of municipal administration.

A decision was taken to extend the area of Calicut municipality and a vast area of the District Board was joined to the Municipality in 1942.<sup>143</sup> Certain areas of Badagara, Ponani, Chawghat and 63 minor panchayaths were taken over by the Municipality.<sup>144</sup>

Under the Chairmanship of Surya Narayana Aiyar, the council demanded an increase in the salary of Elementary School teachers.<sup>145</sup> Steps were taken for the exemption of land tax for those lands situated on both sides of Kallai river and Canoly Canal by the Calicut Municipality.<sup>146</sup>

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142. *Ibid.*, 23-9-1943.

143. L&M Dept. The Administrative Report of Calicut Municipality 1942-43 (RAC)

144. *Ibid.*

145. *Mathrubhumi*, 2-6-1946.

146. *Ibid.*, 8-12-1946.

Contributions for the war fund were collected by Tellicherry municipality though it was opposed by nationalist leader. The Tellicherry municipality had decided to contribute an amount of Rs. 50/- towards the war fund of Madras Government.<sup>147</sup> Earlier the municipality had rejected the request for advance payment to the employees due to the increasing price of food stuffs.<sup>148</sup> The rejection for advance payment was due to the shortage of fund. It's Municipal Chairman Louis Viyagove had demanded financial help for improving its condition. He requested the Government to permit the municipality to grant license to the area of 3 miles which was beyond the boundary of municipal area. Some other demands that hotels situated within and outside the area of municipality should be opened to all castes, legal recognition of the workers union of the municipality, increase in the basic salary of municipal members, demand for famine allowance of 50% healthy accommodation facilities, lessening the work load of employees etc. were some of the demands.<sup>149</sup>

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147. *Ibid.*, 21-2-1943.

148. *Ibid.*, 2-8-1942.

149. *Ibid.*, 2-7-1946.

## MUNICIPALITIES AFTER INDEPENDENCE

After independence, the importance of local self government institutions in the administration of the country was fully realised. The municipal and local bodies became the basis of true system of democracy. The municipal election took place in all municipalities in 1947 and the congress won a majority of seats. In the election propaganda of Cannanore municipality, P. Krishna Pillai, the communist leader had requested for a municipal administration with popular participation and requested deserving seats for both communist party and league.<sup>150</sup>

Matters of national importance were discussed by Palghat municipality in 1948. The government had taken decision for giving protection to the minority community of both India and Pakistan. The Palghat municipality welcomed the government decision.<sup>151</sup>

Improvement in the condition of Calicut municipality after independence could be noticed. The administrative report of the municipality in 1947-48 indicated that the municipal members increased in number from 36 to 40. Special attention had given to

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150. The Deshabhimani Newspaper Report, 13-9-1947. Cited in Andalat (ed.), Sakhakale Munnotte Volume 2, Trivandrum, 1973, p. 253.

151. *Mathrubhumi*, 14-10-1948.

water supply and road construction. The municipality undertook the town bus service. The economic condition of the municipality had improved and in 1950 the municipality had a balance amount of Rs.7761 in budget.<sup>152</sup> In 1951 the municipal workers had given a strike notice demanding increase in salary.<sup>153</sup> Later it was settled by enhancing salary.

The Calicut municipality had improved much in the field of health, sanitation and water supply. The water supply system was completed in the year 1951.<sup>154</sup> The drainage system was completed in the year 1952.<sup>155</sup>

The revised budget of Tellicherry municipality for the year 1953-54 indicated that the municipality had no financial problem. The municipality had rendered to the people by providing drainage system.<sup>156</sup> The Tellicherry municipality decided to take up works including road construction, extending educational facilities to all pupils, toilet facilities to all houses etc, but later it was delayed due to lack of fund.<sup>157</sup>

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152. L&M Dept. The Administrative Report of Calicut Municipality 1949-50 (RAC).

153. *Mathrubhumi*. 22-4-2951

154. *Ibid.*, 16-6-1951

155. L&M Dept. The Administrative Report of Calicut Municipality in 1951-52 (RAC)

156. *Ibid.*, 17-3-1953

157. *Ibid.*, 22-9-1955.

An important resolution that was passed was the one which demanded the formation of a linguistic state. It opposed the move for the formation of a Kerala State after alienating Malayalam Speaking areas.<sup>158</sup> The municipality had memorised the government about the financial needs of the municipality for the road construction and drainage system. The Tellicherry municipality under the Chairmanship of A.V. Kunhikrishnan Nair attempted to improve the conditions of the municipality.<sup>159</sup>

The Palghat municipality had shown a surplus budget in the period 1953 as stated below.<sup>160</sup>

Revised budget for the year 1952-53

Total income	Rs. 9,58,830
Expenditure	Rs. 8,02,760
Surplus	Rs. 1,56,070

The municipality had progressed much in the field of education and there had developed around 40 primary school centres and the council itself had run 19 primary schools.<sup>161</sup> The

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158. *Ibid.*, 26-9-1955

159. *Ibid.*, 12-1-1953

160. *Ibid.*

161. *Ibid.*, 12- 9-1953.

construction of Malampuzha dam was undertaken by the municipality

In 1955 the municipal election to the Palghat municipality were conducted and the Congress won the majority of seats i.e. out of 32 seats the Congress secured 17 seats.<sup>162</sup> The seats secured in the election were shown in the following table.<sup>163</sup>

Congress	..	17
Poura munnany	..	6
League	..	3
Independents	..	6
Total	..	32

But in the election to the post of the Chairman M.C. Menon, the candidate of Poura Munnany, was elected as the Chairman of the municipality.<sup>164</sup> This had happened because of the cross voting of two Congress members. Later these two Congress members were suspended from the party. The Poura munnani was constituted by the union of local parties in the area. But in

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162. *Ibid.*, 13-10-1955.

163. *Ibid.*, 13-10-1955.

164. *Ibid.*, 11-11-1955.

the Cannanore municipality none of the municipal parties secured a majority.

Thus, most of the developments of the municipalities after independence were beneficial to the people. The advent of independence and the inauguration of Indian Republic made a radical change in the functioning of the municipality. This was apparent even from the Indian constitution. Article 40 of the constitution which lay down as a directive principle of State Policy makes it clear that 'the state shall take steps to organise village panchayaths and endow them with such powers and authorities as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self government.

The First Five Year Plan made a strong plea for the integration of local government in the state and central government. Significant changes had taken place in local government since 1950 and various committees were appointed to look into the working of the various aspects of the local government institutions. The first such committee known as local finance enquiry committee was set up in 1949 and it submitted Its report in 1951.<sup>165</sup> In its report the

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165. S.C. Roy Choudhari, *op.cit*, p.220

committee drew attention to the financial plight of the local bodies and made suggestion for exploring new sources of revenue to them and pleaded for the granting of independent power of taxation to the local institutions.<sup>166</sup>

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166. *Ibid.*

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CHAPTER 5

# CONCLUSION

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## CHAPTER 5

**CONCLUSION**

The term Local Self Government became part of the political and administrative vocabulary towards the last decades of the Nineteenth century. It meant the variety of services provided or managed on the public behalf by a group of local authorities, some of which were modern and some not so modern.

The foregoing analysis of the development of local self government in Malabar enables us to make some conclusions. These are based on a historical analysis of the data contained in four of the foregoing chapters dealing with Local Self Government. We began by raising questions such as what was the British policy towards the development of local self government and what caused its changes? What was the social base of local bodies, the involvement of the people, the methods and techniques of political mobilisation? How did different political parties participate in the affairs of the different bodies of local self government? When we make an analysis of the development of local self government from the period of 1866 to 1956? i.e. from the period of the introduction of Town Improvement Act 1866 onwards till the formation of the Kerala State in 1956, we can see various stages that the local bodies

had undergone. A striking point is the interference of the government in the administration and the suppression of the growing spirit of Nationalism that found expression in the local bodies.

One of the important changes that had taken place from the period of 1866 onwards was the introduction of democratic decentralisation and the consequent changes in the organisational structure of the local bodies. It is doubtful whether the government intended to democratise, their real motive being economic. In 1865, the need for new taxation led the government to pass an Act giving towns a statutory form and allowing them to allocate 25% of the municipal expenditure. Moreover, the restrictions imposed by the government on the local bodies went against the principles of democracy and self rule. The lack of popular control in the local administration gave rise to agitation which led eventually to the introduction of a bill in the provincial legislature, seeking to provide elective elements in its administrative body. The object of ensuring the participation of common people was not realised because of the introduction of the nomination system.

The growth of local self government from the period of 1850 onwards has been described as a voluntary association, as an

emphasis on administrative efficiency, as a phase of political development and as a period of democratisation. An important step was taken by the 1870 Resolution with decentralisation of finance from centre to province. This emphasised the desirability of associating Indians with the administration. It transformed the control of certain departments to the provincial governments which included education, medical services, roads, etc. But the structure of local governments in almost the whole period under discussion remained the same with a presiding officer and council members. Though commissioners by the Act of 1865 were appointed from the inhabitants of the town with the power of taxation, they were required to act only with the approval of the Governor in the province. A serious defect of the Act of 1865 as later events were to show was that there was little accountability in the power of the commissioner to spend large sums of money. Not even Ripen's Policy of Local Self Government on the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Decentralisation ever treated local bodies as being exclusive of the machinery of government. The over burden of taxation fell upon the local inhabitants. For example the Cannanore municipality could not claim any compensation when its land was given to the cantonment authority. The government was very keen to keep away the cantonment area out of any political influence.

Extreme disfavour and financial pressure compelled the British Indian Government to introduce the 1871 Act with financial decentralisation. But still the government tried to impose dominance through the Act of 1871 by ensuring the presence of a European Officer as working member and by the appointment of government officers to inspect and superintend the working of the Act.

The introduction of popular election was a noteworthy attempt for the progress of local self government. But the main objection raised was whether the inhabitants would be public spirited and whether they would be demanding reduction of taxes. Actually the questions should have been about decentralisation and devolution.

The different sources of income of the local bodies were utilised for public works of various kinds, educational activities, sanitary and medical purposes providing lighting to market places and some other purposes like paying debt, interest etc.

The qualification required for the voters revealed the fact that local bodies were not representative of the masses, because it represented only the wealthy and the educated. Exclusion of women from voting power was a major drawback in the voting system in

the earlier period. The electorate introduced through 1865 Act was a restricted one. The election of one half of the councillors by tax payers in 1882 was a further improvement of Local Self Government. The election of the president by councillors was also noteworthy.

The origin of District Board may be traced to the consultative committee which assisted District officer in the management of funds to local school and dispensaries. The District Board in Malabar managed local affairs outside the area of the 5 municipalities. The various Governmental measures for development of local self government meant increasing involvement of government in Indian Society. The introduction of various Act was done by the Government at different stages with a view to better administration and to get the support of native people. This was done under the pretext of political and popular education, which was not fulfilled through various Acts. The elective principle remained at a rudimentary stage. The municipal electorate was minute, often comprising of less than 2% of the urban population. The local administration which was dominated by British Indian government was mainly constituted for the promotion of British Colonial interests. However it provided for the co-option of some Indians. This kept nationalism away from the local bodies at least in the earlier stage.

Lord Ripon's Resolution of 1882 marked the second step in the development of Local Self Government. The Resolution promised elected majority and an elected Chairman. This marked a change in the basic approach to local self government. But the scheme of Lord Ripon could not progress much because it reserved large discretionary powers to the government. However Lord Ripon regarded the reform of local self government as the greatest achievement of his viceroyalty.

Even before the Resolution of Lord Ripon there were large government schools at Tellicherry, Calicut and Palghat, where learning was progressive. It was pointed out that the majority of population were Brahmins and other high castes. The lower caste formed the minority group and they remained educationally backward. But educational institutions under local boards had imparted education to all sections of the society. The local bodies by and large remained secular institutions.

The preference of non-official Chairman to an official one in the Resolution was a remarkable step in the progress of local self Government. However the Resolution of 1884 was subjected to severe criticism, because there was no increase in the elected member in the municipality. Increasing control of the Collector and

officials created obstacle in the smooth working of the local bodies. The local bodies suffered neglect at the stage of implementation. The British Indian Government did not carry out the policy laid down in the Resolution of Lord Ripon and no real progress was made in the Local Self Government. By and large reforms were imposed from the top like almost everything else, that was done under the British rule. Local Self Government suffered from the absence of local support. The presidency towns of Madras did not undergo any radical change as a result of Lord Ripon's reforms.

However, British policy changed primarily due to the emergence of mass national movement. Montague's 20th August 1917 House of Commons declaration was that the British Policy in India would hence forth be 'the gradual development of self governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British empire.' Under the scheme of dyarchy Local Self Government belonged to the transferred subjects. Nothing substantial could be done, due to lack of funds. The Indian Minister in charge of Local Self Government was always depended on executive councillors who were in charge of finance. From 1925 onwards the District Board president was elected by members of the District Board, but such

elected presidents mainly belonged to influential and rich families. Another drawback of the constitution of district board was the system of nomination of District Board members by the District Board President. This led to favouritism and nepotism. Another inhibiting factor was the limited nature of the resources of the District Board, which determined the range and scale of District Board services. Resources of towns were inadequate to maintain even elementary services.

Presentation of mangalapathra and passing of Resolution were the methods applied by local bodies for raising their demands and protests. The growth of schools in Malabar District reflected the political and financial pressures exercised through the municipal and District Board budget. Provincial grants were allotted for educational progress, sanitary facilities, improvement of roads, development of public works etc. The imposition of tax upon people was a major source of income to the local boards. The provisions of the Government of India Act, 1919 authorised that every local Government should obey the orders of the Governor General in the council and should keep him constantly and diligently informed of the proceedings of all matters of the local government.<sup>1</sup> The

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1. Government of India Act of 1919, Part V, (RAC)

authority of local government was superseded by the presence in its province of the governor general.<sup>2</sup> From the above statement it becomes clear that the local bodies were still very much under the government control, even though popular participation in a limited way was ensured. No attempt was made by the government to solve the financial difficulties of the local boards and it always insisted on a reduction of expenditure.

The entry of political parties and their assumptions of the administration of local bodies reflected the growing spirit of nationalism. Political control of a Municipal body has its own reward in the struggle for power elsewhere, for such control has great prestige and propaganda value attached to it in the wider context of national politics. Popular election to local bodies could be beneficial in more ways than one, viz. to arouse electoral interest and to crystallise vital issues for popular judgement. The party system in local government could also be fruitful because it served to arouse the vital issues for popular judgement and democracy at the national level.

By the 1920's the Indian National Congress became a mass movement and the District Board and Municipal Councils began to

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2. *Ibid.*

be occupied by members of the Congress party. Often in the public meetings held under the auspices of local Board units, the Board President and Municipal Chairman criticised anti-National activities of the Government and argued for gaining benefits to the local people through the administration of local boards. Not much involvement of local bodies had taken place during the I World War period, because of the split in the congress party.

The local bodies had mellowed the severity of caste dominance by nominating members of the minority and lower caste community as per the amendment Local Boards Act of 1930. The promotion of Harijan Welfare was undertaken. The temple entry bill and the removal of untouchability bills were greeted cheerfully by the local boards. However caste feelings persisted and found expression in various ways. The withdrawal of high caste students from the school which admitted a lower caste student in Chirakkal Taluk Board school is a case point.

The rise of national consciousness also resulted in the promotion of the mother tongue. The introduction of Malayalam Language for official purposes of the Municipalities was a notable venture which proved a scintilla for the growth of nationalism. The introduction of spinning by charka in the schools was

noteworthy which helped the promotion of patriotic feelings. The introduction of Kalari in the educational institutions promoted not only a martial spirit but also a feeling of national consciousness among the students.

Strong protest was shown by the local bodies against the appointment of the Simon Commission. The boycott of Simon Commission was marked by the observation of hartal and organisation of processions. This was another instance of replication of national politics in local bodies but it had its tragic consequences. Teachers of District Board Schools, who participated in the boycott were suspended by the District Board President who was a nominee of the government. In Calicut, the Municipal Chairman ordered that the Municipal office and schools be closed for a day. The activities of Swarajist Party through their critical evaluation of the local bodies strengthened the working of local bodies.

The importance of Civil Disobedience Movement in spreading the anti-imperialist consciousness was remarkable. It was during the Civil Disobedience period, that many people especially women internalised an anti imperialist consciousness. The local bodies also protested against arbitrary arrests and police repression.

Provincial autonomy was introduced through the 1935 Act. In Madras a provincial Congress ministry was formed under C. Rajagopalachari. Accordingly elections to the Municipality and the District Board were held in Malabar district also. The leadership of Congress in the administration of local self government was noteworthy for the increasing fervour of nationalism. Especially, the period of Kelappan as President of District Board was very popular due to several steps undertaken by him. For example, Hindi and spinning were introduced in the Board Schools; Dalit students were exempted from entrance fee and special fee. The District Board requested the government to cancel the registration of those hotels which did not allow entry to lower castes. The introduction of prohibition was also demanded. The rising tide of nationalism is reflected in the protest of the Calicut Municipality against the repressive policy of the Diwan towards popular demand for responsible government in Travancore.

Meanwhile the abolition of Taluk Board and devolution of its functions on the District Board had increased the wide powers and responsibility of the District Board. But the resignation of Congress Ministry in 1939 was followed by a period of hardship for local bodies. Unhealthy situations developed in the Local Self

Government during the Governor's rule in the Madras Presidency. Meanwhile the period 1935 and 1940 witnessed efforts to propagate the ideology of socialism. The organisation of different sections like workers, peasants, teachers and the unemployed youth were integrated in the struggle against British imperialism during this period. That had broad based the national movement in Malabar.

But the ministry formed under Prakasam as part of the Interim Government in 1946 did not contribute much to the growth of local bodies. After 1940 the government was very particular in preventing the local bodies from involvement in nationalist agitation. This attitude was prominent at the time of the Quit India Movement.

The attempt by the municipalities to introduce industries and handicrafts to meet the needs of the increasing population was noteworthy. The gaining of independence was beneficial for the growth of Local Self Government in Malabar. A proposal for a municipal drainage system and water supply in the Calicut Municipality had to wait until and after independence. The increasing number of local board councils widened the work undertaken by the local government. The hue and cry for the formation of a linguistic state was raised. An opposition for the move to form a Kerala State after alienating Malayalam speaking

areas was also raised by the local bodies. Great enthusiasm was shown by Municipal Council members and District Board members for the formation of Kerala State. At the same time the integration of services of Travancore and Cochin State were issued with the approval of Government of India.<sup>3</sup> There developed some difference of opinion and dispute in relation to the integration of the two states. One decision was that when the integration was effected the superfluous personnel had to be treated as supernumeraries.<sup>4</sup> One argument was that this arrangement resulted in further additional expenditure to the public exchequer.<sup>5</sup> The re-integration of services of the erstwhile Travancore and Cochin states were issued with the approval of Government of India. A change in the structure of administration had taken place due to the integration of the two states.<sup>6</sup> A change in the number of post and administration would be taking place after the integration or

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3. S.C. File No. 15829/52 dated 15-11-1952, S.C.Files (DAT).

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. This could be compared to Rajmundry District of Andra Pradesh, when the disxtrict administration was transferred to Kakkinada the seaport and banking centre of the District. See John G. Leonard, "Urban Govt. under the Raj--A case studyof Municipal administration in nineteenth century South India" MAS Vol. 7, No.2, 1973, p.231.

shifting of administration.<sup>7</sup> Likewise with regard to the integration of Government services in the Travancore-Cochin states, the state government issued an order based on recommending two independent committees, after search and scrutiny at the hands of two experienced officers of Madras Government appointed for specific purpose.<sup>8</sup> In Malabar, after independence, ideological and political rivalry was sharply expressed. The election to the District Board in 1954 resulted in the election for the first time of a Communist member as President of the District Board. This was a prelude to the formation of a Communist Ministry after the formation of the Kerala State.

The Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had announced in Parliament the appointment of a Commission for the reorganisation of the State in December 1953. When the State Re-organisation Commission arrived at Calicut, the memorandum of Aikya Kerala Committee was submitted in June 1954. When the State Re-organisation bill was introduced in 1956, both Malabar

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7. After shifting the district administration of Rajmundry, it retained the district court, the government high school and few governmental Engineering offices, See John Leonard, *op. cit.*

8. G.P.S. 5, 18375/49/C S dated 27-9-1950 in File No.15829/52 dated 17-11-1952 (DAT)

District and Kasargod Taluk of Southern Canara District was joined with Travancore-Cochin State.<sup>9</sup> The integration of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore had been demanded by the District Board and the various municipalities, from the 1930's onwards. With the formation of Kerala State, the Madras Legislative Assembly was dissolved in October 1956 and with it the Malabar District Board Administration came to an end.

Although the policy of local self government satisfied neither official aims nor nationalist aspirations, its importance for local politics and administration is now undergoing a major re-assessment. One may consider the extent to which the popular element in the local self government was checked by the British Indian Government. The analysis does not purport to lessen the values of democracy but serve to discard unrealistic expectation from democracy. So long as it is acknowledged that local government exists to serve the people, its management structure is only a means and not an end in itself. This objective can be achieved only by involving the people in the process of decision making through their representatives who are ultimately accountable for the success or failure of democratic local governments. But the

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9. State Re-organisation Bill 1956 (CS File No. 21241 Bundle No. 760), DAT.

structure of local government represented by the Municipalities and District Board in the Malabar District during the British period were not adequate to fulfil the objectives. This was because then government had a vital stake in their administration and it could hardly afford to entrust the executive authority even to a partially elected council. With the inauguration of constitutional government after independence this atmosphere had changed. But it would not be proper to decry the present system outright. Before making any alternative arrangement, it is desirable to examine the existing arrangement as to whether it developed into a form that may provide effective political direction. Local Boards became subordinate to the state government as per the constitution of India. So they did not get full autonomy especially in financial matters. The system of local self government introduced in the presidency towns was modelled by and large on the British pattern and the system catered more for administrative convenience of the alien rulers than for the local needs and peculiarities. This feeling itself may suggest the need for a structural change in the system.

The above idea was clearly expressed in the words of P.P. Ummer Koya,<sup>10</sup> the veteran freedom fighter and the only remaining

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10. Interview with P.P. Ummer Koya at his residence, Calicut on 24-1-1999.

District Board member alive, that "the British Indian Government introduced local self government in India on the British model, i.e. a council for district. The jurisdiction of the council was very limited. The education, health and construction of roads in the rural areas were some of the activities of the local boards. Nationalist activities were not allowed in the local boards. Progressive change took place in the activities of local bodies after independence and framing of the constitution of India."

Another view point was expressed by K.Madhavan,<sup>11</sup> veteran freedom fighter of Malabar, "the local bodies in Malabar worked only for name sake, they did not have any real power. The major portion of the local bodies were dominated by feudal lords and influential class. The local board members were not allowed to favour nationalist movements. District Board Administration under Kelappan as President was a model one."

A nationalist view point was expressed by M. Kamalam,<sup>12</sup> the former Municipal Council Member, freedom fighter and Ex-Minister of Kerala. She said that "most of the local bodies were dominated

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11. Interview with K. Madhavan at Govt. Arts and Science College, Calicut on 22-3-1999

12. Interview with M. Kamalam at her residence, Calicut on 14-10-1999.

by Congressmen, who had engaged in nationalist activities inspite of threat and suppression of the British Government. Majority of the officials in the local bodies were oppressive in nature and though Indians resembled the Britishers in character and nature.” From that expression it was very clear that anti-nationalist elements had also shrouded in the British Indian period. In the words of Parukutty Amma,<sup>13</sup> veteran social worker, retired teacher and former librarian of Mathrubhumi, “in the beginning though there was no nationalist tendency among the local bodies, but later nationalist attitude was expressed by the local bodies. Well known Congress and nationalist leaders like K.Kelappan, K. Madhava Menon, U. Gopala Menon, K.V. Surya Narayana Aiyer, C.V. Narayana Menon, etc., were in charge of the local bodies. The population in the local area was not drifting and the people felt a homely attitude towards the local bodies.”

Several meaningful attempts were made by the District Board and Municipalities in Malabar for the development of their regional localities. The local bodies kindled the spirit of Nationalism and patriotism from local regional and national level. Through the passing of resolutions and submission of mangalapathra, the local

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13. An interview with Parukutty Amma at her residence, Calicut on 15-10-1999.

bodies had at most tried to express their sorrows and suffering faced by them due to foreign domination. But even though the ideological difference among Congress men and growth of socialist ideas had weakened the unanimous strength of nationalist leaders, that weakness was overcome by the contribution of various political organisations for the liberation of the nation from foreign yoke. Colonialism was a major hindrance for the local bodies on their path towards nationalism.

Democracy in India has been a plant of tender growth. In the constitutional and political development of the country representative elements were gradually introduced and over a period of time the people learnt to work in the democratic institutions. In the case of Malabar, the growing strength of population and political parties have been the bane of local government as in other parts of the state. The principle of Laissez-faire had its operation in the west, the social and economic components of a democratic society which pressed for political and administrative reforms. In India the situation was different, caused by the presence of foreign imperial power. But Indian society consisting as it did and still does of mutually exclusive groups was no less responsible. It made the continuance of bureaucratic

despotism an essential condition for its very existence. A democratic change in the informal character of social relationship and the people oriented basis could alone bring about a corresponding change in the local administration. This condition is necessary for making government and society mutually inclusive. This is a goal which remained yet to be attained, though of course the local government had played a prominent role in the nationalist struggle.

1974

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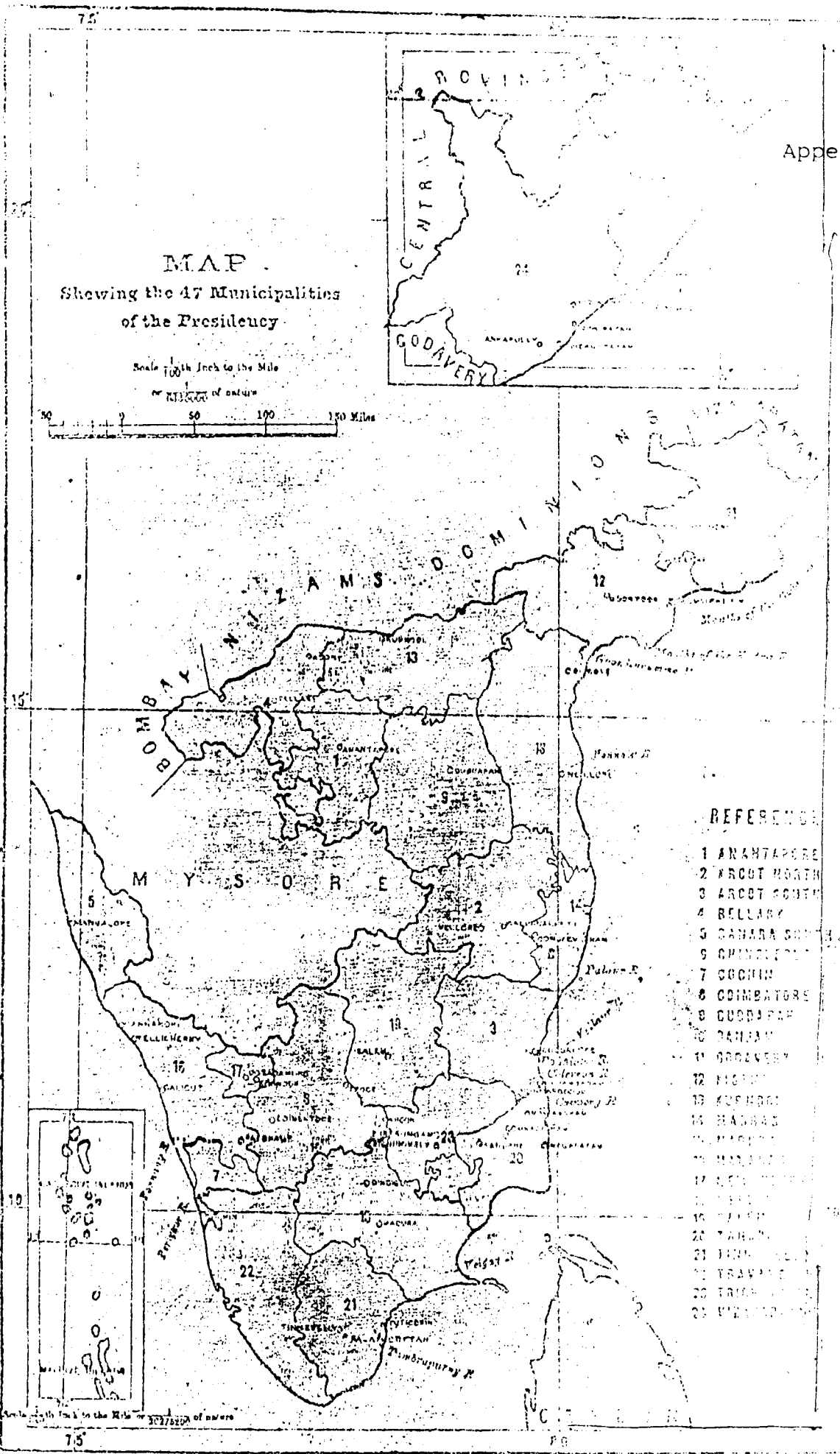
# GLOSSARY

## GLOSSARY

Amsom	:	A land revenue division in Malabar. It is comprised one or more desoms
Basha poshini	:	An organisation for language growth
Charka	:	Wooden machine operated by hand for making thread
Chira	:	Large pond
Chalia	:	A caste group whose traditional occupation is weaving
Farka	:	Portion of a revenue circle
Jatha	:	A procession
Khadi	:	Hand woven cloth
Kalari	:	Martial art of Kerala which involves physical exercise
Mappila	:	A Muslim of Malabar
Menon	:	A sub-caste of Nair
Mangala pathra	:	Traditionally presented on auspicious occasions
Maidan	:	A large level ground
Mukkuva	:	Fisherman community
Nambiar	:	A sub-caste of Nair
Namboodiri	:	The Malayalee Brahmin
Peruvannan	:	A caste group now included in Scheduled Caste category
Pulaya	:	Traditionally agricultural labourers. Now included in Scheduled Caste category
Samanthas	:	A limitative neighbouring group
Satyagraha	:	Literally the quest for truth. A method of showing protest
Thiyya	:	A caste group belonging to the backward category, known in Palghat as Ezhavas
Taluk	:	A revenue sub-division of a district
Veluthedan	:	Washerman community

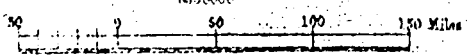
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# APPENDICES



**MAP**  
 Showing the 47 Municipalities  
 of the Presidency

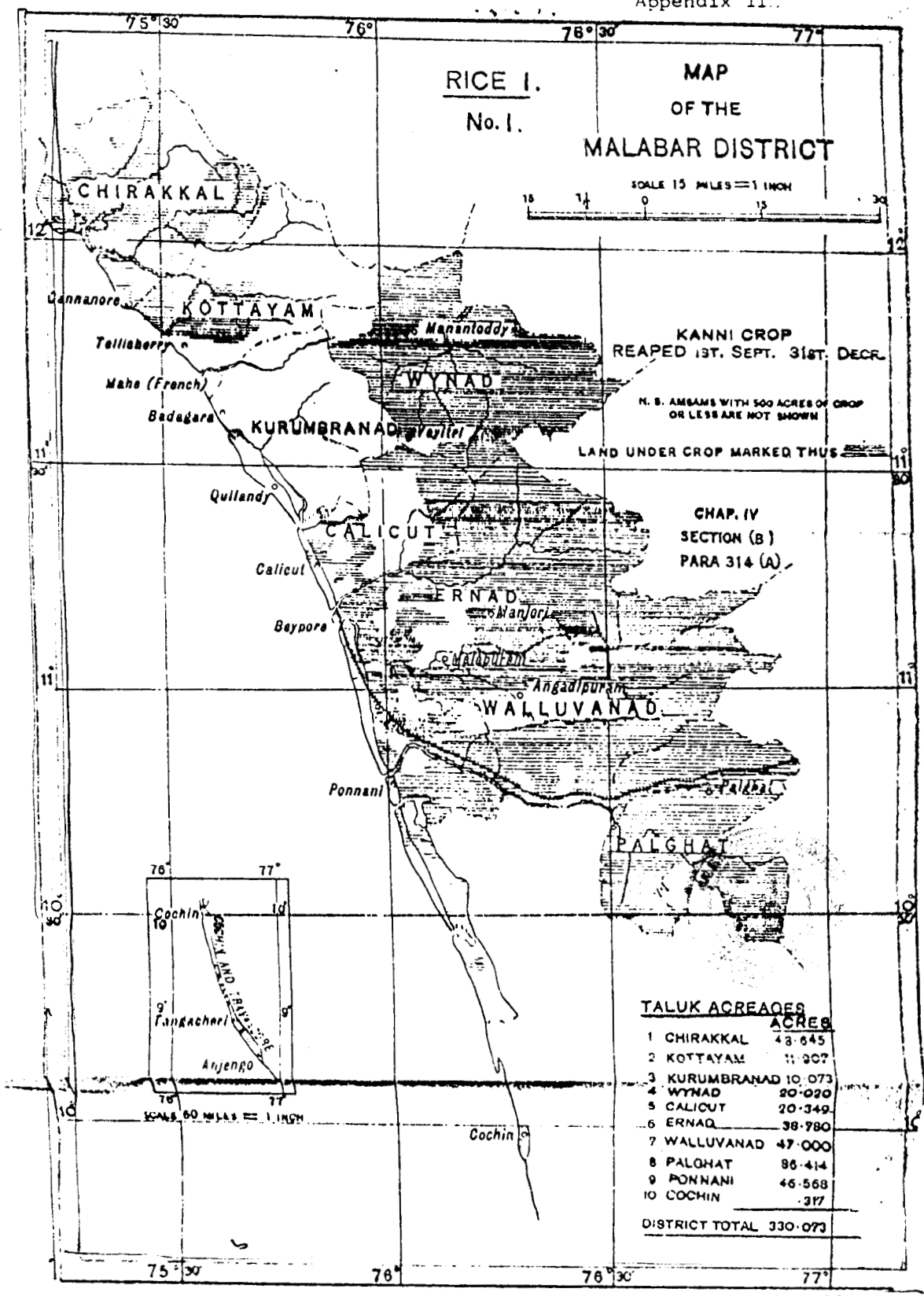
Scale 100th Inch to the Mile  
 or 10000 of miles



**REFERENCE**

- 1 ANANTAPORE
- 2 ARCOOT NORTH
- 3 ARCOOT SOUTH
- 4 BELLARY
- 5 CANARA SOUTH
- 6 CHINLEDE
- 7 COCHIN
- 8 COIMBATORE
- 9 CUDDAPUR
- 10 DANAY
- 11 GOVERNOR
- 12 HOSUR
- 13 KUPPADI
- 14 MADRAS
- 15 MADRAS
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Scale 100th Inch to the Mile or 10000 of miles



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