

K. G. KRISHNA MURTHY
G. LAKSHMANA RAO

**POLITICAL
PREFERENCES**

IN

KERALA

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Political Preferences in Kerala relates to the voting behaviour of Legislative Assembly Constituencies in Kerala (over the past four elections) on the basis of some of their aggregate socio-economic and occupational characteristics. The study has tried to measure the impact of determinants such as labourer-cultivator ratio, size of town and political competitiveness. This is the first empirical work of its kind on elections in any part of the country, and the first major attempt to analyse the patterns and shifts in voting preferences.

The results of the Municipal Elections held in Kerala in April, 1968 (where the Congress Party has obtained vast majority in the Municipalities over the combined opposition) support the main contention advanced in this book by the authors from their analysis that Congress Party has not lost its support structure. This book would be of immense value to social scientists in India and abroad, both from the methodological and substantive aspects. This study will also stimulate thinking and research on political sociology, a field in India which has so far not been fully explored.

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An Electoral Analysis of the Kerala General Elections

1957, 1960, 1965 & 1967

K. G. KRISHNA MURTHY
G. LAKSHMANA RAO



RĀDHĀ KRISHNA

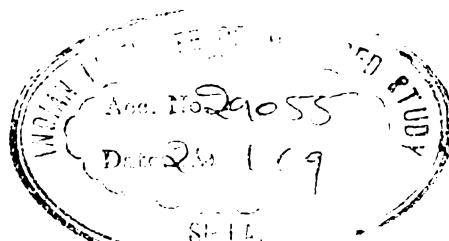
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INTRODUCTION

The present study is an electoral analysis of the Kerala General Elections of 1957, 1960, 1965, and 1967. In addition to an analysis of these four general elections on the set guide lines the book also gives in brief the political developments in the State from 1948 to 1956 and the socio-economic and occupational background of the peoples in the State and various regions of the State. Politically Kerala is the most troubled State in the Indian Union and no single political party has ever been able to form a stable government in the State. Further, political preferences seem to be ever changing in the State. Many politicians, statesmen and journalists have advanced many reasons for such political developments in the State but no systematic research has yet been made to analyse the voting trends. The present work is the first attempt of its sort in the field and it tries to correlate the voting preferences of the people with their socio-economic, demographic and occupational background. The cultivator-labourer ratio, size of the town, and political competitiveness are the three variables which are chosen to test the levels of voter turn-out and trends of voting preferences.

The book, in short, could be divided into two parts. The first two chapters deal with the socio-economic, religious, occupational, demographic and political background of the State and various regions of the State. The rest of the chapters deal with the electoral analysis. Chapter III explains the limitations of the study, the methods and techniques as to how we have collected, processed and analysed the data. Chapter IV deals with the growth of electors and the votes turned out at these four general elections. Chapter V assesses the impact of the socio-economic, demographic and political variables on the voter turn-out patterns. Chapters VI and VII analyse the impact of the selected independent variables on the fortunes of the Indian National Congress and the Communist Party of India respectively while Chapter VIII deals with the other minor parties. And Chapter IX summarizes the findings and conclusions of the study.

The results of the study are highly encouraging and the independent variables we have used appear to have very good impact on the voter turn-out trends and the political preferences of the people. In short, political preferences of the people in Kerala seem to be just a reflection of the intensity of their socio-economic, demographic, religious and occupational problems rather than political. The tug of war appears to be mainly between the cultivators, however poor they may be, and the landless agricultural labourers. While the highly educated, urban elite, skilled and industrial workers, persons engaged in trade and commerce and cultivators stand on one side, the mediocre educated middle class elite, population of the small and middle size towns, unskilled labourers, workers at household industry and agricultural labourers stand on the other side. While the former categories generally support rightist democratic parties the latter categories support ultra-leftist parties. However, the political preferences are not strongly committed and the fortunes of various political parties are highly fluctuating. In general, in terms of votes, the Congress is gaining strength in all the types of areas while the Communists have been steadily losing their support structure.

In the Indian election system, success in terms of votes need not correlate with success in terms of seats. Depending upon the pattern of election adjustments and alliances with other parties even a party which is getting minority votes may get a majority in the legislature while a party which secures majority votes may turn out to be a minority party in the legislature. Hence, our only contention is that if a majority vote is a sign of popularity the Congress is more popular than the rest of the parties in Kerala and if a growth of the share of a party vote is an indicator of the growth of popularity of a party, Congress Party's popularity is growing at the cost of other parties in Kerala.

We are conscious of many limitations with which we have worked on the study. For example, the application of the model on political competitiveness which we have suggested in the Chapter on the Method would have been more revealing. But such an attempt is avoided for lack of time and resources. The whole work is the fruit of the untiring efforts of the authors during their spare time over a period of two years. We earnestly hope

that the study would inspire and help further research in studying the State politics.

We also like to make use of this opportunity to express our acknowledgements for all those who have helped us in completing the Project. We are greatly indebted to Dr. Robert Holmes without whose interest, encouragement and help the publication of this manuscript would have been difficult. Particularly Mr. P. Chandrasekhara Rao and Mr. M. Chandrasekharan of the Indian Society of International Law have helped us in finally editing the work, hence our thanks to them. Mr. Prakash Narayan of the Election Commission has made our job much easier in collecting the electoral data and Shri Ashok Mitra, Registrar-General of India has kindly consented to allow us to make use of the manuscripts of the Census volumes ; our grateful thanks to them. Mr. Francis S. Bourne and Mr. Gopal Krishna have greatly helped us in processing the data and bringing out the book ; hence our acknowledgements to both of them. Finally, Mrs. Viran Chopra has done a very excellent job in nicely typing the final version of the book ; we do thank her, also.

K.G. Krishna Murthy
G. Lakshmana Rao

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Socio-Economic & Political Background of Kerala

KERALA is a narrow strip of land, running about 360 miles in length, along the Western Coast of India, into which 16,903,715 people are very densely jammed. Sandwiched between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea and not exceeding 75 miles in breadth, this land of scenic beauty is bounded by Mysore State on the north and Madras State on the east and south-east.

History

The history of any people or any nation is an important factor, which shapes its political and social behaviour. Internal squabbles and incessant warfare among the chieftains until the Britishers came were very much pronounced in the history of the Malayalam-speaking people.

According to a popular legend the land crust that forms the present Kerala State, had risen from the depths of the Arabian sea when Parasurama, the Brahman Avatar of Vishnu, performed a severe penance to atone for his sin having killed all the Kshatriyas. Whatever might be the truth of this legend, that the area now comprising Kerala had been originally formed by the recession of the sea is, now, an accepted geological fact.

It was in the first half of the 9th century that the Keralites felt for the first time a sense of unity and started a new era called 'Kollavarsham', which began from August, 825 A.D. However, the facade of this unity soon collapsed. The same old rivalries and skirmishes among the chieftains continued. Unable to accept any local overlordship, they invited a foreign nobleman to be the head of a loose political Confederation. The Perumals of Chera dynasty, thus, came into power.

The end of the Chera dynasty again was another turning point. All the Malayalee chieftains again fell apart into three

main power clusters corresponding to the regions of Travancore, Cochin and Malabar.

In the meantime, while these rivalries continued to exist, the Westerners appeared on the Konkan Coast. The dynasties of Travancore and Cochin, from time to time, as per exigencies, were in active friendship with the Portuguese and the Dutch. The rise of the power of the British East India Company and its active involvement in the Carnatic and Mysore areas brought the two States of Travancore and Cochin nearer to the British. The treaties of subsidiary alliances which they concluded with the British brought them under the paramountcy of the British and they remained so until the British left the Indian sub-continent.

The Zamorin of Calicut was placed in a different situation. He was in active league with the Arabs and had a massive naval force. He was also successful in temporarily keeping the Portuguese off the Kerala Coast. The Vijaynagar rulers could only temporarily bring him under their subjugation. Then a series of struggles followed with the Western Powers taking sides as best suited to their convenience and interests. The Sultans of Mysore temporarily occupied the whole area and, subsequently, Tippu ceded the region of Malabar to the British in 1792. Thereupon began the history of British power in Malayalam-speaking areas, frequently highlighted by the heroic resistance of the people to the foreigner.

In 1948, with the merger of Cochin with Travancore, a single Travancore-Cochin State was formed. The integration of Malabar District of the erstwhile Madras Province and Kasargode Taluk of the erstwhile Mysore Princely State with Travancore-Cochin under the States Reorganization Act, 1956, which re-drew the political map of India, re-organising on the basis of language, the then-existing States, brought all the Malayalam-speaking peoples together into a single State, called Kerala.

History has left an indelible mark on the various regions of Kerala in the political, sociological, religious and economic fields.

Size

Lying in the tropical region between $8^{\circ}15'$ and $12^{\circ}45'$ northern latitude and $74^{\circ}50'$ and $77^{\circ}30'$ eastern longitude and

sliced out from the rest of the Indian sub-continent by a wall-like structure of the Western Ghats, Kerala, in all, has just an area of 14,992 sq. miles. It occupies only about 1.2 per cent of the Indian territory, and is one of the smallest States in the Indian Union. It is, however, interesting to note that it is more populous and also wider in area than many other sovereign States of which one often hears, *e.g.*, Albania, Belgium, Netherlands, Lebanon, Cyprus, Jamaica and Israel. Switzerland is bigger in area than Kerala only by 950 sq. miles but it has less than one-third of Kerala's population.

Topography

Kerala's topography, mainly dominated by the Western Ghats, teems with dense forests, innumerable rivers, lagoons, backwaters and high-yielding plantations. Due to the proximity of the sea and the wall-like structure of the Western Ghats, it experiences a very heavy monsoon rainfall. The State falls into three natural sub-divisions on the basis of physical features :

1. The Low-land stretching along the sea-shore which is mostly covered by coconut plantations and scattered paddy lands ;
2. The Mid-land lying between the Western Ghats and the sea-shore covered by lands where paddy is cultivated and tapioca, spices, cashewnuts, tea, etc. are grown ; and
3. The Up-land which is largely a moutainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3000 ft. to 8000 ft.

Climate

The diversity of the physical features causes also a corresponding diversity in climate. The pinching cold of the mountain top and the bracing cold of the elevated higher stretches of the Mid-land present a vivid contrast to the hot and humid climate in the plains along the sea-coast. However, the variation in temperature is very small (only about 10° F, *i.e.*, 80°F to 90°F). Seasonal, incessant and heavy monsoon rains and dry summer are other contributing features. It is but natural that such a big diversity in topography and climate has its own impact on the various aspects of life in Kerala.

Problems

The real problems confronting Kerala do not flow from its size or its topographical and geological layout. They are different and not susceptible to an easy solution. The story of Kerala is one of marked inconsistencies: the highest density of population per square mile (Kerala 1127, India 358) and the lowest per capita land area, the highest rate of literacy in the country offset by the lowest employment potential, the highest yielding agricultural sector (value per acre yield in Kerala Rs. 320, India Rs. 125) but the lowest per capita food production, the highest percentage of working population in the secondary and tertiary sectors (*i.e.*, manufacturing and service sectors) accompanied by the lowest industrial productivity and industrial wages, the biggest foreign exchange earning potential but a very low per capita income, a very high birth rate against the lowest death rate, the smallest average land holdings (Kerala 1.5 acres, India 7.5 acres) and the highest proportion of landless agricultural labourers in the agricultural population. Kerala has almost one agricultural labourer for each cultivator while the all-India figure is one agricultural labourer for every three cultivators. To add to all these problems, Kerala has three equally powerful, well organised and disciplined if not militant religious organizations which exercise a decisive influence on social and political matters, contributing in a way to the political perplexity in the State.

Natural Resources

Kerala, however, does not present as gloomy a picture as would appear from the above. The State abounds in natural resources. The rivers, backwaters, sea-board and the forests etc. are the treasure-house of its natural wealth. In making the best use of them Keralites are next to none. Many a material that go waste in other corners of the country are used as raw materials for several household and small-scale industries in Kerala.

Rivers and Backwaters

There are, in Kerala, as many as 44 rivers which apart from providing great potential for the generation of cheap hydro-electric power, also constitute important means of transport for

goods and people, affording indirectly, thereby, employment potential for people engaged in towing and rowing the boats. Further, the waters provide rutting facilities for the coir industry, and are also a permanent source of fish. The rivers and backwaters facilitate the cheap transport of raw materials and finished products in the agricultural and industrial sectors. As the backwaters are connected with the sea during high-tide, they possess exhaustive deposits of lime-shell which is essential for the cement industry in the State.

Sea-Board

With a coastline of about 360 miles and innumerable backwaters connected with it during hightide, many economic benefits accrue from the exploitation of the wealth of these waters. Although Kerala has only a short coastline as compared to that of India as a whole (only 10 percent of India), its average annual fish-catch amounts to 3.10 lakh tons which comes to about 30 per cent of the annual total fish-catch in India. Kerala stands first in the fish-catch and second in the consumption of fish in India (per capita consumption of fish in Kerala 33 lbs., India 6.10 lbs.). Extraction of shark liver oil, turtle oil and body oil of leather jacket, collection of tripang sea-worm, weeds of nutritional value, extractions of Iodine from sargossa sea weed and oyster culture are all dependent upon the sea-waters. In other words, rich waters, woods and plantations comprise the real sources of livelihood in Kerala.

Forests

The State is also rich in forests and about 30 per cent of its area (India 17.2) is covered by forests. In this respect Kerala ranks second amongst the States in India, only Assam having a larger percentage of forest area. The forests yield a high income, averaging an annual income of Rs. 18 per acre, while the corresponding all-India figure is only Rs. 5.6. The flora and fauna and the game sanctuaries are an attraction for tourists. A flourishing timber industry, and other smaller industries connected with sandal wood, rattan, honey, rubber, rose wood and tusks of dead elephants depend upon the existence of these

forests. But for the existence of these rich forests the unemployment problem would have been far worse than it is today.

Manpower

Apart from all the above items, Kerala has got one other inexhaustible resource which is presently of too large a proportion for the Government to profitably exploit. It is its huge mass of literate and illiterate employable population, prepared to work anywhere and in any capacity. It is only with this population that the small-scale and less profitable unmechanized textile, coir and cashewnut industries are thriving. Simple, hard-working, hopeful and optimistic as these people are, any ray of hope and opportunity provided to them often pays very rich dividends. On the other hand, any dissatisfaction caused among these people can often be channelled and exploited to a good extent by interested groups.

But the paradox is that nature's beauty and bounty, and the enthusiasm and aptitude of the people of Kerala exist side by side with poverty and un-and under-employment. The consequences of such a situation will be frustrating and ripe-soil for the growth of unrest and agitation. The hopelessness of the situation can be easily grasped if one has a look at the destinies of the people employed in agriculture, and in secondary and tertiary sectors.

Rural-Urban Break-up

The rural-urban break-up and the corresponding distribution of output and employment between primary, secondary and tertiary sectors generally furnish clues as to the stage of development an economy has attained and the pattern of distribution of such wealth. All the developed and developing economies exhibit a tendency towards rising urbanity, profitable and economical usage of physical resources and manpower and a shift from agricultural to industrial output. Strangely enough, in the case of Kerala the trend has been to the contrary.

The growth of urbanity in Kerala compared to India figure is impressive. The Census of 1951 show a 13.5 percent urbanity in Kerala against India figure of 17.38 percent. By 1961 the

percentage of urbanity in Kerala had gone up to 15.03 and the corresponding all-India figure was only 17.84 per cent. So while Kerala showed a net increase of urbanity of 1.55 per cent within a decade, the corresponding all-India figure was up by only 0.46 per cent. However, a correspondingly rapid growth is not found either in industrial output or in industrial wages.

Rural Setting

The rural-urban break-up in Kerala is all the more important because of the peculiar ecological layout of the villages. About 15 per cent of the villages in the State have a population of more than 5,000 persons. The corresponding all-India figure is only 0.38 per cent. The density of population in most of the towns in Kerala is not much higher than that in some villages. In fact, some of the villages have a higher density of population than neighbouring towns. The distribution of homesteads in the villages also is peculiar. Unlike in the rest of India, homesteads in Kerala are not clustered together into compact villages but are scattered all over the fields and plantations like some areas in France and U.S.A. A homestead, surrounded by its own farmland, is an ideal house in Kerala. Intensive cultivation of perennial commercial crops, particularly coconuts, cashewnuts and pepper, is characteristic of such homesteads.

Agrarian and Industrial Sectors

The agricultural sector provides some raw materials for cottage, small-scale and large-scale industries as well. Coconut husks for the coir industry, cashewnuts for the cashewnut industry and raw rubber for the rubber industry are some such materials. Hence the connecting links between the agrarian and industrial sectors in Kerala are very strong and any imbalances suffered by one sector are instantaneously experienced by the other sector.

Sectoral Output and Employment

Kerala also presents a curious picture in the distribution of sectoral output and employment.

TABLE I.1
Sectoral Employment and Labour Productivity in Kerala
(1955-56)

		<i>Working force</i>		<i>Net value added per worker Rs.</i>	
		<i>Kerala</i>	<i>India</i>	<i>Kerala</i>	<i>India</i>
		Lakhs	Per cent	Per cent	
1.	Primary Sector	27.6	54.9	71.8	625
2.	Secondary Sector	9.7 (100%)	19.3	9.4	539
3.	Tertiary Sector	13.0	25.8	18.8	975.4
Total :		50.3	100.0%	100.0%	700.00
					651.00

Source : National Council of Applied Economic Research : Techno-Economic Survey of Kerala.

The proportion of working force engaged in agriculture and allied occupations in the State is, as could be seen from the above chart, only 55 per cent against the all-India figure of 71.8 per cent. Such a low percentage of working force in the primary sector and very large chunks of working force in the secondary and tertiary sectors would indicate a very high level of development in the State, somewhat comparable to that of a country like Japan. But the major share of output, about 49.01 per cent, originates in the primary sector against the corresponding all-India figure of 45.4 per cent. The secondary and tertiary sectors in the State engaging a working force of 45 per cent contribute only 50.9 per cent of the output. This is indeed a very small contribution compared to the all-India figures, according to which the secondary and tertiary sectors which engage a working force of only 28.2 per cent contribute as much as 54.6 per cent. In other words, the agricultural sector in Kerala is highly productive and high-yielding while the industrial and tertiary sectors are less productive and less profitable. Consequently,

the industrial wages in Kerala are very low and, in fact, all the other Indian States except Andhra Pradesh have higher industrial wages than in Kerala.

TABLE I.2
Average Annual Earnings of Factory Employees in
Various States—1956.

Andhra Pradesh	595
Assam	1,526
Bihar	1,236
Bombay	1,415
Madhya Pradesh	982
Madras	950
Orissa	947
Punjab	991
Uttar Pradesh	1,044
West Bengal	1,142
Kerala	736

Source : Statistical Abstract of India (1957-58)

Slacking productivity, crude degree of technology, uneconomical industries and low industrial wages are definitely not good signs of a progressive economy.

TABLE I.3
Percentage of Occupational Distribution in Kerala and
India, as a whole, as of 1961.

	Kerala	India
Total workers	100.00	100.00
Cultivators	20.92	52.80
Agricultural labourers	17.38	16.71
Labourers for every 1000 cultivators	831.00	316.00
Mining, etc.	8.65	2.77
Household industry	8.68	6.37
Mfg. other than household industry	9.40	4.23
Construction	1.26	1.09
Trade and Commerce	5.72	4.06
Transport, Storage and Communications	2.71	1.60
Other services	25.28	10.37

Note : Full Table is given in Chapter II.

Even the occupational distribution of the working force in the State is really disturbing and a cause for anxiety. The working force engaged in Kerala in the agricultural sector is only 38 persons for every 100 workers. In the whole of India the figure is as much as 70 persons for every 100 workers. Particularly in the labourer-cultivator ratio, Kerala differs with the all-India picture. While in the whole of India there are only 316 labourers for every 1000 cultivators, in Kerala there are 831 labourers for every 1000 cultivators. This means that the labour pressure on cultivators in Kerala is almost three times as high as that in India, as a whole. As we have already noted, in all the other occupational classes belonging to the secondary and tertiary sectors, Kerala has a lead on the all-India figures but in the matters of output and incomes it falls behind, quite deplorably. Even in Western countries the growth of urbanity itself, even though it is a balanced one, is discouraged after it reaches a certain level, due to the sociological and political implications involved in any further rise. So, even a low percentage of urbanity, if it is not properly balanced, is likely to cause many sociological and political upheavals.

Religion

In a tradition bound country like India, religion and caste naturally have their fullest impact and in Kerala the diversity of religions is all the more important in the light of the presence of three powerful religions.

If we take up India as a whole, Hinduism is the dominant religion with a percentage of 83.51. Islam comes next to it with a percentage of 10.69. Christianity has only a percentage of 2.44. In the matters of organization and discipline, these three religions are not that much active in India, as a whole, as they are in Kerala.

TABLE I.4
Break-Up of Three Major Religions in the State of Kerala and in India, as a whole.

	<i>Hindus</i>	<i>Christians</i>	<i>Muslims</i>
Kerala	60.83	21.22	17.91
India	83.51	2.44	10.69

As can be observed from the above table, the proportions of the Christian and Muslim religions are significant in Kerala. The Christians come upto 21.22 per cent of the total population and the Muslims 17.91 per cent. Moplas, as the Muslims of Malabar are called, and the Syrian Christian Church, to which most of the Christians of Kerala belong, are very well disciplined and they play an active role in the political matters. They played a leading role in 1959, in bringing the downfall of the Communist Government.

While the all-India percentage of Hindu population is 83.51, it is only 60.83 in Kerala. Further, they are not organised into a single compact unit. According to the 1931 Census, Ezhavas, Thiyas and Harijans, all sub-castes of Hindus, make up more than 60 per cent of the Hindu population. These sub-castes are backward educationally, economically and socially than the rest of the Hindu society. Any promise of the economic betterment of their situation from any quarter is likely to rouse better enthusiasm among them than any feeling of religious affinity. They find cordiality among themselves more than with the superior caste Hindus.

Among the rest of the Hindus the Nairs are the best organized people under the aegis of the Nair Service Society. They have a definite and powerful influence on political matters. On account of the educational institutions they have founded, their influence is creeping into the upper crest of the literate Hindu sections also. In 1959 it was the Nair Service Society leader, Mr. Mannath Padmanabhan, who built up a militant liberation movement and brought down the Communist Government.

So, within their own spheres of influence, the Nair Service Society, the Roman Catholic Church and the Muslim League are very powerful.

Caste

Though the observance of caste system with all its rigour and formalities is prevalent all over India, the very strict enforcement of it is a matter peculiar to Kerala alone. The great Hindu saint Vivekananda had even referred to Kerala as the "mad house of India." Non-caste Hindus, called Avarnas, were not entitled to enter the temples and they were even

prohibited from mixing with the caste Hindus called 'Savarnas'. There were also cases of educated Avarnas being kept out from the Government services on the basis of their caste. Even today, after all the efforts through legislation and reformist movements to prohibit untouchability, to give everyone free access to temples and to remove caste disabilities at all levels, the caste system still remains a burning problem. Particularly, it is so in respect of the deep cleavage between the backward classes represented by Ezhavas, Thiyas and Harijans on the one side and Nairs and Brahmins on the other, a cleavage predominantly due to economic and social reasons.

Cosmopolitanism

Yet another aspect of Kerala's life, also attributable to historical reasons, is that the Malayalees are cosmopolitan in outlook and character. Today, as India's biggest foreign exchange earner, Kerala has the widest contacts with the foreign markets. Even in the long past, since B.C., Kerala had extensive contacts with the rest of the world in the East and in the West, with Egypt, Asia-Minor, the Assyrian and the Babylonian empires at the height of their power. The Greeks, the Romans and the Chinese had trade relations with Kerala long before even the Christian era. During the early centuries of the Christian era, Kerala established trade relations with the Malayan Peninsula, the Philippines, Java and Sumatra. Foreign contacts helped the quick spread of Christianity, Islam, and Zorastrianism to Kerala during the early period of this era.

Press

The press, particularly in a literate community, is a powerful organ in influencing the political behaviour and preferences of the people. Kerala has the largest number of vernacular dailies and weeklies in India. Although Kerala has only a population of 169 lakhs, it has more newspapers than any other highly populous State. These papers tender fearless criticism of governmental and other public activities and amply display news of national and international importance. In editing local news and offering editorial comments on the local issues, the

news magazines are very zealous. They also take an active part in the propaganda, which precedes every election.

Political Developments In Brief Since 1948

Political unrest and governmental instability have been characteristic features of Kerala's history since Indian Independence. The rebelling groups that crop up like mushrooms from within all the major political parties from time to time, parochial attitudes of preferring regional interests to the Parties' interests, the unscrupulous political tactics often resorted to by minor political parties, and personal rivalry amongst leaders even belonging to the same party, appear to be some of the primary ills of this small State. No party and no individual on the political scene in Kerala appears to be free from these prejudices. People also shift their political preferences too often.

In the election held in 1948 for the Legislative Assembly, the Congress Party under the leadership of veteran leader, Pattam Thanan Pillai, won a majority in the house and formed the Government. Pattam Thanan Pillai, thereupon, became the Chief Minister. But within six months the Ministry had to resign as a result of a signature campaign within the Congress Party against the Chief Minister. Subsequently, T.K. Narayana Pillai, who took an active part in the signature campaign against Pattam, was made the Chief Minister. That Ministry also did not last long because of the integration of Travancore and Cochin States into a United State of Travancore-Cochin. C. Kesavan was elected as the new leader and he headed the Government until the next General Election in 1951, which was another turning point in the political history of Kerala. Numerous parties such as INC, PSP, RSP, KSP and TTNC, etc. had set up their candidates in large numbers for the then-existing 108 seats. As the CPI was banned at the time of the election in 1951, it set up its candidates under the garb of independents and organised a united front with the RSP and KSP. In the election, however, no party could get an absolute majority in the House. Congress won 43 seats, PSP 11, RSP 6, Kerala Socialist Party 1, TTNC 8, and Independents 38. Of the 38 Independents, 31 were said to be Communists or Communist supported. Hence it was

the second largest group in the Assembly. Their success was mainly due to the United Front of Leftists. Even though the Congress Party secured the highest number of seats, it did not have an absolute majority in the House. However, the Congress Party formed the Ministry with the support tendered by the TTNC. But within six months the TTNC itself moved a no-confidence motion against the Congress Ministry and the Ministry was voted down.

The General Election took place second time in February 1954. According to fresh delimitation, there were 95 single-member and 11 double-member constituencies.

Once again the KSP, RSP, and CPI formed a United Front of Leftists and entered into an electoral understanding with the PSP. This election also followed the earlier pattern. The Congress won 45, PSP 19, TTNC 12 and the UFL 41 seats. The further break-up of the UFL was: CPI 23, RSP 9, and Independents 9. Of the valid votes polled, the Congress secured about 45.0%, CPI 16.0%, PSP 16%, TTNC 6.0%, RSP 5.5%, and Independents 11.5%.

TABLE I.5
Comparative Position of Political Parties in the Kerala General Elections of 1954 and 1951

Parties	1954 Election				1951 Election			
	Seats		Votes		Seats		Votes	
	Con- tested	Won	%	%	Con- tested	Won	%	%
INC	115	45	38.5	45.0	104	44	40.8	35.4
CPI	35	23	19.7	16.0	WAS BANNED			
PSP or ISP	38	19	16.2	16.0	70	11	10.2	14.6
TTNC	16	12	10.2	6.0	14	8	7.4	6.0
RSP	12	9	7.7	5.5	11	6	5.6	3.5
Independents and Others	44	9	7.7	11.5	242	39	36.0	40.5
Total :	260	117	100.0	100.0	441	108	100.0	100.0

Source : K.P. Bhagat, 1962, *The Kerala Mid-term Election of 1960*, p. 8.

As can be seen from the chart, the overall situation in 1954 was not very much different from that in 1951. The Congress Party

not only continued to be the largest single Party but also increased its vote by 9.6%. The Communist Party continued to be the second largest group but as it did not contest in the 1951 election on its own, its position cannot be compared. Other Parties also improved their position slightly. The Independents were, however, badly mauled. This was due to the fact that the Communists contested the election on their own and had, therefore, to withdraw the support they had given to Independents during the 1951 Elections.

When the Legislative Assembly met, the Congress Party, having no absolute majority, failed to form a Ministry, nor was the Communist Party, the second largest Party in the House, able to form the Ministry. Consequently, the PSP with only 19 seats in the House came forward to form the Ministry with the support of the 45 Congress members. Pattam Thanu Pillai, again, now under the PSP flag, headed the Kerala Government. But within one year the PSP Government was defeated on a no-confidence motion moved by the TTNC, supported also by the INC. PSP Government went down and Congress Government came up with the support of the Travancore Tamilnad Congress. The Congress Party induced two PSP members and an Independent to join it in the Legislature to secure a majority in the House. But scramble for political power continued. A rebel group that sprang from within the Congress Legislature Party joined hands with the Opposition and turned down the Congress Government. President's rule was imposed in Kerala. Later, elections were held in 1957 for the whole of Kerala, which was drawn on the basis of linguistic principle. Hence the election results of 1948, 51 and 54 which were limited only to Travancore and Cochin are not comparable with that of the latter ones held for the whole of Kerala in 1957, 1960, 1965 and 1967. A detailed empirical study of the elections of 1957, 60, 65 and 67 would follow in the subsequent chapters.

This is, in brief, the background of the Kerala situation and any political study aimed at analysing the Kerala situation should bear all these aspects in mind before arriving at generalizations.

Regional Diversities and Disparities

Three Distinct Regions

AFTER THE subsequent re-organization of the administrative units in 1956-57, the State, as at present, comprises nine districts. On account of their past history, present economic development and religious composition, these nine districts can be regrouped into three distinct regions :

1. Malabar, comprising the districts of Cannanore, Kozhikode and Palghat ;
2. Cochin, comprising the districts of Trichur and Ernakulam; and
3. Travancore, comprising the districts of Kottayam, Alleppey, Trivandrum and Quilon.

In the fields of religion, occupational distribution of working force, rural-urban break-up, literacy, size of land holdings and the area covered by them, problem of unemployment, density of population per square mile, location and dispersal of industries and even in the layout of the natural resources in the State, the three regions exhibit great diversities and disparities.

Religion

Religion and Caste are two important factors in determining the political and social behaviour of human beings. However, religion-wise and caste-wise voting preferences cannot be secured either in Kerala or in the rest of India. The regional distribution of the three religions in Kerala looks very interesting and revealing. The percentage of Christian population in Kerala compared to the all-India figure is almost 10 times higher (Kerala 21.22 per cent, all-India 2.44 per cent) and the percentage of Muslim population in Kerala compared to the all-India figure is slightly less than double (Kerala 17.91, all-India 10.69).

TABLE II.1
**Break-Up of Three Important Religions of India,
 Kerala and the Three Regions of Kerala**

<i>Region</i>	<i>Total Population</i>		
	<i>Hindus</i>	<i>Christians</i>	<i>Muslims</i>
1. Malabar	62.65	4.34	32.96
2. Cochin	54.00	34.42	11.50
3. Travancore	61.18	29.24	8.15
4. Kerala	60.83	21.22	17.91
5. India	83.51	2.44	10.69

Note : The computation of the above percentages is done on the basis of the 1961 Census figures (Census of India, Paper No. 1 of 1963). The smallest unit for which the religious break-up is given is the district. Hence districts have been re-grouped into regions and thus the figures are arrived at. The caste-wise break-up of the Hindu religion further is not available in the Census.

Hindus comprise only 60.83 per cent of the total population in Kerala as against the all-India figure of 83.51 per cent. Further, these three religions are not evenly distributed throughout the State and there is, therefore, a tendency for each religion to get more firmly entrenched in a particular region.

Hindus

From the results of the above Table it might appear that in the State as a whole and in the various regions, Hindu religion, being numerically the largest, is more dominant than the other religions. The actual position, however, is not so. Apart from its disorganised and indisciplined nature, Hindu religion suffers from another shortcoming in Kerala, namely, the division of the Hindu population into two broad classes, the super-Caste Hindus represented by the socially and economically well-off Namboodiris and Nairs and the sub-Caste Hindus represented by the socially and economically backward Ezhavas, Thiyyas and Harijans. The first category comprises about 40 per cent of the Hindus. They inhabit primarily the region of Travancore and are organized and disciplined by the N.S.S. The causes for the

spread and popularity of super-Caste Hindus and the N.S.S. are not obscure. The States of Travancore and Cochin were always ruled by the Hindu rulers. Maharaja Marthanda Varma, the ruler of Travancore, himself was such a devoted Hindu that he dedicated his entire kingdom to "Padmanabha", the family deity at Trivandrum. Marthanda Varma and his successors thereafter ruled the State as the Dasas or Sevinis of "Padmanabha". The observation of rigid casteism and super-casteism was the tune of the day.

The second category is mainly confined to the Malabar region and to Cochin to some extent. Economically and socially backward as they are, these peoples' votes are generally supposed to go in favour of the Communists. The great success of the rebel Kerala Congress which received the whole-hearted and exclusive support of the N.S.S. in the regions of Travancore and Cochin and the major headway which the CPI made in the region of Malabar confirm this general impression.

Christians

Things are different with the Christian religion. The largest percentage of Christians (34.42 per cent) as against the total population is found in the region of Cochin. In Travancore it comprises 29.24 per cent of the total population and in Malabar it comprises only 4.34 per cent of the total population and is hence negligible. Unity and discipline are well familiar to the Christians. The threat of social and religious sanctions by the Church works very effectively on these people. Although the Christians comprise 29.24 per cent of the total population in Travancore they suffer in comparison with the better organized Nairs. Christian power bastion is mainly limited to the region of Cochin where they can out-weigh the other two major religions. The popularity and spread of Christianity in Cochin can also be easily explained. The arrival and preachings of St. Thomas, one of the disciples of Christ, in Kerala in the first Century A.D., the presence of the Westerners later at the port of Cochin, and the feverish activities of the missionaries around the Port were the main reasons. The political preference of the Christian population consistently leans towards the rightist parties.

Muslims

The stronghold of the Muslim population is the region of Malabar, where it comprises 32.96 per cent of the total population. In Cochin, the Muslim population makes up to 11.50 per cent and in Travancore upto 8.15 per cent. The rise of the Muslim League in Kerala as a party devoted to give expression to the feelings of the Muslim population in the State, and its excellent performance in the elections in areas where there are large chunks of Muslim population confirm the view that the Muslims have also developed a sense of unity and political purpose in their voting preference. However, Muslim League leaders have repeatedly denied that their Party is a communal organization. The Islamic influence in Malabar is mainly due to two important factors. Islam was brought into Kerala from the Middle-East in the Seventh Century by the local sailors and merchants who belonged to Malabar. Secondly, the Zamorin of Calicut, who ruled Malabar, and later Tippu Sultan of Mysore under whose suzerainty the region of Malabar came, were staunch Muslims. Hence their religion, namely Islam, spread appreciably. The Muslims organized under the Muslim League did not show any consistent pattern of political alliance. In 1960, they were in active alliance with the Congress and the PSP in bringing down the Communist Government but in the 1965 General Election they swung to the other end and concluded election agreements with the Left Communists.

Thus, the three religious groups play an important part in Kerala politics. Besides, the fact that each one of them has its power relatively stronger in one particular region than another complicates the issues further and makes alliances unstable.

Occupational Classes

Next to religion, occupational distribution of working force assumes importance in the regional disparities. As can be seen below, the region of Malabar falls behind the State figures in almost every respect. Occupational distribution figures of districts as of 1961 have been recomputed region-wise and percentages for them are given in Table II.2.

TABLE II.2
Region-wise Occupational Distribution as of 1961

	<i>Malabar</i>	<i>Travan- core</i>	<i>Cochin</i>	<i>Kerala</i>	<i>India</i>
Total workers	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Cultivators	19.86	22.99	18.68	20.92	52.80
Agricultural labourers	20.78	15.67	14.63	17.38	16.71
Labourers for every 1,000 cultivators	1046.00	682.00	783.00	831.00	316.00
In mining, quarrying, live-stock, forestry, fishing, housing, plantations, etc.	7.73	10.36	6.89	8.65	2.77
Household industry	6.62	10.53	8.70	8.68	6.37
Mfg. other than household industry	8.06	10.19	10.27	9.40	4.23
Construction	1.18	1.17	1.57	1.26	1.09
Trade and commerce	5.63	5.52	6.27	5.72	4.06
Transport, storage and communications	2.52	2.33	3.82	2.71	1.60
Other services	27.62	21.24	29.17	25.28	10.37

The variations in the agricultural labour pressure from region to region are particularly note-worthy. Malabar has 20.78 per cent of the total working population as agricultural labourers. This figure is much higher than the corresponding figure for the State and for the other two regions.

In terms of numbers, there are in Malabar 1,046 agricultural labourers for every 1,000 cultivators, which means that they slightly over-number the cultivators. In Travancore there are only 682, in Cochin 783 and in the State, as a whole, 831 agricultural labourers for every 1,000 cultivators, which in turn means that in the regions of Travancore and Cochin, cultivators outnumber and dominate the labourers rather easily. As can be observed from the Table given in the succeeding pages, big landholdings and landlords are more in Malabar and small landholdings very few. The concentration of land in very few hands and the presence of a large number of under-employed and numerically large agricultural labourers are likely to cause disturbed situations in many fields.

It is only in the occupational category of mining, quarrying, etc. that Malabar's lot is better than that of the region of Cochin. In respect of almost all other occupational classes Malabar is either lagging greatly behind or just coming equal to the level of the other regions. In the categories of household industry and manufacturing other than household industry, which comprise the main chunk of the secondary sector, Malabar lags far behind the other regions. (Household industry : in Malabar 6.62%, Travancore 10.53%, Cochin 8.70%; in manufacturing other than household industry : Malabar 8.06%, Travancore 10.19%, Cochin 9.40%.) But in the classes of construction, trade and commerce, transport and storage and communications, Malabar is slightly better than the region of Travancore.

However, one observation in this connection is note-worthy. In the agrarian sector comprising cultivators, agricultural labourers and workers in plantations, orchards and allied activities and the secondary sector comprising of the household industry and manufacturing other than household industry, Travancore leads the other two regions. And in construction (perhaps due to heavy construction activities in the Port of Cochin), trade and commerce, transport, storage and communications and other services, Cochin leads the other two regions. Consequently, Malabar remains backward in all respects. On top of it all, as has been noted earlier, Malabar is infested with high labour pressure also.

Rural-Urban Break-up and Literacy

A higher percentage of urbanity, a shift from agrarian economy to industrial economy and more employment in the secondary and tertiary sectors are some indications of a growing and developing economy. The establishment of industries and allied activities in the cities attract the immigration of the surrounding population.

In the percentage of urbanity also Malabar falls behind the other two regions. Cochin has an urban percentage of 16.60, Travancore 14.78 and Malabar 14.65 only. As will be observed in the succeeding chapters, Cochin is the highest industrialized area and Travancore comes next to it. The distribution of

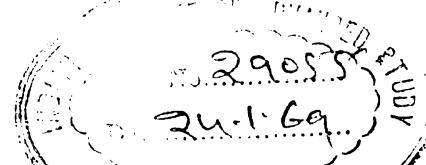


TABLE II.3

Rural and urban break-up of the total population and literate population of the three regions of Kerala, Kerala State and India, as a whole.

	<i>Malabar</i>	<i>Travancore</i>	<i>Cochin</i>	<i>Kerala</i>	<i>India</i>
Urban population	14.65	14.78	16.60	15.11	17.97
Rural population	85.35	85.22	83.40	84.89	82.03
Total literacy	38.93	52.29	49.57	46.85	24.02
Urban literacy	49.28	57.62	58.80	54.94	46.97
Rural literacy	36.94	51.37	39.81	45.41	19.00

Note : Figures of urbanity and literacy are not available region-wise in the Census of 1961. District-wise figures of urbanity and literacy have been taken from the Census of 1961 and they have been recomputed for regions.

rural population in the rural sphere presents a contrary picture. Malabar tops the list (85.35%), Travancore follows next (85.22%), and Cochin has the lowest rural population (83.40 percent).

In literacy too, Malabar ranks the lowest. In the percentage of total literacy, urban literacy, and rural literacy, Malabar is far behind the corresponding State and other regional figures. Travancore ranks first with a 52.29 percentage of total literacy and 51.37 percentage of rural literacy. In urban literacy Cochin ranks first with a percentage of 58.80 (corresponding State figure 54.94, Malabar 49.28%). The literacy rate in the rural areas of Malabar (36.94%) is the lowest in the State.

Another significant point is that while the difference in urbanity between Travancore and Malabar is only 0.13 per cent (Travancore 14.78, Malabar 14.65), the difference in urban literacy is as much as 8.34% (Travancore 57.62, Malabar 49.28). Such a vast difference does not exist between the regions of Cochin and Travancore. The difference in urbanity between the regions of Cochin and Travancore is 1.82% (Cochin 16.60, Travancore 14.78), but the difference in literacy is only 1.18% (Cochin 58.80, Travancore 57.62). In other words, the smallest but highly industrialized region of Cochin, (Cochin comprises only two districts), and the biggest middle class peasantry region of Travancore (comprises four districts), are going at great strides

in matters of urbanity and literacy. Poverty and illiteracy fall to the lot of the region of Malabar.

Land Holdings

In a country like India where land reforms are often virulently debated about, the agrarian sector is very much affected by the labourer-cultivator ratios and relations and a scrutiny about the size and number of the land holdings and the area occupied by them is necessary to make any sound-based study on political preferences. A table prepared by the Statistical Department of Kerala and referred to by the National Council of Applied Economic Research in its Techno-Economic Survey of Kerala gives an idea of the situation.

TABLE II.4

Percentage distribution of number of holdings and land area of holdings in Travancore-Cochin area and the Malabar region

Classes of holdings	Travancore-Cochin		Malabar	
	No. of holdings	Area	No. of holdings	Area
Upto 2.50 acres	86.47	36.96	51.52	8.22
Between 2.50 and 5 acres	8.34	20.11	18.03	9.46
Between 5 and 10 acres	3.51	16.28	14.24	14.62
Between 10 and 20 acres	1.15	10.24	10.12	20.28
Between 20 and 40 acres	0.36	6.56	3.97	15.99
Between 40 and 100 acres	nil	nil	1.74	13.80
100 and above acres	0.17	9.85	0.38	17.63

Source : Kerala 1959, An Economic Review, Government of Kerala (1960).

Note : The figures which are given in the cumulative order are recomputed into the above classes.

A glance at the above Table shows that small and medium size landholdings are more in the region of Travancore and Cochin, and most of the cultivable land area is covered by them. In Malabar, much of the land is under the control of the very few big landlords.

In Travancore-Cochin, about 86.47 per cent of the landholdings are of the size of less than 2.50 acres and about 36.96% of the cultivable land area is covered by them. The corresponding figure for Malabar is amazing. In Malabar, 51.52% of the landholdings are of the size of less than 2.50 acres. They cover just 8.22% of the cultivable area. In the next class between 2.50 and 5 acres in Travancore and Cochin the landholdings are 8.34% and land area covered by them is 20.11%. In Malabar, these holdings are 18.03% but cover only 9.46%.

So, in Kerala if we define ryots possessing below 10 acres as middle class peasants and cultivators possessing more than 10 acres as landlords, landlordism is prevalent only in Malabar and it is almost absent in the area of Travancore-Cochin. In Travancore-Cochin 98.32% of the landholdings (adding up the first three classes of landholdings) are of the size of below 10 acres and 73.35% of the cultivable area is covered by them. In Malabar 83.79% landholdings fall into this category but the land area covered by them is very small, *i.e.*, only 32.30%. In other words, 16.21% of the landholdings control the major proportion of cultivable land area, *i.e.*, 67.70%. Out of this, farms of more than 40 acres, constituting only 12.12% of the landholdings (adding up the last two categories in Malabar) have under them 31.43% of the cultivable land area. For a region like Malabar where the agricultural labourer pressure is the highest in India this sort of land distribution is really explosive. A country whose economic stability is squarely based on the agrarian sector cannot afford to have unequal agricultural labourer-cultivator relationship. But in the case of Kerala, and particularly in the case of Malabar, the situation unfortunately is precisely the same. The political implications of this situation are discussed in the latter chapters.

Un-employment

Kerala also faces quite an acute problem of un-employment, with the region of Malabar facing it most. A table prepared on the un-employment position in Kerala by the Statistics Department, Government of Kerala, reveals the real position. Unfortunately, the Table presents Travancore and Cochin regions as a combined unit. Separate regional figures could have been more informative and revealing.

TABLE II.5
Un-employment Position in Kerala

	(Nos. in Lakhs)		
	Travan- core- Cochin percent- age	Malabar percent- age	Kerala percent- age
(a) Below 15 years age	40.0	37.0	39.4 .
(b) Above 15 years	60.0	63.0	60.6
Total Population	100.0	100.0	100.0 .
1. Students	4.0	2.1	3.3
2. Disabled or too old	4.5	5.7	4.9
3. Pensioners or rentiers	1.4	0.4	0.8
4. Having regular employment	19.6	17.5	18.7
5. Household workers	19.0	19.4	19.1
6. Casual workers	8.0	12.1	9.6
7. People in search of employment	3.6	5.9	4.2
8. Labour force (4+6+7)	30.9	35.5	32.5
Category (7) as percentage of labour force	11.62	14.64	12.79

Source : The Statistics Department of Kerala.

The age group of 15 and above is considered ideal to be treated as employable population. If this is accepted as a good definition, the Table shows that employable population in Malabar is about 3 per cent more than in Travancore-Cochin. (Malabar 63, Travancore-Cochin 60.) This is above even the State figure of 60.6 per cent. Added to this, non-earning adult dependents, *i.e.*, disabled or the aged are more in Malabar by 1.2 per cent (Malabar 5.7, Travancore-Cochin 4.5.) The percentage of household workers is almost the same in both Travancore-Cochin and Malabar regions but people having regular employment in Malabar fall behind by about 2 per cent (Travancore-Cochin 19.6, Malabar 17.5). Malabar is more hard hit in the matter of under-and-unemployment. Under-employed people (casual workers whom we may call so) in Travancore are only 8 per

cent and in Malabar they are 12 per cent. We have the same depressing position in the matter of the un-employed. The percentage of unemployed in Malabar is more by 2.3 per cent (Malabar 5.9, Travancore-Cochin 3.6).

The conclusion is quite obvious. Comparatively more regular employment, less casual workers, less un-employment, less disabled adult dependents and more school-going children (a sign of general prosperity ?), are more characteristic of the Travancore-Cochin region. Seasonal employment, more direct unemployment, acute under-employment, more disabled adult dependents and less percentage of school-going children (Travancore-Cochin 4, Malabar 2.1) fall to the lot of Malabar.

Density

The high percentage of un-and-under-employment, large numbers of non-earning dependents, and labour pressure are supposed to be the problems of high density areas. However, Malabar does not compare with the other regions in this aspect either.

From the point of view of density of population, Malabar stands lowest of all the regions. Travancore has the highest density of population and Cochin comes next. What is more note-worthy is that the density of population per sq. mile in Malabar is less than the State figure and the difference in the density of population per square mile between Travancore and Malabar is as high as 689 persons per square mile (Travancore 1598, Malabar 909). This is, perhaps, due to non-industrialization and poor farming methods. Even industrially, the levels of development within Kerala vary considerably from region to region. Compared with the all-India position, however industrially backward the Travancore and Cochin regions might be, they are still better off than the region of Malabar. This is mainly due to one important reason, namely, the tendency for almost all the major industries in Kerala to get localized around specific places. Raw material orientation, availability of traditional skill, availability of port facilities for export are some of the causes responsible for such localization of industries in some regions in Kerala.

The cashewnut industry is one of the most important industries in Kerala and about 90 per cent of the cashewnut factories

are situated in Quilon (region of Travancore), for reasons of availability of traditional skill and raw material. Much of the coir industry which provides jobs for about 4 lakhs of people in Kerala is highly concentrated in the region of Cochin. Again, tea, coffee, tiles and brick industries and rubber processing industries cluster around the region of Travancore. The coconut oil expellers are situated mainly in Cochin.

Thus, much of the employment potential (about 80 per cent) is shared between the regions of Travancore and Cochin. Malabar does not have any large scale industry. Rice milling, which neither possesses a high employment potential nor a big profit margin, and handloom textile factories which are of un-economical size are situated in the region of Malabar.

The industrial dispersal also presents a dark picture as far as Malabar is concerned. In the matters of supplying State loans, supply of raw materials and the supply of iron, tin and steel to the industries, Malabar gets rather a raw deal. All the above aspects can be briefly summed up.

The region of Travancore is N.S.S. dominated, laid out with middle-class peasantry, of even land distribution amongst all, of low agricultural labour pressure, highly urbanized, highly industrialized, with a high density of population and highly literate.

The region of Cochin is highly industrialized, highest urbanized, highly literate and Christian dominated and ranks first in the tertiary sector.

But Malabar is highly rural, dominated with landlordism and labour pressure. The region also is least industrialized, least literate, least employed, poverty-stricken and Muslim-dominated.

Whatever may be the reasons for these huge demographic, religious and economic diversities and disparities, the effects of these factors on the political affiliations and preferences can very well be imagined.

The Method

AS MENTIONED in the Foreword, the aim of our study is to make a comparative analysis of the voter turnout, voting preferences and the respective party positions in the general elections in Kerala. But to make a thorough study on Kerala with the existing available data is rather difficult due to various reasons.

To make any study to figure out the shifts on the voter turnout, the voting preferences and the respective party positions in any given area, the constituencies that have been carved out in that area, for various general elections, from time to time, must be reasonably comparable if not completely identical. Any major delimitation changes and short-time territorial readjustments make the old and new constituencies incomparable. In Kerala, neither the constituencies nor political alliances or parties present a picture of continuity and stability.

After the formation of the Travancore-Cochin State in 1948 and until the Kerala State came into existence in 1956, three general elections were held, *i.e.*, in 1948, 1951 and 1954. The number of members to be elected to the State Assembly during that period ranged from 108 to 117. After the formation of Kerala, the Assembly constituencies were re-drawn and consequently Travancore-Cochin's share of the Assembly seats came down. In the light of this change in the number and boundaries of the constituencies before and after 1956, any comparison of the elections after 1956 with the elections before 1956 becomes very complicated and is for the same reason not attempted here. So, within two decades the State's turbulent political history has been cut into two major periods, *i.e.*, (1) from 1948 to 1955 and (2) from 1956 to 1967.

Unstable Alliances

Unstable political alliances and marriages of convenience

entered into between political parties with no common ideologies, just for the sake of victory in the elections or to enable the formation of a ministry are some factors which give a refractive picture of the respective party positions from one election to the other. Parties involved in such alliances escape triangular contests in the fight with their principal enemy. As each party is supported by every other party of the alliance in terms of votes, the determination of the genuine position of any single party exclusively and the variation of its strength from one election to the other becomes almost impossible.

Whenever a general election is in the offing in Kerala, the formation of "United Fronts" is the most widely adopted strategy of the Kerala politicians. The KSP, the PSP, and the CPI formed a 'United Front' for electoral purposes in the 1951 General Election. It came to an end immediately after the election. Once again the same parties formed the 'United Front of Leftists' in the General Election of 1954. It too collapsed after the elections. When elections were held for the Kerala State in 1957, all the political parties contested individually with minor electoral adjustments, and the CPI came into power. The PSP, the Muslim League and the Congress joined together to throw down the Ministry by means of an anti-Communist alliance, which popularly was known as the 'Liberation Front'. But history repeated itself. The Congress which had in 1959 eagerly enlisted the support of the PSP and the Muslim League to overthrow the Communist Government had later to part with them. In the 1965 General Election, the U.F.L. was revived by the Rightist Communist Party and the Revolutionary Socialist Party. The SSP, the Leftist Communist Party and the Muslim League concluded election agreements and greatly benefited out of them. In 1967, again all parties formed an 'United Front' against Congress. These election agreements and the 'United Front' strategy greatly result in mutual benefit for the parties but the composition of the alliances never remains constant. Consequently, the changing patterns of party alliances really confuse any proper estimation of the political preferences of the people and of the variations in the strength of the political parties.

TABLE III.I
Election Alliances and Political Desertsions in Kerala in Various General Elections

	Travancore-Cochin			Kerala			
Year of the general election	1948	1952	1954	1957	1960	1965	1967
Nature of the elections	General Election	General Election	Mid-term Election	General Election	Mid-term Election	Mid-term Election	General Election
Name of the election alliance		UFL	UFL		Anti-Communist alliance	UFL	UFL
Parties composing the alliances		CPI RSP KSP	CPI RSP KSP		PSP INC ML	RSP CPI (Right) CPI (Left) SSP ML	CPI (Right) CPI (Left) SSP ML RSP KSP KTP
Principal enemy they fought		INC	INC		CPI	INC	INC
Party came into Power	INC	INC with the support of TTNC	PSP with support of INC	CPI	INC		Coalition of all the constituents of UFL
Causes of the downfall of the ministry	Two ministries fell down due to internal Congress squabbles	Travancore Tamilnad Congress withdrew support to INC	Congress Party & 2 PSP members backed the no confidence motion of the TTNC	PSP, INC & ML resorted to direct action	A section of the Congress changed the floor	Assembly dissolved by the Presidential Order	

Rebel Parties

The factors that refract the real positions of political parties do not end there. The frequency of rebel groups and rival parties, rising up from within the dominant political parties, is very high in Kerala. The INC has suffered great political defeats in Kerala, mainly due to the rise of rebel groups within it. When Pattam Thanu Pillai left the ranks of the Congress in 1952 and formed the PSP group in Kerala, he weaned away from the Congress a good proportion of its supporters. Similarly in 1964, another big rebel group broke away and established almost an equally powerful party, called the "Kerala Congress".

The PSP in Kerala also has had a chequered career. Until 1960, it was a unified group. Its subsequent ups and downs have only been corresponding reflections of the changes undergone by the Party at the national level. In 1960, the group headed by Ram Manohar Lohia broke away from the mother party and contested the elections independently. In 1964, the Lohia Socialist Party and the Praja Socialist Party merged into the Samyukta Socialist Party but immediately broke away again into the Praja Socialist Party and the Samyukta Socialist Party.

The position of the CPI also is not different. The formation of the Leftist Communist Party in Kerala reduced the mother party to shambles. In other words, today in Kerala there are two Congress Parties, two Socialist Parties and two Communist Parties. So any systematic attempt at calculating the voter-turnout ideology-wise and party-wise has to face the question of evaluating the respective roles of the mother parties and the rebel parties in Kerala politics

The introduction of changes in the delimitation of constituencies is another factor which has to be reckoned in making any comparative study of the election statistics. In India the delimitation of constituencies both for the State Assembly and for the Union Parliament is done once every decade, after the decennial census, so as to give proper consideration to the decline or net-growth of population in the State. If, therefore, the population of a State declines, the number of Assembly constituencies also comes down and certain constituencies may even altogether disappear. Similarly, if the population goes up, the number of constituencies will go up and some new constituencies, carved out of the old ones, may come into existence.

Delimitation Changes

TABLE III.II
Number of Elections held in Kerala, Territory Covered, Delimitation Changes and Number of Assembly Seats

Elections held in the year of	1948	1952	1954	1957	1960	1965	1967
Territory covered	Travancore	Cochin		Kerala—(Travancore+Cochin—Shencottai+(Malabar+Kasargode taluk of South Kanara district)			
Delimitation changes	First delimitation	Second delimitation	Third delimitation	Fourth delimitation	Fourth delimitation	Fifth delimitation	Fifth delimitation
Total number of Assembly seats		108	117	126	126	133	133
Pattern of delimitation	86 single member constituencies, 11 double member constituencies	95 single member constituencies & 11 double member constituencies	102 single member constituencies and 12 double member constituencies	102 single member constituencies, 12 double member constituencies	133 single member constituencies	133 single member constituencies	133 single member constituencies

In either case the boundaries of constituencies necessarily undergo major changes and in some cases even a 100 per cent change or more is quite possible. For example, according to the latest delimitation of 1965, 35 of the constituencies in Kerala have undergone a net change of more than 50 per cent. Three to four constituencies have undergone a net change of more than 100 per cent. The constituencies of Kuthuparamba and Periyalam in Cannanore District have undergone more than 100 per cent change, because of their present size as compared with their former size, and on account of the major deletion done and major foreign elements included in the areas covered by them. Consequently almost all the constituencies become incomparable.

But, however, if the polling-boothwise voter-turnout data of all the general elections are available, that data can be recast against the latest delimitation of the constituencies and the party positions can be, to some extent, made comparable. But two factors make this cumbersome task also impossible : (1) the Election Commission does not publish polling-boothwise voter-turnout, and (2) Parties contesting in the old constituencies out of which the new constituencies are carved out may not be the same in the new constituencies. So, ultimately, there is no fool-proof way for a sound comparative study.

Need of Effective Variables

Hence a need for some effective variables, which are thoroughly free from the above mentioned shortcomings, and on the basis of which the political preferences and respective party strengths can be compared, inevitably arises. In this context the highly diversified social, economic and demographic structure of Kerala presents an ideal picture. These factors would have as much impact as that of any political ideology in influencing the minds of the voters. In fact, the conflicting ideologies themselves survive upon the existing social, political and economic conditions. Further, the fact that all these highly important factors are just ignored by research workers in this field highly tempts one to explore them in detail.

In view of this, some important social and economic variables, that are closely related to the real problems of Kerala, are chosen to be tested. The size of towns, agricultural labourer-

cultivator ratio, and percentage of winning are the variables on the basis of which the constituencies have been stratified.

TABLE III. 3
Highest and Lowest Figures of the Variables

Size of towns	Population of biggest town in Kerala	313,030
	Population of smallest town in Kerala	5,746
Labourer-cultivator ratio	Highest labour pressure (per 100 cultivators)	479 labourers
	Lowest labour pressure (per 100 cultivators)	28 labourers

Note : The highest and lowest figures for the per cent of winning are not given in the above Table because they vary from election to election.

The composition of these variables, varies highly from region to region and constituency to constituency, thus causing disparities in the economic and sociological aspects of Kerala society. The above chart which portrays the highest and lowest figures of the variables gives an idea of their variation. The lowest unit for which the figures have been computed is the taluk (—Taluk is an administrative unit lower than that of a district in South India). There are as many as 55 taluks in Kerala and each taluk covers about two Assembly constituencies in general. The data which is collected for a taluk gives a fairly realistic picture of the constituencies from the point of view of these variables.

Size of Towns

Size of towns is one variable which is intended to test the patterns of voter-turnout and voting preferences in the urban areas. The reasons why the size of towns is preferred to the percentage of urbanity are the following. Kerala is not a highly industrialized area and so the urban areas are not confronted

TABLE III. 4
A Cross Arrangement of Towns according to their Functions and Sizes

<i>Classes of towns according to size</i>	<i>Towns belonging to the function of manufacturing</i>	<i>Towns belonging to the function of service</i>	<i>Towns belonging to the function of trade and commerce</i>	<i>Total towns falling into each class.</i>
				<i>Total population</i>
Number of towns of 20,000 and less population	21	23	2	46
Total population	255,274	276,220	20,053	551,547
Percentage	46.28	50.08	3.64	100.00
Number of towns between 20,001 and 50,000 population	10	15	—	25
Total population	319,582	386,045	—	705,627
Percentage	45.29	54.71	—	100.00
Number of towns with 50,001 and above population	2	6	—	8
Total population	229,852	1,067,135	—	1,296,987
Percentage	17.72	82.28	—	100.00

with the usual urban problems. In fact, in Kerala some of the villages are more densely populated and more problematic than some of the towns. Hence the problems of urbanity are hypothesized to vary from one size of town to another. This assumption is reinforced by the literacy rate also. Big towns have higher literacy rates than the medium sized towns. So, in terms of the magnitude of problems, rate of literacy, employment potential and social texture, the size of towns is an important factor rather than the percentage of urbanity.

Table III. 4 where a cross arrangement of the towns in Kerala according to their functions and sizes has been made, gives an idea as to how the big towns and medium sized towns differ in their functions. Of the towns with a population of 20,000 and less, about half of them (21 out of 46), covering almost half of the small town population, are manufacturing towns. Almost the same picture is presented by the medium sized towns also. Ten towns covering about 45.29 per cent of medium sized town population are engaged in the function of manufacturing. Therefore, the small sized and medium sized towns have an impressive component of industrial labourers engaged in the manufacturing sector. It may be recalled that Kerala has the lowest industrial profits and industrial wages.

Big towns present altogether a contrasting picture. Out of 8 towns with a population of 50,000 or more, only 2 towns are engaged in the function of manufacturing. Others are purely service towns. They are largely inhabited by the white-collared servants either of the Government or of the private sector. These people are necessarily highly paid. Big towns thus greatly differ from the small and medium-sized towns in social texture and economic background.

Such a diversified urban picture has been supposed to produce a differential impact on the political behaviour of the inhabitants and the results of the study have completely endorsed this opinion.

Note : Even if a part of a town enters into a constituency, it has been classified as belonging to the category to which the town belongs. However, such instances are rare in Kerala delimitation. Generally, 98 per cent of the towns have been rounded off with in a particular assembly constituency.

The constituencies, as far as this variable is concerned, are divided into four classes, *i.e.*,

1. Big town areas : Constituencies with towns with a population of 50,000 and above.
2. Middle size town areas : Constituencies with towns with a population of 20,000 to 50,000.
3. Small town areas : Constituencies with towns with a population of below 20,000.
4. Rural areas : Constituencies without any urban units.

Labourers *vs.* Cultivators

The labourer-cultivator relationship in Kerala has already been thoroughly discussed in the First and Second Chapters. The reasons that have prompted us to test this variable are the following :

Heavy pressure of agricultural population upon land is a crucial problem in India. Quick land reforms, for the more even distribution of land and for the development of healthy relations between the agricultural labourers and cultivators are repeatedly stressed by many.

In India, almost all the political parties, *i.e.*, the Congress, the CPI, the PSP and the SSP have made it a point to organize their own agricultural labour unions and cultivators' organizations. The motivations are obvious. Hardly, any election passes without any sweeping references to the agricultural labourers and cultivators in the election manifestos of various political parties.

Hence, it is thought best to test how far this variable is really effective in influencing the political preferences of the voters. The Table on landholdings in the Second Chapter analyses the land distribution in various regions and the impact of this variable on Kerala politics.

On this variable also, the constituencies have been divided into four classes, *i.e.*,

1. *Heavy labour pressure areas* : Constituencies where there are 200 or more agricultural labourers for every 100 cultivators.
2. *Moderate labour pressure areas* : Constituencies where there are 100 to 199 agricultural labourers for every 100 cultivators.

3. *Low labour pressure areas* : Constituencies where there are 48 to 99 agricultural labourers for every 100 cultivators.
4. *Cultivator dominating areas* : Constituencies where there are less than 48 agricultural labourers for every 100 cultivators.

Percentage of Winning

Percentage of valid votes secured by a candidate in winning the seat is another variable which is used for the stratification of constituencies. This variable is also supposed to test the voter turnout and voting preferences in both the rural and urban constituencies. There are different ways of defining the 'Unsafe', 'Marginal' and 'Safe' constituencies. One of the approaches is that, an Unsafe constituency can be conceived of as one where a party wins inspite of its being in a predominantly minor position, in a number of earlier elections. In a Marginal constituency, the fortunes of a party might be fluctuating. Instances where one party wins three out of six elections and the other party winning the other three, provide the example of a Marginal constituency. The Safe constituencies are those where a party wins a good number of elections (5 out of 6, etc.).

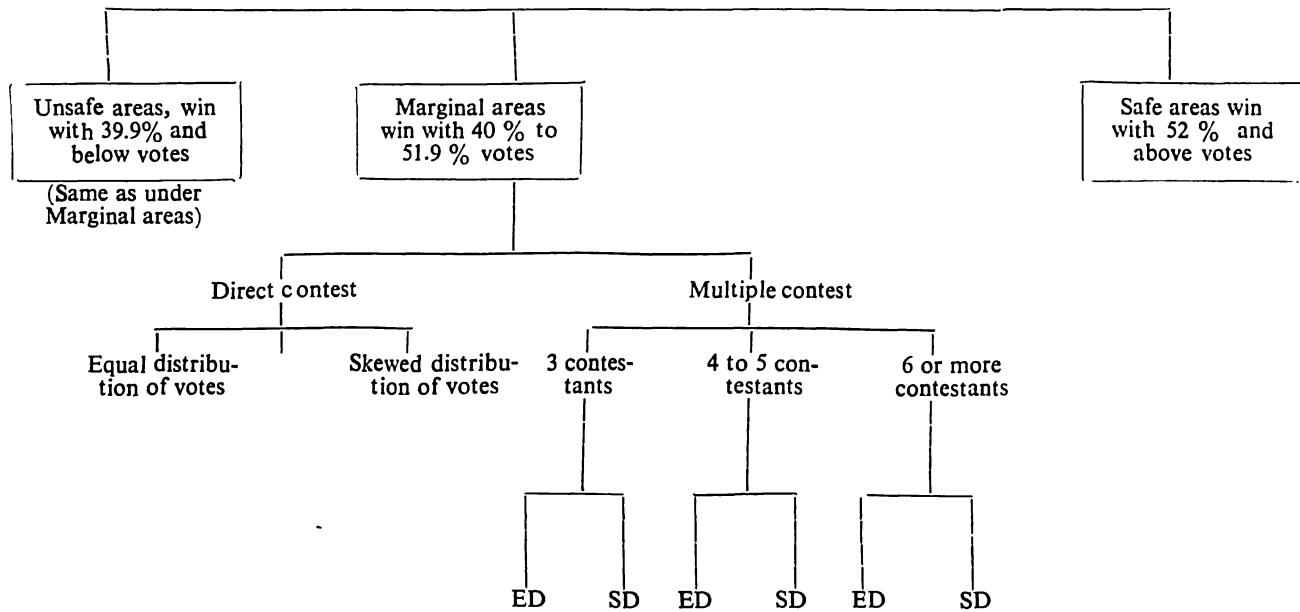
Suggested Scheme

The above mentioned approach has its inherent limitations, on account of delimitation changes. So the suggested scheme given in Table III. 5 is considered to be better.

In this scheme an 'Unsafe' constituency is defined as that in which a candidate wins with only approximately 1/3rd of the total votes polled. That would mean that the competition from the other contestants is very keen and that the vote has been evenly distributed among several contestants. This is also Unsafe because any coalition as between the opponents or their parties might upset the winning candidate's position.

Marginal constituencies are those in which both parties have obtained an almost equal number of votes but the gain of the successful party is only by a slight margin. It also means that a

TABLE III.5
Suggested Scheme



Note: In the above table ED stands for equal distribution of votes among the contestants and SD stands for skewed distribution of votes among the contestants.

slight shift on the part of the voters could upset the winning party's strength in the next election.

Safe constituencies are those where any given party wins with a sufficient margin over its opponents. Here slight fluctuation or shift in voting preferences might cause concern but may not bring the opponents to victory.

A number of hypotheses can be generated from the above model. To list only a few of them :

1. Voter turn-out will be higher in Marginal constituencies than in Safe and Unsafe constituencies.
2. Voter turn-out would be higher among Unsafe constituencies where the votes amongst the opponents are equally distributed.
3. Within the Marginal constituencies voter turn-out would be highest if the contest is direct.

These three points illustrate how this model can be used to derive propositions for empirical study. However, due to the limitations of time and resources only the simplest method of dividing the constituencies into Safe, Marginal and Unsafe areas has been used. Their definition is as follows :

1. *Safe areas* : Constituencies won with 52 per cent and above of the valid votes polled.
2. *Marginal areas* : Constituencies won with 40 to 51.99 per cent of valid votes polled.
3. *Unsafe areas* : Constituencies won with 39.99 per cent and under valid votes polled.

Source of the Data

The reliability, authenticity and genuineness of the findings of any study, even though it is an unproblematic one, depend much upon the reliability and genuineness of the basic data upon which the study is squarely based. A study attempted on the electoral statistics of a State like Kerala, which is, land of contradictions and controversies, has to be much more careful in selecting the sources of the basic data. Otherwise the study is likely to raise more questions than the questions it is aimed to answer.

The Censuses of India of 1951 and 1961, the reports on the general elections of India and some statistical tables published

by the Statistics Department, Government of Kerala, are our principal sources of basic data. Wherever, these basic data have required recomputation and rearrangement they have been done systematically and with utmost care. The Census of India, 1961 is the nearest decennial census for all the four general elections, i.e. of 1957, 1960, 1965 and 1967. The same relevant census data have been used for the stratification of constituencies of all the four general elections, just because any projection of the census figures either backward or forward will produce the same ratios and consequently the stratification would remain just where it is now. So, the basic data of this study can be said to be authentic to the extent to which the Census of India and the reports of the Election Commission of India are authentic. In fact, some of the computational errors found in the reports of the Election Commission have been corrected by the authors before the reports have been made use of. Hence, in some cases, the electoral figures in this study may not tally with the Election Commission figures.

Collection of the Data

Once the sources of data and the specific mass of information required are determined, then, generally, the collection of information becomes quite easier and clearer. But in the case of Kerala this aspect also presents some problems. At the time this study is undertaken, none of the Census books relating to Kerala has been published and special permission has to be secured to use the manuscripts which are just passing into the Press. The report on the 1965 and 1967 General Elections in Kerala had also not been published and only a mimeographed official copy of the election results is made available to us.

Regarding the actual collection of the data, there are two aspects of it. One is collecting the social and demographic data from the Census. The primary census abstract of Census of India, 1961 gives altogether nine classes of workers under the major heading of "Livelihood" classes. Out of these nine classes only the columns "As Cultivator", "As Agricultural Labourer" and "At Household Industry" are chosen for our purpose. The information regarding the towns is given separately. The lowest administrative unit for which this information is available

is the taluk. There are altogether 55 taluks in the State of Kerala. The strength of the elected legislative members of the Assembly in the four General Elections of 1957, 1960, 1965 and 1967 ranges from 126 to 133. So it can safely be said that about two to three Assembly constituencies fall into each taluk. As the constituency-wise codification of this social and demographic information is difficult and expensive, the collection of the taluk-wise data and the stratification of the constituencies on the basis of it would give a fair picture. The taluk-wise data relating to the cultivators, agricultural labourers and workers in the household industry have been collected from the Census Book, Part II-A, Kerala. It means that if a taluk stands very high in respect of labour-cultivator ratio, the constituency belonging to this taluk is classified as high.

The second aspect of the collection of the data relates to the electoral data. The reports of the Kerala general elections published by the Election Commission give almost all the particulars that are required for our study. Constituency-wise total electorate, valid votes polled and votes secured by various parties and candidates are available in the reports. These data have been collected as they are, of course, after correcting some of the errors contained in the reports. The per cent of winning which is used as one of the variables for the stratification of the constituencies is nothing but the percentage of valid votes secured by the winning candidates. This is also readily available in the reports.

The processed and classified social demographic data are then systematically codified for each constituency. The electoral data (total electorate, total valid votes polled by each party in each constituency) are also placed in line with the social and demographic data so as to know easily the effect of each variable and each class of each variable with respect to the voter turn-out and the voting preferences.

Double-Member Constituencies

While arranging the electoral data in regard to each constituency a problem relating to the double-member constituencies inevitably arises. In the 1957 and 1960 General Elections, there were 12 double-member constituencies in Kerala. Each double-

member constituency will have to be represented by at least one Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe M.L.A. ; the constituency is territorially big and each elector in the constituency will have two votes ; one to be cast to any one of candidates who is contesting for the general seat and the other to be cast to any one of the candidates who is contesting for the reserved seat. So, in such double-member constituencies generally there is every likelihood of finding more valid votes polled than the total electorate, thus giving a more than 100 per cent voter turn-out which is really an absurd thing. So to avoid any such refracted picture in such constituencies the electorate is duly doubled for any calculation of the voter turn-out.

Treatment Meted out to Political Parties

The treatment meted out to the political parties also requires a special explanatory note. Rebel groups and dissident groups are not new to Kerala. In 1964, the Congress Party and the Communist Party, each split into two groups. The erstwhile PSP and SP, which had merged into the SSP, again broke into SSP and PSP. The PSP as such did not contest in the General Election of 1965 and so there is not much problem with the SSP, as practically the whole following and leadership of the former PSP in Kerala have joined the SSP, the strength of the former PSP has been treated as the strength of the SSP in 1957 and 1960.

The rival factions of the Congress Party and the CPI, claiming themselves to be the genuine parties owing strict allegiance to the ideologies of the mother parties, contested the elections individually and established themselves as sizeable parties. So, it is thought best to treat the official Kerala unit of the Indian National Congress and the splinter "Kerala Congress" as a single party. Much the same way the Rightist and Leftist Communist wings are treated as a single party. This procedure would not only make the party-position more comparable but also divide the ideology-wise voting preferences more systematically.

Further, for the consideration of the party-position in the 1965 General Election, independents who won their seats with the support of other parties and who later publicly declared

allegiance to those particular parties have been included in those parties. The votes secured by various parties as shown in various tables include the votes of such independent members also.

Of the eleven independents in 1965, those elected from Calicut II, Kasargod, Guruvayoor, Mattancherry, and Cannanore later joined the Muslim League Legislature Party. Hence they have been included as forming part of the Muslim League Party. Mr. U. Utham from Manjeri had issued a statement saying that he would sit with the Left CPI. Three other independents elected from Vadakkekara, Nattika and North Wyanad were supported both by the Left CPI and Right CPI, so they are included in the CPI. Another independent candidate from Kaduthuriti was supported by KC. So he is shown in the Congress Party.

Electorate

The mere act of voting cannot be solely attributed to political consciousness. However, the nature of voting can be taken as an index for levels of political consciousness and participation in any country. It is not necessary either to be highly educated or rich in order to acquaint oneself with the current political ideologies. Once the conflicting political ideologies are properly identified and understood by any one, it becomes easier for a person to decide his own political preferences and cast his vote accordingly.

Just as the desire of the voter to cast his vote can be interpreted as an index of political consciousness, the enthusiasm and involvement of a qualified citizen to get himself enrolled as voter can also be taken as a sign of political consciousness and political responsibility. But the burden of consciously getting himself registered as a voter, falls upon the shoulders of the citizen only in some countries. In others, the electoral organisations themselves prepare the lists of all qualified voters as a matter of responsibility and obligation, irrespective of the initiative on the part of political organisations and the individual citizens. A brief comparative review of the procedures of some countries may, therefore, help us to understand the real implications involved.

Electoral Registration in the U.S.

In the United States the duly qualified citizen has also the burden of getting himself registered as an elector before he can cast his vote anywhere and at any election.

The clerk of each township, city and village, under the recommendations of the Secretary of State, shall provide blank forms printed on cards which are known as "registration cards" to be used in the registration of electors.

The registrant therein has to file an affidavit, indicating where and when he intends to vote, etc. The affidavit shall also state

the name, residential address, birth place of the elector and, if a naturalized citizen, the place, date and nature of naturalization. Registration is granted after the clerks make sure that the application is a genuine one.

The several township, city and village clerks may conduct a house to house canvass or such other means of checking the correctness of registration records as may seem expedient. Proper steps also are taken to strike off the names of the voters who die.

Such finalized registration record shall be open for public inspection, under the rules and regulations prescribed by the clerk.

Any elector of a municipality may challenge, on specified grounds, the registration of any registered elector by submitting to the clerk a written affidavit, that the particular elector is not qualified to vote. The clerk in his turn mails the affidavit to the challenged elector and if he fails to appear and answer before the clerk within 30 days, the clerk shall cancel his registration.

So, in America, the initiative in electoral registration should consciously come from the citizen. The Government can only make sure that the registrations are genuine.

The U.K. System

The procedure adopted in the United Kingdom is quite different from that of the U.S.A. In the United Kingdom it is the duty of every registration officer (officer in charge of preparing voters lists) to prepare and publish separate and, if possible, continued registers of electors of Parliamentary constituencies and local Government elections.

For the preparation of these registers, the Registration Officer shall send enumerators, on house to house visit, in order to make sufficient enquiries about persons entitled to be registered as voters.

When the enumerators send back such necessary information, the Registration Officer prepares and publishes electoral lists showing the lists of persons appearing to him to be entitled to be registered together with their qualifying addresses.

Later, he will also (except in the case of Northern Ireland)

determine all duly made claims for registration. He will also determine all duly made objections to any person's registration as a voter. In Northern Ireland, all such claims and objections are determined by "revising officers".

The Canadian System

In Canada also, the electoral lists are prepared on the lines adopted under the U.K. system but a long, elaborate and distinctive procedure is adopted at various levels. The Canadian system differs with that of the U.K. system on the following points :

Separate electoral lists are prepared for rural and urban polling divisions just before the impending elections.

In appointing enumerators to the urban polling divisions the returning office seeks the active advice of politically divergent candidates who contested the preceding election and received the highest and next highest votes.

When the name of any citizen is included in the voters' list in urban polling divisions, the enumerators leave a chit at his residence to that effect.

In the rural polling divisions, only one enumerator belonging either to that polling division or electoral district is appointed and much of the burden of preparing the preliminary lists and revising them falls upon him.

Receiving the claims and objections and revising the preliminary electoral lists, involve a highly complicated procedure.

Indian System

The Indian system of preparing the electoral lists appears to have adopted the practices of both the U.K. and the Canadian systems. In India, electoral rolls for the assembly constituencies are revised every year.

In the year preceding the general elections, they are revised intensively, *i.e.*, by deputing an enumerator to collect the name, age and house number of each householder in the constituency. This enumerator collects information volunteered by the householders. There is no penalty for non-cooperation. The enumerator is generally a temporary employee under the

registration officer (generally a Sub-divisional Magistrate) in the urban area. His work is supervised generally by permanent employees of the registration officer. The Sub-divisional Magistrate himself goes round and makes a percentage check of the work of enumerators and supervisors.

In the rural areas, the revenue inspector, the patwari, or karnam etc. collect the information. Their work is supervised by revenue organizations under the electoral registration officer (Sub-divisional Magistrate).

When the lists have been prepared in a draft form, they are published, a press note is issued, leaders of local parties are informed and a period of at least one month is given, for filing claims and objections. The claims and objections are disposed of by the sub-divisional officer or the tahsildar in the rural area and by the sub-divisional officer in the urban area. These intensively revised lists are printed and published for use during general elections. Sometimes, for urban areas an intensive revision of the rolls is done and rolls are reprinted at the request of the local municipality, corporation, etc. The cost for such printing is borne by them. This happens only where the assembly roll is also used for such elections. In the rural areas certain panchayats have their own electoral rolls for their elections.

It will thus be seen that the enumeration of voters in India takes place separately for panchayat elections, for municipal elections and for assembly and parliament elections. The process of enumeration, therefore, is almost a continuous one for the reason that these elections do not take place simultaneously.

The above system has the following two defects :

1. The enumerator has no legal authority to enter any premises and to insist upon collection of information from the householder.
2. There is no obligation on the part of the householder to furnish any information to the enumerator.

So, from the above account it can be observed that it is only under the U.S. system that the electoral registration can be taken to be a fool-proof index of political consciousness and political responsibility.

Under the other three systems mentioned above, the voters' lists are prepared just like collecting census data. But after

giving allowances to all the shortcomings, one is yet left with some scope to hypothesize that there would definitely be a high correlation between voter turn-out and voter enrolment. This envisages that there would be at least a small increase in the voter enrolment where the voter turn-out is going to be very high. This is possible in the Indian context, particularly for the reason that the voters' lists are revised a short while before the elections. If the election is likely to be very competitive in which every one is determined to express his political preference, the voters' lists necessarily must come up to the brim. And at least when there is going to be a very high voter turn-out there should not be any shrinkage in the per cent of electorate.

But the situation relating to the electorate and voter turn-out in the Kerala elections of 1957, 1960, 1965 and 1967 does not show any such relationship. Kerala's net population growth has remained almost constant. Further, for many decades while the birth rate in Kerala is almost equivalent to the all-India figure, the death rate is the lowest in India. This necessarily means that if there is any variation in the total population having the right to vote, the variation necessarily must be a growth, however insignificant it might be.

TABLE IV. 1
Per cent of Electorate and Per cent of Valid Votes Polled

	Electorate as per cent of total population				Percentage of valid votes polled			
	1957	1960	1965	1967	1957	1960	1965	1967
Kerala	7,564,911 49.72	8,038,268 47.55	8,558,345 47.13	8,616,427 44.37	65.69	84.42	73.94	72.90
Malabar	2,742,310 49.02	3,004,033 48.66	3,192,825 48.34	3,191,874 45.26	58.55	80.67	70.19	68.26
Cochin	1,495,867 46.64	1,651,589 49.19	1,765,977 47.47	1,791,829 45.47	69.94	87.22	77.69	77.80
Travan- core	3,326,734 51.87	3,382,646 46.79	3,599,543 45.95	3,632,724 42.98	69.95	84.49	75.41	74.54

The percentage of electorate against population have been arrived at after projecting the population figures of 1961 census back to 1957 and forward to 1965. The percentage of valid votes polled are calculated against the total electorate of the respective regions and the State of Kerala. The electorate figures given here do not tally with the electorate figures given in the basic Tables. In the basic Tables electorate in the double-member constituencies is doubled so as to give a clear picture about the voter turn-out.

This indicates a consistent growth of political consciousness. In the State as a whole, and in all the regions as well the voter turn-out has been consistently growing since 1957. The sudden heavy poll in 1960 is however due to the intense conflict between the communists and the non-communists.

In the state as a whole in 1957, the percentage of valid votes polled was 65.9 and in 1965, 73.94. This indicates a net increase of 8.25 per cent—a highly impressive figure. But, corresponding electorate figures do not however show any increase. In fact, there is a net decrease of 2.59 per cent in electorate. This figure is rather inexplicable.

The net increase in the valid votes polled in 1965 over that of 1957 in the region of Malabar is 11.64 per cent, in the region of Cochin 7.75 per cent and in the region of Travancore 5.46 per cent.

However, the electorate figures show a declining tendency from 1957 to 1965. In the region of Malabar the decline is 1.32 per cent and in the region of Travancore it is as high as 5.92 per cent. Only the region of Cochin shows a small net increase of 0.83 per cent. The reason might be the very high percentage of urbanity.

But what really casts doubts on the question is the fact that the poverty-stricken, illiterate and labour pressure region of Malabar is consistently showing a higher percentage of voters than the other two regions on the occasion of all the three general elections. Only Travancore in 1957 and Cochin in 1960 show a lead on Malabar by 2.85 per cent and 0.44 per cent respectively. In all the other cases Malabar has a lead over other regions which are highly literate, urban, laid out with even land distribution and with large employment potential.

From the point of view of voter turn-out Malabar falls behind the other two regions in all the general elections by 5 to 11 per cent.

Socially, economically and educationally well-off regions—Cochin and Travancore—have less percentage of voters but turn-out higher percentage of votes. Malabar, as an economically, socially and educationally backward region, has more votes but turns out less votes at the poll.

Any comment on this situation without the necessary supporting data would tend to become impressionistic and

superfluous. At this stage, it cannot be definitely stated that forces either political or social are at work either to prevent the citizens from getting enrolled as voters or to encourage unqualified citizens to creep into the electoral lists so as to promote their party interests.

It is often contended in India that in the process of party electioneering there is a high tendency, on the part of almost all parties, to prevent, either by convincing or forcing, the enrolment of votes and voter turn-out of their opponents. And it is also contended that the unqualified supporters of the respective parties are pushed into the electoral lists in an obvious attempt to ensure the victory of one's own party. The following observations may nevertheless be made in relation to Kerala.

In a region like Travancore, where the labourers are heavily dominated by the cultivators, the former can very well be kept out of the electoral lists and the polling booths by the latter. Lack of organization and unity among the labour classes makes the job easier. But in a region like Malabar, where the labourers outnumber the upper classes, the former can perhaps assert their voting rights. Here, and in the highly urban region of Cochin, labourer organizations and trade unions are likely to be more powerful.

Voter Turn-out

It is now generally agreed that voter turn-out indicates political consciousness. Systematic research investigations on voter turn-out have not yet been done in India. One or two electoral studies which have been attempted on the general elections in Kerala, are not sound from the standpoint of methodology. Useful investigations on voter turn-out have, however, been made in foreign countries, especially in the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. These studies, of course, widely differ in the types of methodology they employ and the independent variables they use, to find out and explain the patterns of voting behaviour. Nevertheless, electoral studies generally take into consideration the following factors : political structure and process, level of economic development, social norms and inhibitions, ecological layout, size of towns and civic consciousness of the subjects of the country. Some of the significant findings and inferences that have emerged out of these studies may be given below.

Political Structure

Totalitarian countries may, for example, have far higher voter turn-out than the democratic States. What is more, even among democratic countries the voter turn-out may differ from country to country, depending upon the pattern of representation, economic conditions, socio-ethnic composition, ecological layout, etc.

Socio-economic Factors¹

The voter turn-out tends to be high among the upper social

¹ Socio-economic factors : Voter turn-out tends to be high among the upper social classes and skilled people who are likely to be economically advanced and have better access to effective instruments of communication.

S.M. Lipset concludes that American farmers show greater interest in politics and elections due to the highly beneficiary policies of the Government.

classes and skilled people who are likely to be economically advanced and have better access to effective instruments of communication. Farmers are likely to vote more in countries where governments follow highly beneficial policies towards them. Trading, commercial and manufacturing classes in democratic countries, create considerable impact on voter turn-out in the process of creating political pressure, against the government to influence its economic policies.

Rural-Urban Differences²

A large number of studies support the proposition that urban

A. Campbell stresses that in a country like the United States, trading, commercial and manufacturing classes create considerable impact on voter turn-out in the process of creating political pressure groups against the government to influence its economic policies.

² Ecological factors : According to Heinz Eulaw's findings, urban social environment and political process are likely to have greater impact on voter turn-out than the socially inhibited rural environment. He also maintains that political competitiveness proportionally fades out with a decrease in urbanity and gradual disappearance of the urban character of the population.

Differences in voter turn-out in small towns and metropolitan cities have been asserted by V.O. Key. He is of the opinion that due to socio-economic and occupational reasons the people that come from rural areas and small towns are not generally conservative elements. He feels that the people in middle-sized towns are most conservative than in metropolitan cities who are generally most liberal.

Studies supporting higher urban voter turn-out : In essence a large number of studies support the proposition that urban areas vote more than rural areas. S.M. Lipset in his work *Political Man* endorses this opinion. Robert Lane cites higher employment, effective communications, political articulation, ethnical divergence and heterogeneity, civic consciousness, class consciousness and class conflict as the causes of higher urban voter turn-out. Campbell and Gurian's Survey Research findings of the Presidential Elections of 1948, 1952, 1956, 1960 also agree with this.

Relations in the rural areas, on the other hand, are governed by mutual bonds, occupational interdependence and homogeneous social structure. Hence they are likely to be less radical and accept more that is conservative and turn out less votes.

Studies supporting higher rural voter turn-out : On the other hand, there are a few studies which support the hypothesis that rural areas vote more than the urban areas.

The study by Robinson and Standing in Indiana, for the Presidential Elections of 1936, 1940 and 1944 endorses this hypothesis. They found that the rural counties had the highest voter turn-out and that a progressive urban character of the population would lead to a gradual decline in the voter turn-out and that the large cities would have the lowest voter turn-out. Similarly, V.O. Key also asserts that the small town constituencies have higher voter turn-out and the large city constituencies have the lowest voter turn-out. Scarrow, who had analysed the aggregative data

areas have higher voter turn-out than rural areas. Of course, there are also some studies which support the hypothesis that rural areas vote more than the urban areas. It has also been asserted that voter turn-out differs according to the size of town.

While some of our findings on Kerala electoral behaviour completely endorse some of the above hypotheses, the others completely reject them.

I. Voter turn-out on the Variable of Size of Town

TABLE V.1
Highest and Lowest Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation
to the Variable of Size of Town

<i>Election</i>	<i>Voter turn-out in per cent</i>			
	<i>Big town areas</i>	<i>Middle-size town areas</i>	<i>Small town areas</i>	<i>Rural areas</i>
1957	68.71	63.07	65.76	66.63
1960	85.46	84.15	83.79	84.79
1965	74.14	77.33	74.10	72.70
1967	74.35	75.43	73.62	71.44

In the State as a whole in 1957 and 1960 Big town areas and in 1965 and 1967 Middle-size town areas have registered the highest voter turn-out. On the other hand, Small town areas and Rural areas have registered the lowest voter turn-out. The difference between the highest and lowest voter turn-out figures is very low and it has not exceeded five per cent in any election.

of the federal and provincial elections of Canada, also found the same trends. He also writes that the Boer farmers in South Africa vote more than the urban population. Another significant finding relating to higher rural voter turn-out is that of Krishna Murty who employed an ecological scheme consisting of the size of town, distance from town and per cent of urbanity, in his electoral study of the North Central States of United States. He found that farther the constituency is from a large metropolitan town the higher the voter turn-out. Rural counties would have the highest voter turn-out and the big cities the lowest. The voter turn-out would also gradually decline with a progressive growth in the per cent of urbanity. He found the same pattern relating to the size of towns also.

TABLE V. 2

Gains and Losses in Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation to the Variable of Size of Town

Period	<i>Gains and Losses in per cent</i>			
	<i>Big town areas</i>	<i>Middle-size town areas</i>	<i>Small town areas</i>	<i>Rural areas</i>
1957 to 1960	+16.75	+21.08	+18.03	+18.16
1960 to 1965	-11.32	- 6.82	- 9.69	-12.09
1965 to 1967	+ 0.21	- 1.90	- 0.48	- 1.26

To summarize, Big town areas in Kerala, in general, have registered the highest voter turn-out and Small town areas and Rural areas have registered the lowest voter turn-out with an exception in 1965 when Middle-size town areas stood in between.

In terms of gains and losses, however, Middle-size town areas and small town areas have registered more net gains (from 1957 to 1967) than Big town areas and Rural areas.

Regional Trends

In the region of Malabar, Big town areas have registered the highest voter turn-out and Rural areas have registered the lowest voter turn-out. In terms of gains and losses Big town areas and Middle-size town areas have registered more net gains than the Small town areas and Rural areas. Hence the voter turn-out trends in the region of Malabar are different from that of the State. In the region of Malabar, voter turn-out and with it the political consciousness increase with an increase in the size of town.

In the region of Cochin, there is no clear trend in voter turn-out and the difference between the highest and lowest voter turn-out figures also is very little. Hence from the point of view of voter turn-out all the types of areas stand on the same footing in Cochin. In the region of Travancore, with an exception in 1957, Middle size town areas have registered the highest voter turn-out and Big town areas have registered the lowest voter turn-out.

Further, Middle-size and Small town areas have suffered great fluctuations in the voter turn-out.

II. Voter turnout of the Variable Labourer-Cultivator Ratio

TABLE V. 3

Highest and Lowest Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation to the Variable of Labourer-Cultivator Ratio

Election	Voter turn-out in per cent			
	Heavy labour pressure areas	Moderate labour pressure areas	Low labour pressure areas	Cultivator dominating areas
1957	57.06	66.02	64.79	75.07
1960	81.23	85.25	83.88	87.81
1965	67.50	74.79	73.53	78.52
1967	64.67	74.34	72.50	77.61

In the State as a whole, in all the general elections Cultivator dominating areas have registered the highest voter turn-out and Heavy labour pressure areas have registered the lowest voter-turnout.

TABLE V. 4

Gains and Losses in Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation to the Variable of Labourer-Cultivator Ratio

Period	Gains and Losses in per cent			
	Heavy labour pressure areas	Moderate labour pressure areas	Low labour pressure areas	Cultivator dominating areas
1957 to 1960	+ 24.17	+ 19.23	+ 19.09	+ 12.74
1960 to 1965	-- 13.73	-- 10.46	-- 10.35	-- 9.29
1965 to 1967	+ 2.83	- 0.15	- 1.03	- 0.91

In terms of gains and losses fluctuations in voter turn-out seem to be heavier in Labour pressure areas than in Cultivator dominating areas. The fluctuations also seem to have increased with an increase in the labour pressure.

To summarize, Cultivator dominating areas have always registered the highest voter turn-out in Kerala while the heavy Labour pressure areas have registered the lowest voter turn-out. In terms of gains and losses, gains have increased with an increase in the labour pressure upon cultivators. Two inferences could be drawn from these trends. Firstly, cultivator dominating areas in Kerala are highly politically conscious. Hence the variation in terms of gains and losses is lowest among these areas. Secondly, the forces for mobilization are strongly behind heavy labour pressure areas whenever the elections are very competitive. Hence the variation in the voter turn-out from one election to the other tends to be highest.

A belief that farmers do not possess political consciousness was held by Marx and his followers. According to Marx farmers by virtue of their isolated occupation are traditional, conservative, more slavish to customs and less communicative. Therefore, they are not capable of organizing themselves into a well knit group to assert their rights.

He also held the view-point that farmers are individualistic. Their main concern is their own agricultural operation. Hence, farmers are not and would not be class conscious. Any revolution to be effective must have an ideology which presents the class interests. For the realization of this class interest, organized conflict is inevitable. Since farmers by themselves cannot constitute a separate class, they are not capable of staging a revolution. Marx in his "Eighteenth Brumaire" stated that "the small peasants form a huge mass, whose members live in similar conditions without, however, entering into many and varied relations with one another. Their method of production isolates them from one another, instead of drawing them into mutual intercourse. This isolation is promoted by the poor means of communication in France together with the poverty of the peasants themselves. Their fields of production, the small holdings, admit of no division of labour in their cultivation and no application of science ; hence no variety of development, diversity of talents, no wealth of social relations....."

“.....In so far as there exists only a local connection among these peasants, a connection which the individuality and exclusiveness of their interests present from generating among them any amount of interest, national connections, and political organizations, they do not constitute a class. Consequently, they are unable to assert their class interest in their own name, be it by a Parliament or by Convention.”

Mao and others have maintained that agricultural labourers spearhead the revolution in Asia. The Kerala scene shows that voter participation fluctuated heavily in agricultural labour concentrated areas and also they had the lowest voter turn-out.

It is to be remembered that Boer farmers in South Africa always polled the highest. Therefore, our analysis disproves the hypothesis which has been advanced by many that agricultural proletariat are more politically conscious than the peasants in developing societies. This also demonstrates that peasants as a class are more capable of organising the elections and the parties than the agricultural labourers.

The fact that voter turn-out is lowest in Communist strongholds of Malabar explodes the myth about the monolithic and omnipotent qualities of the Communist organizational structure. Or it may be that the rich landlords are blocking the agricultural labour vote. Empirical validation is necessary for either one of these conclusions.

In the region of Malabar agricultural labourer pressure upon cultivators is higher in comparison to the State as a whole and other regions as well. In Malabar there are no Cultivator dominating areas and in all the general elections Heavy labour pressure areas have registered the lowest voter turn-out and with an exception in 1960 Low labour pressure areas have registered the highest voter turn-out. Further, since 1957, all the types of areas are suffering losses in voter turn-out but the fluctuations are felt more heavily in the Heavy labour pressure areas.

In the region of Cochin there are no Heavy labour pressure areas and in all the general elections Low labour pressure areas have registered the highest voter turn-out and with an exception in 1965 Moderate labour pressure areas have registered the lowest voter turn-out. But voter turn-out fluctuations have been heavier among Low labour pressure areas and Cultivator dominating areas than in Moderate labour pressure areas.

In the region of Travancore also, with an exception in 1960, Cultivator dominating areas have registered very high voter turn-out, and Low labour pressure areas have registered the lowest voter turn-out in all the four general elections. Further all the types of areas have exhibited declining trend in voter turn-out.

IV. Voter turn-out Trends in Relation to the Variable of per cent of Winning

TABLE V. 5
Highest and Lowest Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation to the Variable of per cent of Winning

<i>Election</i>	<i>Voter turn-out in per cent</i>		
	<i>Safe areas</i>	<i>Marginal areas</i>	<i>Unsafe areas</i>
1957	65.85	66.82	61.43
1960	83.90	86.17	79.02
1965	71.07	74.19	75.98
1967	70.87	75.93	76.56

In the State as a whole in 1957 and 1960 Marginal areas have registered the highest voter turn-out and in 1965 and 1967 Unsafe areas have registered the highest voter turn-out. However, in 1957 and 1960 Unsafe areas and in 1965 and 1967 Safe areas registered the lowest voter turn-out.

In terms of gains and losses all the areas have registered a declining trend in the voter turn-out. But the fluctuations seem to be heavier in Safe areas and Marginal areas than in Unsafe areas. In terms of political competitiveness, Marginal areas and Unsafe areas are the areas where political competitiveness is at its highest. The above trends clearly prove that competitive areas vote more than the non-competitive areas. However, the voter turn-out trends in some of the regions do not conform to the State patterns.

In the region of Malabar, for example, Marginal areas have always registered the highest voter turn-out and Unsafe areas

have registered the lowest voter turn-out. Here it is worth probing in further as to why Safe areas are exhibiting higher voter turn-out than the Unsafe areas. Further, Safe areas and Marginal areas have exhibited bigger fluctuations in voter turn-out than the Unsafe areas.

In the region of Cochin, there are no Unsafe areas in 1957 and 1960 and in all the general elections Safe areas have registered the highest and Marginal areas the lowest voter turn-out. But, strangely, both the areas have exhibited fluctuations in voter turn-out to the same degree, *i.e.*, 7 to 10 per cent.

The region of Travancore, however, has not exhibited any consistent trends. Further, this region has registered fluctuations in the voter turn-out equally in all the types of areas. The present data do not give any scope for drawing inferences regarding the variations in the regional trends.

Two factors, (1) the degree of political competitiveness and (2) labourer-cultivator ratio, have accounted significant variations in the voter turn-out. The urban-rural differences in polling are marginal in Kerala. If there are any, they are more in the region of Malabar.

The fact that the voter turn-out is highest in Marginal areas is in conformity with the untested propositions advanced by several scholars in India. Rural population, even though are illiterate and are not exposed to modern media of communication, which are within the reach of the cities, are alive to the political developments in the country. Voters in Kerala are rational and are capable of discriminating the candidates, their cleavages on issues, ideologies and the prevailing political climate.

It can safely be concluded that voting tends to be high among Low labour pressure and cultivator dominating areas and also among Middle and Big town areas. However, the rural-urban differences in voting are not so pronounced as is often supposed to be in the Kerala State. An elimination of Agricultural labour population from the universe will not only reduce these differences, but in fact the voter turn-out of the Rural areas may go considerably higher than urban areas. Hence, in Kerala voting the presence of a large number of landless labourers is a major source of variation in voter turn-out. Hence, in any competitive election greater mobilization is required among these areas.

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The Communist Party of India

Communist thinkers, starting from Marx, have given different interpretations to the support they would receive from various social classes such as industrial proletariat, peasants, agricultural labourers and the urban bourgeois. An attempt is made here to find out whether these interpretations are correct in the context of the general political scene in Kerala.

First, Marx was convinced that of all the oppressed and exploited classes, industrial proletariat, and industrial proletariat alone, could serve as the vanguard of the ultimate world revolution which would put an end to capitalism and bourgeois institutions. Secondly, he had no confidence and faith in the revolutionary character of the peasants and agricultural labourers. According to him, these people, even though oppressed and exploited, are less class conscious, less communicative, more conformist to customs and social inhibitions and accept their lot submissively. Thirdly, he had the greatest contempt for the bourgeois class and bourgeois institutions. According to him the people in this class, though vocal about social and economic justice, are unreliable, and self-seeking.

The successors of Marx had, however, differed on almost all these points. Lenin is the foremost among them. He had good faith in, and admiration for the industrial proletariat. But as a shrewd tactician, he argued that the Russian industrial proletariat, if it had to succeed, would have to join hands with the poor farmers and landless labourers. He was instrumental in making the Russian industrial proletariat join hands with other liberal parties of the pre-1905 period, bringing about a bourgeois revolution before a proletariat revolution could occur. So, according to him, the industrial proletariat, the landless labourers, the poor peasants and the lower sections of the bourgeois would comprise the supporting social structure of the Communist Party. It is, of course, a different story that in

liquidating the peasantry and the bourgeois he was later very loyal to the Marxian precepts.

Stalin's attitude towards the industrial proletariat was also the same as that of Marx and Lenin. His programme for the industrialisation of the country was implemented with the utmost sacrifices and miseries on the part of the peasant folk. He never conceived the peasant and bourgeois classes as the support structure of the Communist Party. The bourgeois class was completely eradicated by Stalin. Stalin's Russia of the post-Second World War era had also prescribed an industrial proletariat-based-armed-uprising for all the South and South-East Asian countries.

As against this, Mao of China and Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam have re-defined the social classes and assigned new roles to them. According to them, the peasants and the agricultural labourers are the vanguard forces of the communist revolution to establish a proletariat dictatorship amongst the rural masses. Mao and Ho consider that only the feudal land lords and oppressors are out of the fold of revolutionary forces.

So, when the Indian Communists had to plan their strategies, they had before them the above theoretical colours and revolutionary models and techniques of Communism. However, the socio-economic and political situation in India has never lent itself to convenient analysis to the Communists. The Indian political behaviour, social attitudes and cultural background have always remained an enigma to the CPI. And, consequently, the policy line and tactical slogans have miserably failed to draw the people to its fold, and left the CPI alienated from the people.

Ranadive's attempt in 1948 to apply the Russian model of revolution to the Indian situation and make the Communists rely primarily upon the industrial proletariat proved to be unrealistic.

Rajeswara Rao's attempt in 1950 to apply the Chinese model of revolution to the Indian situation and make the Communists primarily rely upon the rural peasantry and agricultural labourers also failed.

And, finally, the attempts of Dange and Rajeswara Rao to bring the workers, peasants and the bourgeois into a broad alliance and form a united democratic front to further the

Communist interests remained as futile as any of the other policies.

Now we shall see in terms of votes bagged by the CPI in Kerala, the real social and economic groups that are supporting the CPI, and also see whether the pro-Communist vote has any definite ideological commitments in terms of Marxian and neo-Marxian social class analysis.

Neither the capitalists who, according to Marx and his followers, would invest their unlimited economic resources to exploit the labourers with an unending thirst for profits, nor the industrial proletariat who, according to Marx, would be forced to work for subsistence wages and consequently raise an axe against the capitalists, are present on the economic scene of Kerala.

The Communists in Kerala identify as industrial proletariat only those manufacturing labourers who work in the uneconomical and unmechanized manufacturing pursuits of hand-loom industry, coir industry, cashewnut factories, dehusking and rice milling. A good part of these manufacturing units, as many government's economic reports and industrial surveys have repeatedly emphasized, are very small and employ only less than twenty to twenty-five labourers each. Further, the non-availability of the raw materials they make use of, the paltry investments at their disposal, and the poor marketing facilities they have, acutely confine the productive activities of the manufacturers, and leave them with bare profits and sometimes bleak prospects of having to cut into their investments. On the other hand, the labourers who work in these factories have to depend solely upon these units for their bread and butter. So, a short-sighted lockout by the manufacturers or an unproductive strike by the labourers, more than solving any problem, is likely to leave the entrepreneur bankrupt and the labourers unemployed. Thus the manufacturing labourers and the manufacturers are mutually dependent and their prime motive has got to be to keep the wheels of the industry moving so that they could make a living out of it.

Further, all these manufacturing units in Kerala, strangely enough, are located in small and middle-size towns. So, a major chunk of the active population of these towns should necessarily consist of the manufacturing labourers and semi-skilled labourers. As all these economically active people are

likely to be of voting age, the voting preferences of the constituencies where these small and middle-size towns are situated can be broadly interpreted as the voting trends of the manufacturing labourers and labourers of industrial origin.

The same is the case with the bourgeois. The trading, commercial and other white-collar professional classes in the Western countries whom, Marx very much despised and whom Lenin thought could be tactically exploited to promote the revolution, have no counterparts on the Indian scene. The Communists in Kerala identify as the urban bourgeois those people who are engaged in government and private white-collar services. These people, even though low paid, are comparatively better off than the manufacturing labourers. But they have neither any vested interests nor any capital stakes.

Such people are mainly distributed in the big towns. Out of the 2.4 million urban population of Kerala, 1.2 million (8 per cent of the total population) belong to this category and live in big towns. These comparatively highly paid and highly literate people of big towns represent the cream of the elite of the State. So, the voting patterns of the constituencies in which these big towns are situated can be broadly interpreted as the voting preferences of the urban bourgeois of Kerala. Now we shall see the voting patterns in terms of the size of towns.

I. Communist Voter turn-out in according to Size of Towns

TABLE VI. 1
**Communist Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation
 to the Variable of Size of Towns**

<i>Election</i>	<i>Communist voter turn-out in per cent</i>			
	<i>Rural areas</i>	<i>Small town areas</i>	<i>Middle-size town areas</i>	<i>Big town areas</i>
1957	33.59	34.74	38.68	29.28
1960	38.14	40.93	40.23	35.37
1965	33.37	33.11	27.89	28.45
1967	36.38	26.64	28.00	30.93

In the State, as a whole, the CPI secured its maximum vote in 1957 from the Middle-size town areas, in 1960 from Small town areas and in 1965 and 1967 from the Rural areas. The above Table futher illustrates that Rural areas provide consistent support to the Communists. Even though Small and Middle-size town areas have exhibited support to the Communists they have also accounted for big fluctuations. The following Table illustrates the degree of fluctuations suffered by the Communists in various types of areas.

TABLE VI. 2
Gains and Losses of the CPI in Kerala in Relation
to the Variable of Size of Town

Period	Gains and Losses of CPI in per cent			
	Rural areas	Small town areas	Middle-size town areas	Big town areas
1957 to 1960	+4.55	+6.19	+1.55	+6.09
1960 to 1965	-5.77	-7.82	-12.34	-6.92
1965 to 1967	+3.01	-6.47	+0.11	+2.48

To sum up the gains and losses, the CPI has registered gains in 1960 ranging from 1.55 per cent to 6.19 per cent in all the types of areas. However, in 1965 compared to that of 1960 the CPI has suffered very heavy losses ranging from 5.77 per cent to 12.34 per cent in all the types of areas. Consequently, at the 1965 polls the CPI has not even been able to consolidate its position of 1957 in any of the areas. In 1967, however, it has recovered some of its losses in Rural areas and Big town areas. But Small and Middle-size town areas which have at times registered the maximum Communist voter turn-out have exhibited very big fluctuations.

So, to conclude, Small and Middle-size town areas have registered the highest Communist voter turn-out. By exhibiting the biggest shifts in the voting preferences, they have also registered major losses for the Communists.

Except in 1967, Big town areas have been consistently indicating the lowest Communist voter turn-out. Even though these

areas have registered a 6.19 per cent upward shift for the Communists in 1960, in 1965 they have been pushed back to their 1957 position and in 1967 they have slightly recovered their position.

Regional Trends

In the region of Malabar, CPI's strength is gradually concentrating in Big town areas and rural areas. In the General Election of 1967, Small and Middle-size town areas have registered big losses, perhaps due to the factor of election alliance. This trend broadly conforms with the State pattern. As has already been noted, Malabar is characterized by the sudden and anarchical growth of small towns and their accompanying problems. Further, as would be explained later, Malabar has the highest agricultural labour pressure. These factors are logically paying their dividends to the Communists. Strangely, in the region of Malabar Communists have secured their highest voter turn-out twice in Big town areas.

In the region of Cochin, Rural areas and Small town areas have registered the highest Communist voter turn-out while Middle-size and Big town areas have been weakest support to the Communists. But in this region also it is clearly visible that Communist fortunes are highly fluctuating in the Small and Middle-size town areas. These trends are broadly conforming to the State patterns. The formation of United Front of Leftists in 1967 as an anti-Congress front, however, seems to have paid good dividends to the Communists in the Big town areas.

In the region of Travancore also, in general, the CPI has secured its maximum voter turn-out from Rural areas and Small town areas and lowest from Big town areas. Here again the Communist fortunes are highly fluctuating in the Small and Middle-size town areas. In other words, whatever the strength the Communists have in Travancore, they have it in Rural areas only. Their backbone in the Urban areas seems to have been broken to a large extent.

The Mechanics of Voting Preferences

As has already been pointed out, in the small and middle-size towns of Kerala manufacturing labourers and manual labourers

comprise a major chunk of the active population. The Census of 1961 shows that these towns essentially have lower literacy rates than the bigger towns. The standard of living, employment openings, opportunities for rest and recreation, civic amenities and medical facilities are very poor in these towns. Further, the Small and Middle-size towns in Kerala are growing at a very rapid speed, making any proper planning almost impossible. Provision for civic amenities is not keeping pace with the rapid urban development. Within the past decade 21 small and middle-size towns have sprung up around these unmechanized industries. It is significant that in the region of Malabar alone 18 small towns and middle-size towns have sprung up.

Further, in India, small and middle-size towns, particularly of the manufacturing type, are composed dominantly with the mediocre educated and semi-skilled youth in the age group of 20 to 30, who migrate from the rural areas. They migrate naturally with higher aspirations, big ambitions and hopes of better living. But the limited opportunities, unhygienic conditions of living, soaring prices and lower wages, are likely to have a devastating effect on their perceived ambitions and make them highly vulnerable to leftist propaganda and ideology.

V.O. Key pointed out in his book "Southern Politics in State and Nation" that middle-size towns in America exhibit a distinct pattern of political preferences and attitude orientation and that they are more non-conservative than the rural areas. As he has pointed out, the Small and Middle-size town areas of Kerala, no doubt, have exhibited a distinct pattern of voting preferences but they are definitely leftist oriented in contrast to that of the conservative middle-size towns of the United States.

The major gains of the CPI in 1960 and also its heavy losses in 1965 in Small and Middle-size town areas reveal that the manufacturing labourers, semi-skilled manual labourers, frustrated migrated youth and mediocre educated people who are providing the electoral support for the Communists in these areas, are not firmly committed to the Communist ideology. It is true that these people are generally leftist-oriented but they are not hardcore Communists and they have not proved as yet that they are consistent and unvacillating in their support to the Communists. So, the Communists in India have yet to discover

that the winning over of the industrial proletariat at the polls is as difficult as that of winning them over for an armed uprising.

The situation with Big town areas is different. They are identified with the middle classes and elite. They are more literate, have better economic status, higher social prestige and higher degree of civic amenities. The better paid government and private white-collar services give them a sense of security. These areas have turned in the lowest votes to the Communists. Broadly speaking, the middle classes in Kerala have never lent much support for the Communists. However, the above inferences fall short of explaining some of the regional variations in the voting patterns.

II. Communist Voter-Turnout by Labourer Cultivator Ratio

Marxian predictions relating to the internal class relationships of the peasant community and the inevitable development of big landlordism in agriculture, to the effect that the isolated pursuits of agriculture would condemn the whole peasant community to political inactivity and inarticulation have had the same fate, as any of his other socio-economic and political predictions. Marx firmly believed that the peasant community would be gradually divided into the haves and have-nots. He was sure that in agriculture, as in industry, landed property would get increasingly concentrated into fewer and fewer hands. However, unlike the have-nots industrial proletariat, the 'have-not peasants' of the agricultural field, according to him, would be politically passive and unawakening, however unscrupulously they might have been exploited by the big landlords. Lenin's pragmatism, however, had compelled him to theorize that the 'have-not peasants' would join hands with the industrial proletariat in bringing a revolution. If Lenin made a partial use of the peasants and technical use of the bourgeois in bringing a revolution, Mao solely made the peasant community the solid base of the Communist Revolution. He excluded only the feudal landlords and the landed aristocrats from the 'revolutionary masses' and theorized that the peasants can be as much politically alive as the industrial proletariat.

However, the Indian conditions had never lent themselves to

any of the above evolutionary and revolutionary processes of Marxian and Neo-Marxian interpretations. The feudal hierarchies that had arisen under the Hindu, Muslim or British systems of administrations, were only revenue collecting agencies with semi-political and judicial powers. These elements have been completely uprooted by the post-independence Government.

Development of big landlordism or farm ownership and management on commercial scale is out of question in India, due to the Hindu caste system and Hindu laws of inheritance. The Hindu caste system, which was based upon occupational classification of society, divided the haves and have-nots of the agricultural field on a caste basis. If landlordism has to develop it has to develop in 'cultivating castes' and that has been prevented due to the Hindu laws of inheritance and fragmentation of land. So, presently 90 per cent of the land holdings are generally below the size of 10 acres. While the land is vested in the hands of certain cultivating castes, the sub-castes have been assigned with the responsibilities of rendering necessary services to the cultivating castes. And the cultivating castes in their turn, had the obligation of economically supporting the sub-castes that are rendering services to them. So, the present-day have-nots in the agricultural field, who depend upon agricultural labour as a source of living, was more due to their caste than due to losing of their property rights on their own lands. In the light of this background three points can be deduced which are relevant to our present discussion.

Firstly, farmers, engaged in agricultural production on commercial scale, in the Western sense, are almost absent in the Indian scene. Generally cultivators in India are those who are engaged in cultivation of land personally or in the direction or supervision of the cultivation of land owned by themselves or leased from others. In Kerala, particularly, about 80 per cent of the landholdings are of very small size, falling below the size of 10 acres. The big peasants whom the Communists call as 'landlords' are those who hold the landholdings of the size of twenty acres and above. They do not even come to 10 per cent of the landholdings in Kerala. However, the cultivators in Kerala are highly literate and politically active and articulate. In many cases they are also the leaders of the local democratic institutions.

Secondly, agricultural labourers in India traditionally belong to the untouchable castes of Hindu religion. They never had any landed interests. Traditionally and customarily they depend for their livelihood upon providing services to the superior castes. Economically they are the poorest, socially they are segregated and educationally they are the most backward. Any or every hope of socio-economic change to better their lot would be welcomed by them.

Thirdly, the mode of cultivation in India makes interdependence of labouring and cultivating classes inevitable and economically about fifty per cent of the poor peasants are not much better off than the agricultural labourers. In fact, some of the economic surveys show that at least a small percentage of the peasants are working part time as agricultural labourers. So, if Lenin's and Mao's interpretations of class consciousness and class alignments are unquestionable, the whole peasant community (as 90 per cent of them are genuinely poor though articulate) and the agricultural labourers should unhesitatingly join hands with each other and stand solid for the promotion of the Communist cause. And now we can see in terms of votes as how the constituencies predominantly inhabited by these cultivators or agricultural labourers are behaving at the polls. The voting trends of the constituencies with high pressure of agricultural labourers would be broadly interpreted as the voting behaviour of the agricultural labourers and the voting trends of the constituencies where the cultivators are dominant would be interpreted as the voting behaviour of the cultivators.

TABLE VI. 3
Communist Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation
to the Variable of Labourer Cultivator Ratio

Election	Communist voter turn-out in per cent			
	Heavy labour pressure areas	Moderate labour pressure areas	Low labour pressure areas	Cultivator dominating areas
1957	42.84	37.61	32.99	34.91
1960	50.00	42.34	37.26	38.57
1965	38.67	36.16	30.45	28.42
1967	39.65	37.49	31.16	24.64

In all the elections, the CPI has secured its maximum voter turn-out in Heavy labour pressure areas and its lowest voter turn-out from Cultivator dominating areas and the low Labour pressure areas. Another clear trend on this variable is that Communist voter turn-out has always gone up with an increase in the agricultural labour pressure upon cultivators.

TABLE VI. 4
Gains and Losses of the CPI in Kerala in Relation
to the Variable of Laboubrer-Cultivator Ratio

Period	<i>Gains and losses of the CPI in per cent</i>			
	<i>Heavy labour pressure areas</i>	<i>Moderate labour pressure areas</i>	<i>Low labour pressure areas</i>	<i>Cultivator dominating areas</i>
1957 to 1960	+ 7.16	+ 4.53	+ 4.27	+ 3.66
1960 to 1965	- 11.13	- 6.18	- 6.81	- 10.15
1965 to 1967	+ 0.78	+ 1.33	+ 0.71	- 3.78

In terms of gains and losses, the CPI has suffered very high fluctuations in the Cultivator dominating areas. In 1965, the CPI has suffered very heavily in Labour pressure areas which are its strong-holds but recovered slightly in 1967 whereas it has suffered further losses in 1967 in Cultivator dominating areas. No doubt, in the 1967 General Elections the voting preferences are conditioned by the formation of the anti-Congress United Front of Leftists. But the fact that the CPI has been allowed to contest primarily in the Labour pressure areas and has been able to slightly improve its position and the fact that it has contested less seats or secured less votes in the Cultivator dominating areas, indicate that the CPI derives its strength primarily from Labour pressure areas.

Regional Trends

The voting preferences in the region of Malabar conform exactly to the State trends. In this region there are no areas

which fall under the definition of Cultivator dominating areas and in all the elections, the CPI has derived its highest voter turn-out from the Heavy labour pressure areas and lowest voter turn-out from Low labour pressure areas. Further, even though the CPI has secured its maximum strength from the labour areas, it has also suffered heavy fluctuations in its fortunes in these areas.

In the regions of Cochin and Travancore, also the trends of voting preferences conform to that of the State and the CPI has drawn its maximum strength usually from Labour pressure areas and minimum from Cultivator dominating areas. The overall losses suffered by the CPI, in the Cultivator dominating areas in the region of Travancore are particularly significant.

The findings on this variable are very clear. The voting preferences based on the cultivator-labourer ratio are consistently operating almost like general laws. The Communist voter turn-out always is the highest among the Heavy labour pressure areas and is the lowest, with very few exceptions among Low labour pressure areas and cultivator dominating areas.

Further, the fluctuations in the CPI's voter turn-out also are very high in the areas where it is generally polling its maximum voter turn-out. The losses of the CPI, among the Low labour pressure areas and Cultivator dominating areas also, are heavy.

The fact that CPI's strongholds in Kerala are Heavy labour pressure areas can be explained very easily. In the areas where the agricultural labourers are in a majority, in relation to the cultivators, they can successfully organize themselves into a decisive force and the social and economic sanctions that the cultivators may think of using to force the labourers to accept their (cultivators') political lead may not be any deterrent. Communist promises like the distribution of land to the poor tiller, higher labour wages, moratoriums on debts, and rights on the lands for the tenants are likely to have electrifying effect on these half-starved and land-thirsty organized agricultural labourers. These sections would welcome any social and political changes that would be of some benefit to them. In areas where the cultivators are in a minority, as against the labourers, they may take the elections passively and thus indirectly offer an opportunity to the labourers to turn up at the polls. The fact that the voter turn-out is lowest among the

Heavy labour pressure areas and that the CPI is having its highest voter turn-out among these areas clearly indicates that the cultivators among these areas are passive. On the other hand, in the Low labour pressure areas and Cultivator dominating areas, the cultivators can easily and successfully manoeuvre and manipulate the labourers to follow their own (cultivators') lead. This is particularly so, in the regions of Cochin and Travancore where the Congress is successfully attempting to wipe out the Communists from Low labour pressure areas and Cultivator dominating areas. However, even though the highest and lowest Communist voter turn-out figures are tempting the Communists to completely and unhesitatingly rely upon the agricultural labourers, the gains and losses figures have to be really disheartening for them. The big gains (in 1960) and the heavy losses (in 1965) of the CPI in the Heavy labour pressure areas necessarily lead to the conclusion that even though the agricultural labourers are providing the biggest support base for the CPI they are not as yet ideologically and firmly committed to the Communists.

On the other hand, it has already been observed that cultivators in Kerala are generally poor. Particularly in the regions of Cochin and Travancore, landholdings are deplorably fragmented and the land-thirsty cultivators in Kerala do not come anywhere near the concept of landlords. If the Communist social class and class alignment analysis is correct, these cultivators should stand with them or at least should not oppose them. But at the polls in Kerala the cultivators seem to be the bitter opponents of the Communists. Cultivator dominating areas and the Low labour pressure areas are two categories where the cultivators numerically outnumber the agricultural labourers. These areas are voting lowest to the Communists. In Malabar there are no Cultivator dominating areas and the Low labour pressure areas are voting lowest to the CPI. In Travancore Low labour pressure areas vote lowest to the CPI. The State figures also show that the CPI polled its lowest voter turn-out in Low labour pressure areas. So, it may be hoped that further probing into the Cultivator dominating areas will reveal some intervening socio-economic factors which are preventing them from turning out lowest Communist voter turn-out. But the conclusions that the agricultural labourer in Kerala is an

oscillating supporter of the CPI and that the poor cultivator is a determined opponent of the CPI cannot be superficial.

IV. Communist Voter turn-out by per cent of Winning

As we have already noted, Marx and his followers firmly believed that the division of the society into antagonistic classes, based upon the mode of production would be inevitable and that the antagonistic classes would ever be fighting and never compromising until the exploited have-nots are able to completely demolish capitalism, liquidate the capitalists and socially own the means of production for themselves. Further, according to Marx, the exploited have-nots, however hard they may be pressed, will always stand solid through thick and thin with the Communists who vanguard the proletariat revolution.

There is also a general impression that the sympathizers and the supporters of the Communists are unvassillating and that they would stand with the Communists ever unperturbed. So, in the context of elections, such impressionistic opinions infer that the Communist supporting vote would remain constant while the fluctuations in the voter turn-out of other parties would be of great magnitude. Whenever there is an election in India, and the Communists are contesting, the general comment is that the Communists would poll their votes cent-per-cent and the result would depend upon the ability of other parties equally to poll their votes cent-per-cent. Both the general public and the politicians unhesitatingly presume that the Communist voters, in general terms at least, are unvassillating.

However, as we have observed during the analysis of the voting preferences on the first two variables, the Communists not only suffer fluctuations and losses in all the areas but also suffer very badly among their own stronghold areas. Further, a general analysis of the votes polled and seats won by the Communist Party in Kerala tells us that the votes polled and seats won, are not directly proportional.

A thorough application of the methodological design on political competitiveness which we have described in the chapter on 'The Method' would have discovered the trends of the voter turn-out and voting preferences in polls in direct, triangular and multi-angular contest and also in terms of Safe, Marginal and

Unsafe areas. Such an accurate study on the continuum of political competitiveness would have made the party position clear. And as such, an exhaustive study was not possible, our inference on the voting preferences on this variable can only be partially true. Political competitiveness is likely to be least in Safe areas and likely to be most in Marginal areas and also sometimes (when the voter turn-out strength of all candidates is equally distributed) in Unsafe areas. In terms of the pressure of the number of contestants, it would be less in Safe areas, as these constituencies would be identified as strongholds of one party or the other. In Marginal areas the pressure of contestants is likely to be less but more than in Safe areas, because these constituencies would generally be identified as the areas of keen contest between two candidates or parties. It is only among the Unsafe areas that the pressure of contestants is likely to be the heaviest and also it is among these areas that a shrewed and disciplined political party has better scope for manoeuvrings. In other words, while a high percentage of vote in Safe areas symbolizes the solid foundations of the party and a high percentage of vote in Unsafe areas signifies a slender foundation of the party. Now we shall see the position of the CPI on this variable.

TABLE VI. 5
**Communist Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation
 to the Variable of per cent of Winning**

<i>Election</i>	<i>Communist voter-turnout in per cent</i>		
	<i>Safe areas</i>	<i>Marginal areas</i>	<i>Unsafe areas</i>
1957	33.16	36.37	32.41
1960	55.87	44.71	33.11
1961	27.04	32.92	33.79
1967	32.56	33.91	14.27

On this variable the CPI has secured its maximum voter turn-out twice from Marginal areas and once from Safe areas and Unsafe areas each. However, Unsafe areas which seem to

have been giving consistent support to the tune of 30 to 35 per cent have given only 14.27 per cent votes to the Communists in 1967. Understandably this is primarily due to the formation of the anti-Congress United Front of Leftists.

TABLE VI. 6
Gains and Losses of the CPI in Kerala in Relation
to the Variable of per cent of Winning

Period	<i>Gains and losses of the CPI in per cent</i>		
	Safe areas	Marginal areas	Unsafe areas
1957 to 1960	+ 22.71	+ 8.34	+ 0.70
1960 to 1965	- 28.83	- 11.79	+ 0.68
1965 to 1967	+ 5.32	+ 1.98	- 19.52

In terms of gains and losses the CPI has secured slight gains from Unsafe areas in 1960 and 1965, while it has suffered very heavy losses among these areas in 1967. Particularly, its losses in the Safe areas are enormous.

Regional Trends

The trends in the region of Malabar also conform to the State pattern. Here the CPI is usually at its weakest in Safe areas and at its strongest in Marginal areas. Broadly speaking, the trends in the region of Cochin also conform to the State patterns. However, in this region the strength of the Communists seems to have been shifting from Marginal areas to Unsafe Areas.

In the region of Travancore, the State patterns are further clearer. In this region, CPI's strength has gradually moved from Safe areas (in 1957) to Marginal areas in 1960 and Unsafe areas in 1965. But in 1967, however, the CPI has drawn its maximum support from Safe areas. Obviously, this bias is caused by the formation of the UFL. CPI's loss is the heaviest among Marginal areas, and Safe areas also have suffered considerable loss. Further, CPI which is at its weakest in the region of Travancore and which has suffered overall losses in the region

of Travancore has shown gains among the Unsafe areas. This makes it evident that the CPI can successfully utilize of triangular and multi-angular contests to its advantage even in its weakest areas. Strangely, the same electoral situation arises when all the political parties are linedup against the Congress.

To sum up, both in 1957 and 1960 the CPI has secured the highest voter turn-out from Marginal areas and lowest voter turn-out from the Unsafe areas. In 1965, however, the CPI's strength moved from Marginal areas to Unsafe areas. It is also significant that the CPI has had its highest voter turn-out from Safe areas only once in 1960. In terms of gains and losses the CPI is incurring heavy losses in Safe and Marginal areas while its position in the Unsafe areas is comparatively stable. So it can be inferred that the CPI's impact is felt more among the areas of triangular and multi-angular contests. In other words, it is making best out of the political clashes of the opponent parties.

To sum up the chapter, the CPI is deriving its maximum support from Heavy labour pressure areas and Moderate labour pressure areas and its minimum support from Cultivator dominating areas and Low labour pressure areas. However, labour pressure areas which have voted heavily to the Communists have also exhibited very heavy fluctuations in their support. This necessarily means that even though the agricultural labourers are generally Communist supporters, they are not unqualifying supporters of the Communists.

The results on the variable of size of town make it evident that the CPI draws its support from the Rural areas and further from among the Middle-size and Small town areas. The CPI has in some elections and in some of the regions also secured its highest voter turn-out from among the Middle-size and Small town areas. But these areas have also exhibited big fluctuations in their support to the Communists.

The Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress, the present ruling party in India, was not a political party when it was founded in 1885. It had always been identified with the Indian Independence Movement.

Even though Congress was born as a middle class elite organization, which had complete faith in British liberal democracy, it tried to wrest from the British colonialists for the Indian subjects all the fundamental rights that the British benevolent empire had granted to its British citizens. The Indian National Congress in the beginning demanded only administrative reforms and better treatment for the western-educated Indians. The demand for benevolent British Indian rule soon turned into a demand for self-rule under the British and the demand for self-rule was soon followed by a demand for Swaraj (Independence). The Congress ultimately issued a "Quit India" notice to the British in 1942. The British rule in the Indian sub-continent finally came to an end on August 15, 1947. Later in 1953, at Avadi, Congress passed a resolution stating that Swaraj is complete only when a 'socialistic pattern of society' is established.

As an organization with broad national aims and aspirations the Indian National Congress did not and could not become a particular class or sectional organization. It welcomed all sections and classes of people who stood for Indian independence. It served almost as a national pool of politicians and also as a sort of political training school for the leaders of various ideological colours and shades. Some of them later broke away from the mother party and established new rightist and ultra-leftist parties. In fact, the present-day Praja Socialist Party, the Republican Party, the Forward Bloc and the Communist Party of India were once sub-groups of the Indian National Congress. Within the Congress organization itself, the struggle between the rightist and leftist forces has been an

unending and uncompromising story since the days of Gokhale and Balgangadhar Tilak. While a large chunk of the Congress leadership and following have been trying to force the Congress towards rightism, the other half of the leadership and following has been trying to convert it into an ultra-radical or socialist party. The fights between Gokhale and Balgangadhar Tilak, Gandhi and Netaji Bose, and Nehru and his opponents were only some of the climaxed contradictions. So the party itself, though it is a single organism, serves both as an opposition and a party in power even now. However, the Congress still retains its character of being a mass national organization with broad national aims and aspirations. It claims to stand for the general upliftment of the society as a whole in all spheres of life with least harm caused to any particular class or section. As the Congress has no theoretical, class or sectional orientation, its electoral achievements also cannot be interpreted in terms of its theoretical foundations. We can only analyse whether there are any consistent patterns or class or sectional orientations in the Congress voter turn-out. Further, we will see the strength of the Congress in relation to its opponent parties, particularly its principal opponent, the Communist Party of India.

I. Congress Voter Turn-out according to Size of Town

TABLE VII.1
**Congress Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation
to the Variable of Size of Town**

<i>Election</i>	<i>Per cent of Valid Votes secured by the Congress</i>			
	<i>Big town areas</i>	<i>Middle-size town areas</i>	<i>Small town areas</i>	<i>Rural areas</i>
1957	40.45	34.95	37.25	38.83
1960	43.62	34.78	35.62	31.74
1965	44.49	48.69	47.46	47.15
1967	43.48	43.02	42.79	43.00

In the State, as a whole, in 1957, 1960 and 1967 the Congress has secured its highest voter turn-out from Big town areas. In 1965, however, the Congress has secured its highest voter turn-out from Middle-size town areas. But the Congress has not lost in Big town areas in 1965 and, in fact, it has gained by 0.85 per cent. On the other hand, the Congress in 1957 has secured its lowest voter turn-out (*i.e.*, 34.95 per cent) among Middle-size town areas and in 1960 and 1965 it has secured its lowest voter turn-out among Rural areas.

TABLE VII. 2
Congress Gains and Losses in Kerala in Relation
to the Variable of Size of Town

Period	Congress gains and losses in per cent			
	Big town areas	Middle-size town areas	Small town areas	Rural areas
1957 to 1960	+3.17	- 0.17	- 1.61	- 7.00
1960 to 1965	+0.87	+13.91	+11.84	+15.41
1965 to 1967	-1.01	- 5.67	- 4.67	- 4.15

In the region of Malabar, the Congress has its maximum strength in Big town areas despite great fluctuations in the support it is deriving from these areas. The Congress is also making headway among the Middle-size and Small town areas which are infested with illiterate and mediocre-educated manufacturing labourers. However, the Congress continues to be very weak among Rural areas. And its fortunes continue to fluctuate very heavily in Middle-size and Small town areas. The problems of landlordism and heavy labour pressure might have been responsible for this trend.

In Cochin, however, the Congress does not have any good strong-holds which always stand by it. It has always been securing its lowest voter turn-out from Small town areas. Even though the Congress bagged net gains in 1965 in all the areas, it has suffered considerable losses in Big town areas. Only

Small town areas have registered consistent and repeated gains for the Congress.

In the region of Travancore, however, the Congress has secured its maximum support from the Middle-size and Small town areas. Further, while it has registered tremendous gains in all the areas in this region in 1965, it has suffered considerable losses in 1967. Travancore is the strong-hold of the Congress and true to its strength it has registered net gains in this region in all types of areas since 1957.

To sum up, the Congress is at its maximum strength among Big town areas and has its weakest support among Rural areas. In Small and Middle-size town areas, it stands in between Big town areas and Rural areas. In terms of gains and losses, the Congress is consistently gaining in Big town areas, while in all the other areas it has suffered losses in 1960 and 1967. Even in 1967, when it has suffered losses in all types of areas, its losses are at a minimum among Big town areas.

The reason for the above trends is not far to seek. As has already been explained in the chapter on the CPI, Big town areas represent highly educated middle class social elite in Kerala. These people form the backbone of the Congress support structure. In Small and Middle-size town areas which are infested with illiterate labourers and which have been registering heavy fluctuations in voting preferences, the Congress has made headway in 1965 election, but lost heavily in 1967. Rural areas, in general, registered marginal voting preference fluctuations. But the Congress made a headway in these areas also. In short, the Congress has consolidated its strength where it has been traditionally strong and has been very fastly gaining new support where it has been traditionally weak, *i.e.*, in Small and Middle-size town areas and Rural areas. This trend stands diametrically opposite to the position of the Communists.

II. Congress Voter Turn-out by Labourer-Cultivator Ratio

On this variable, the Congress has secured its highest voter turn-out either from Moderate labour pressure areas or from Cultivator dominating areas. On the other hand, the Congress has secured its lowest voter turn-out either from Low labour pressure areas or from Heavy labour pressure areas.

TABLE VII. 3
Congress Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation to the
Variable of Labourer-Cultivator Ratio

Election	<i>Per cent of valid votes secured by the Congress</i>			
	<i>Heavy labour pressure areas</i>	<i>Moderate labour pressure areas</i>	<i>Low labour pressure areas</i>	<i>Cultivator dominating areas</i>
1957	41.14	42.07	35.58	39.53
1960	35.50	41.81	32.20	34.85
1965	41.16	48.63	45.89	54.39
1967	37.89	44.43	42.06	48.17

TABLE VII. 4
Congress Gains and Losses in Kerala in Relation to the
Variable of Labourer-Cultivator Ratio

Period	<i>Congress gains and losses in per cent</i>			
	<i>Heavy labour pressure areas</i>	<i>Moderate labour pressure areas</i>	<i>Low labour pressure areas</i>	<i>Cultivator dominating areas</i>
1957 to 1960	—5.64	—0.26	—3.38	—4.70
1960 to 1965	+5.66	+6.62	+13.69	+19.56
1965 to 1967	—3.27	—4.20	—3.83	—6.22

In terms of gains and losses the Congress has registered gains in all types of areas in 1965 and particularly its gains in Low labour pressure areas and Cultivator dominating areas are quite significant. In 1967, however, it has suffered losses in all types of areas, but still retains heavy net gains in Low labour pressure areas and Cultivator dominating areas.

To sum up, the Congress generally (except in 1965) has its maximum voter turn-out among Moderate labour pressure areas

and Cultivator dominating areas and its lowest voter turn-out among Low labour pressure areas. In Low labour pressure areas and Cultivator dominating areas many other parties have intervened and secured quite a good share of the total voter turn-out. Hence the votes secured both by the Congress and the Communists among these areas seem to be low. Both the general trends and particularly the Congress voter turn-out in 1965 and 1967 make the nature of political affiliations quite clear.

In 1965 and 1967, the Congress secured gradually high voter turn-out in relation to the declining labour pressure. Further, its ability to secure gains also is clearly in inverse proportion to the amount of labour pressure exerted on cultivators. Consequently, the Congress which has consolidated its position in Heavy labour pressure areas is making good progress in the other areas. But the real support base for the Congress, however, is the cultivator community and their ability to manouvre the elections. With one or two exceptions the trends in various regions also conform to the State patterns.

III. Congress Voter turn-out on the Variable of per cent of Winning

As has already been stated in the chapter on the CPI, this variable of per cent of winning is intended to measure the strength of political parties on the continuum of electoral competitiveness. Electoral competitiveness is likely to be least in Safe areas and likely to be the most in Marginal areas, and at some times, particularly when the voter turn-out strength of contesting candidates is equally distributed, in Unsafe areas. In terms of pressure of contestants, it would be least in Safe areas as these constituencies would generally be identified as strongholds of one party or other. In Marginal areas, the pressure of contestants is likely to be less but more than in Safe areas because these constituencies would generally be identified as areas of keen contest between two or more political parties' candidates. So, of all the areas, it is among the Unsafe areas that the pressure of contestants and spirit of political competitiveness are likely to be the heaviest. Further, it is only among these areas that a shrewd and disciplined political party

better scope for opportunistic manoeuvrings. Thus, while a high percentage of vote in Safe areas indicates a solid and broad based support structure of a party, a high percentage of vote in Unsafe areas signifies a slender and scattered support structure of the party. Our study of the Congress support structure from this angle also reveals that Congress support structure is more solid and broad-based than that of the Communists.

TABLE VII. 5
Congress Voter turn-out in Kerala in Relation to the
Variable of per cent of Winning

Election	Per cent of valid votes secured by the Congress		
	Safe areas	Marginal areas	Unsafe areas
1957	40.13	36.85	34.35
1960	36.72	31.84	30.80
1965	43.07	46.93	50.82
1967	37.15	50.11	59.99

Both in 1957 and 1960 elections, the Congress has secured its highest voter turn-out (40.13 per cent and 36.72 per cent respectively), among Safe areas and its minimum voter turn-out (34.35 per cent and 30.80 per cent respectively), from among Unsafe areas. In 1965 and 1967, however, the Congress has secured its highest voter turn-out (50.82 per cent and 59.99 per cent respectively), from Unsafe areas and its lowest voter turn-out (43.07 per cent and 37.15 per cent respectively), from Safe areas. But the party which was very weak in Marginal and Unsafe areas and strong in Safe areas in 1957 has more or less kept its strength undisturbed in Safe areas and greatly improved its position in the other areas.

The conclusion is very simple. The Congress strength is more concentrated among Safe areas and hence its support structure is likely to be more broad-based. Further, in the elections of 1965 and 1967, the Congress has aggressively pushed into other areas, *i.e.*, Marginal and Unsafe. This clearly indicates that the Congress while consolidating its position in the areas of its

strength, is gradually cultivating its support in other areas. The CPI, on the other hand, has suffered losses among Safe and Marginal areas with a slight gain in Unsafe areas. If our inferences are right, this trend indicates that Communist's strength is getting more and more scattered and slender based. The voting trends in 1967, however, are vitiated by the formation of the United Front.

In terms of highest and lowest Congress voter turn-out, the trend in Malabar is very clear. The strength of the Congress has definitely moved from Marginal areas to Safe areas. Further, Congress has secured net gains in 1967 among Safe areas while it has suffered losses in other areas. However, the fact remains that the Congress is unable to push into Marginal and Unsafe areas against its principal opponent, the CPI. The trends in the regions of Cochin and Travancore also follow the same patterns.

To sum-up the Chapter, Cultivator dominating areas, Low labour pressure areas, Big town areas and Safe areas (with an exception in 1967) are voting more to the Congress Party. Obviously, people with property and professional interests are consistently supporting the Congress Party.

The Muslim League and the SSP

MUSLIM LEAGUE

Of all the political parties that contend for power today in Kerala, the Muslim League is the most religious-oriented. While political groups and parties such as the Kerala Congress (Splinter Congress) and the KTP represent sectional and caste-oriented interests, the Muslim League stands and proclaims itself as the sole protector of Muslim interests. In a multi-religious nation like India, where religion plays an active role in practical politics, either artificially or spontaneously, it is but natural that a particular party should claim the trusteeship of a major minority religion. And, further, there is no other State in India in which a party like the Muslim League could successfully elevate itself into a position from which it could make electoral bargains, as it has been able to do in Kerala. Muslims account for 17.91 per cent of Kerala's total population. This Muslim population is heavily concentrated and therefore very strong in some of the areas of Malabar and Cochin while in the region of Travancore it is largely scattered all over the region and is therefore rendered weaker in the electoral pattern. A comparatively higher percentage of Muslims in Kerala than in the rest of India and the concentration of Muslims in certain areas of Kerala in particular give the Muslim League an edge over the other parties and enable it to tilt the balance of power either way in the politics of this State.

The fact that Muslim League draws its votes principally from the Muslim community can be illustrated by the Table VIII-1 given below.

Thus, during the 1960 elections, the Muslim League contested only in the region of Malabar and secured 13.64 per cent of valid votes polled in that region. In 1965, however, it contested in all the regions and secured 14.40 per cent, 3.30 per cent and

TABLE VIII.1

Per cent of Muslim Population and Muslim Voter turn-out

Region	Muslims as % of total population	Muslim League Voter turn-out		
		1960	1965	1967
Malabar	32.96	13.64	14.40	16.19
Cochin	11.50	—	3.30	3.52
Travancore	8.15	—	.41	0.81
Kerala	17.91	4.96	6.00	6.75

0.41 per cent in the regions of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore respectively. In the State as a whole, it secured 4.96 per cent votes in 1960 and 6.00 per cent votes in 1965. In 1967, perhaps due to the formation of the United Front of Leftists, it has further improved its position in all the regions and the State as well. This Muslim voter turn-out seems to have a set pattern. Except in the region of Travancore, the League's percentage of voter turn-out seems to work out to roughly one-third of its population percentage. Its better performance in Malabar is the result of a higher concentration of Muslims in some areas in that region, while its poor performance in the region of Travancore is explained by sparcely scattered population.

The Muslim League is solely interested in the promotion of its own communal interests and feels free to go hand in hand with any political party or group that would serve this objective.

The Muslim League as an organised political party first appeared on the Kerala political landscape only after the 1957 General Election and particularly during the anti-communist liberation struggle when all the non-communist political parties of Kerala were trying to muster the maximum support to pull down the Communist regime. The Muslim League's association with the PSP and Congress during the liberation struggle gave it a moral standing and the party which did not dare to put up candidates under its own banner in the 1957 General Election, contested the 1960 General Election as an approved partner of the anti-communist tri-party front. However, after the 1960

General Election, in which the Communists were routed, the Muslim League got a raw deal and it was ungenerously kept out of the Ministry by the Congress. So, in 1965, the Muslim League entered into indiscriminate election adjustments with Communists and the SSP and fought the Congress. In 1967 it was one of the constituents of the UFL. However, as can be seen from the above Table, despite these varied electoral adjustments, the League largely continues to draw its votes from its own community.

In 1960, in Malabar, the League seems to have drawn its votes principally from among Small town areas and Rural areas from and among Safe and Unsafe areas on the variable of electoral competitiveness, from among Low labour pressure and Moderate labour pressure areas on the variable of labourer-cultivator ratio.

In 1965, the situation has somewhat changed. It has secured its major share of votes from among Big and Middle-size town areas on the variable of size of towns, from among Marginal areas on the variable of competitiveness, and from among Moderate labour pressure areas on the variable of labourer-cultivator ratio.

To conclude, in brief, the Muslim League improved its position in the region of Malabar in 1965, and further in 1967 it got a foothold in the region of Cochin and made its influence felt in the region of Travancore.

THE SAMYUKTA SOCIALIST PARTY

Among the democratic opposition parties in India the SSP is the extreme leftist party. It prescribes revolutionary socio-economic changes as remedies to all the socio-economic ills of the present day, but steadfastly adheres to democratic principles and constitutionalism in bringing about these changes.

The history of this Party in Kerala is rather a long one. The PSP, from which later arose the present-day SSP, was first established by Mr. Pattam Thanu Pillai, when he and his followers broke away from the Indian National Congress. The PSP soon became a powerful party in the Travancore-Cochin State. In fact, in 1954, before the formation of Kerala, when none of the political parties secured a workable majority in the

State Legislative Assembly to form a Government, it was the PSP which formed the Ministry with Congress support. The PSP Government also did not, however, perform better than the previous Congress Governments and it did not stay long. Since then, the PSP has never recovered its position of power. The subsequent split of the PSP into the ISP and the PSP, the willing retirement of Mr. Pattam Thanu Pillai from his political career in exchange for a Governor's post, the merger of the PSP and the ISP into the SSP, and division of the SSP into the SSP and the PSP have crippled the Party very heavily in Kerala. Today, large sections of the old ISP and the PSP have rejoined the SSP. For all practical purposes the PSP is erased from Kerala's political scene. Hence the strength of the previous PSP is duly shown as that of the SSP for the convenience of comparison.

As a party committed to socialism and democracy and as a party which cherishes democracy, constitutional form of Government and orderly changes and reforms, the SSP draws a large chunk of its leadership from the educated middle classes, and its following and support mainly from the labour classes.

On the eve of every election, the SSP also has the same temptations as that of the Muslim League. It is ever eager to make alliances with any political party to promote its own interests. From 1948 until 1957, the Socialists of Kerala were eager partners of the United Front of Leftists which consisted predominantly of Communists. However, the Socialists actively participated in pulling down the Communist regime in 1959 and fought the 1960 Election as a partner of the anti-Communist tripartite front. After 1960, Mr. Pattam Thanu Pillai became the Chief Minister with the co-operation of the Congress despite the fact that his party was not only a minority one in the State Legislature but also numerically much smaller than the Congress. But he soon accepted the post of Governor and the remaining frustrated SSP members of the Ministry had to resign. Consequently in 1965, the SSP entered into electoral adjustments with the Communists and the Muslim League and in 1967 has become a partner of the UFL. These unstable alliances naturally make any assessment of the real strength of the SSP in terms of votes really precarious.

On the variable of size of towns, the SSP has secured its maximum votes from among Middle-size and Small town areas

in all the three elections. But it has also been suffering net losses in all the areas except for a slight gain of 0.81 per cent among Big town areas. The region of Malabar generally seems to be more favourable to the SSP. Here the Party has secured gains ranging from 1.71 to 5.45 per cent in 1965. In the region of Cochin also the SSP has been securing its big chunk of votes from Middle-size and Small town areas. The SSP, however, has suffered heavily in the regions of Cochin and Travancore.

On the variable of cultivator-labourer ratio, Heavy labour pressure areas are the only areas where the SSP has a net gain of 4.93 per cent in the State as a whole in 1965. On this variable also Malabar is the only region from which the SSP has been securing good gains in Low labour pressure areas and Cultivator dominating areas. The support of the SSP is gradually but definitely disintegrating in the regions of Cochin and Travancore.

On the variable of political competitiveness the trends are very clear. Generally, the SSP has been securing its maximum voter turn-out from Marginal areas and the minimum from Unsafe areas. But the fact that the SSP has secured some good gains among Safe areas in the State as a whole, and all the regions as well, is significant. On the other hand, the SSP has suffered big losses in the State as a whole, and all the regions as well, from among Marginal and Unsafe areas. This might have been due to the fact that the SSP has been carefully trying to avoid precarious contests by concluding electoral adjustments with other opposition parties. It can further be inferred that the SSP is principally concentrating in its own prospective areas.

In brief, the SSP also is securing its maximum support from the areas from which the communists have been drawing their major share of votes. But the SSP is definitely not as strong as the CPI is in these areas and the strength of the SSP is declining more rapidly than that of the CPI in these areas.

Summary of the Findings and Conclusions

The socio-economic and demographic diversities and disparities among the regions in Kerala are very pronounced. In the fields of religion, occupational distribution of working force, rural urban break-up, literacy, size of landholdings, unemployment, density of population per square mile, location of industries and even in the lay-out of natural resources the regions show great variations.

The region of Malabar is characterized by Muslim dominance, landlordism, heavy agricultural labour pressure, middle-size towns of unmechanized manufacturing pursuits, low urbanity, low literacy and unemployment. These conditions have made this region more vulnerable to Communist propaganda.

The region of Cochin is characterized by Christian dominance, middle-class peasantry and big towns of manufacturing pursuits. The region also is the highest urbanized and highly literate. The employment situation is better than in the other regions. Both the Communists and the Congress have a foothold in the region of Cochin.

The region of Travancore, on the other hand, is characterized by the domination of Nayar Service Society, poor or lower middle class owner cultivators, low agricultural labour pressure and big towns with a majority of white-collar servants. The region is highly literate and highly urbanized. All these conditions seem to offer a favourable atmosphere for Congress. The Congress' appeal to the people for safeguarding democracy, socialism and individual rights, is more effective in this region than in the other regions.

On the political front, since the merger of Travancore and Cochin States in 1948, factionalism, personal rivalries and political games of small political parties appear to be the primary ills of Kerala politics. Neither any party nor any individual on Kerala's political landscape appears to be free from these prejudices.

Since 1948, the Congress has formed the Ministry in Kerala as many as six times. All the six times, the Ministry has either resigned or been pulled down due to inter-factionalism or personal rivalries.

The PSP came into power twice with the support of the Congress. But on both the occasions the Congress subsequently withdrew its support. The Communists came into power once in 1957 and again in 1967 ; in 1957 its Ministry was forced out by the united opposition of all other parties. Apart from these, Kerala politicians have the oft-repeated tendency of creating rival parties. Today in the State there are two Congress Parties, two Communist Parties and three Socialist Parties. Parties within parties and factions within factions have been permanent evils in Kerala. The electorate also do not seem to have found any solution for these ills. The political preferences of the electorate continue to swing from one side to the other at the slightest provocation.

Formation of fronts and alliances has been the slogan of the day and after either the Congress or the CPI (whichever party in power) has been the target of such a United Front or Liberation Front.

The Electorate

Regarding the electorate, the available data does not provide any sound basis to draw definite conclusions. Unlike the United States, the voter registration system in India does not call for any conscious duty on the part of the eligible citizen to get himself registered as a voter before he can cast his vote in any election. Voters' lists in India are prepared by the Election Commission as a matter of responsibility.

However, some rough conclusions can be drawn. In view of the facts that the birth rate of Kerala's population has been static for the last several decades while its death rate is consistently coming down, any normal growth in population can only contribute towards an increase in the population having the right to vote. But facts are not so. While the voter turn-out in Kerala, from election to election, is considerably increasing, the size of the electorate has slightly come down. In the State as a whole there is a definite shrinkage of 2.50 per cent of electorate

from 1957 to 1965. Regionwise, Cochin shows an increase of 0.81 per cent and Malabar shows a shrinkage of 0.78 per cent, while Travancore shows a very steep decline of about 6.00 per cent.

In a country like the United States, such an electoral shrinkage could only mean a growing disinterestedness of the voters in elections. But in India, where intriguing party electioneering exists, this is definitely suspicious. In India there is a tendency on the part of each political party to get registered as voters as many of its supporters as possible while preventing the registration of the voters likely to vote for others. Whether this sort of malpractice is a reality in Kerala is anybody's guess and a matter worth probing in.

Voter turn-out

Kerala has the highest voter turn-out in India at any general election. And within the State the regions of Cochin (in 1960 & 1965) and Travancore (in 1957) register the maximum voter turn-out. Consequently voter turn-out has been least in the region of Malabar, the strong-hold of the CPI, at all the general elections. The above said regional diversities and disparities in the spheres of literacy, urbanity, employment etc. appear to be mainly responsible for these trends.

Impact of Socio-Demographic Factors on Voter turn-out

Voter turn-out is the lowest in Heavy labour pressure areas in all the general elections. Voter turn-out increases with the rising proportion of the cultivators. Cultivator dominating areas have registered maximum voter turn-out in all the regions and in almost all the general elections.

The introduction of the Panchayat Raj organs, involvement of the people with the rights of freedom and property, and an attempt to save their rights whenever they are in peril, wide range of literacy among the landowning classes and a low literacy rate among the agricultural labourers appear to have been the real reasons for these trends in voter turn-out.

On the variable of the size of town, Rural areas and Big town areas have polled maximum votes in all the general elections

and the variation of voter turn-out between these two categories in any general election is hardly 2.00 per cent. However, Middle-size town areas have the lowest voter turn-out.

Big towns in Kerala are highly literate and a major portion of the working population in these towns is in the tertiary sector. Hence big towns, apart from being the places of industrial activity, represent the cream of intelligentsia of the State. So, it is natural that they exhibit a very high level of political consciousness. Middle-size towns on the other hand are places of unmechanized manufacturing pursuits. They have very low literacy. Quite a few of these towns are new ones which are developing around new economic activities. These new places, which also possess big proportion of migrant population, exhibit less political interest, hence less voter turn-out. As has already been stated, higher voter turn-out in Rural areas is mainly accounted for by the enlightened cultivating community.

On the variable of political consciousness, Unsafe areas and Safe areas have polled less votes than the Marginal areas in all the general elections. This means that voter turn-out is the highest in the areas of intense political competitiveness. It means that irrespective of economic disparities and literacy levels voters are conscious and capable of perceiving the prevailing competitive atmosphere and express their preferences accordingly. This is a healthy sign for the success of democracy in any nation.

Effects of Voter turn-out

In the State as a whole and the regions as well, higher voter turn-out had led to the loss of strength by SSP, RSP and the Independents. Excepting in the region of Malabar, a heavier voter turn-out in any election is a great setback for the Communists. In fact, Communist electoral fortunes in Kerala are in inverse ratio to the voter turn-out. Even in the region of Malabar they could not raise their share of votes in proportion to the rise in voter turn-out.

The only party which seems to gain by a higher voter turn-out is the Congress and particularly in the region of Travancore its fortunes greatly rise with a rise in the voter turn-out. A 7.00 per cent rise in the voter turn-out in the region of Travancore

has given a 21.00 per cent edge to the Congress over other parties. Therefore, it is evident, that under normal circumstances, the supporters of the Congress, to a large extent are complacent and that a strong organizational force is necessary for the mobilization of its strength in full.

As stated by the famous political scientist V.O. Key, the constituencies having middle-size towns exhibited a pattern of electoral behaviour distinct from those of the highly urbanized or rural constituencies.

Impact of Social and Demographic Factors

Size of Town : The strength of the Congress is very high in all the general elections among the Big town areas and the Rural areas. In Middle-size and Small town areas Congress strength is relatively weaker than that of the Communists in all the general elections. However, Congress has made headway in 1965 among the Middle-size town areas and Rural areas to the tune of 10.00 per cent, while retaining its strength among the Big town areas.

These findings reveal that the general impression held in this country and abroad that the Congress is losing in urban areas, does not hold good in the State of Kerala. Congress is relatively weaker only among the Middle-size towns, and Small town areas.

The Communists, on the other hand, draw their maximum support from the Middle-size and Small town areas. However, the overall losses of the Communists also vary heavily (10.00 per cent) among other areas.

In essence the results show that the partisan preferences are fairly stable both in Big town areas and Rural areas. Whereas the fortunes of all the political parties are highly fluctuating among the Middle-size and Small town areas. In many cases the fluctuations range from 10.00 to 12.00 per cent.

The main reason for these high fluctuations of the partisan preferences in the Middle-size town areas is that these towns are predominantly manufacturing towns. As has been hypothesized by several social scientists, manufacturing towns in any country have a typical socio-economic structure, which will be conducive to political instability. Further, these towns are generally characterized with adverse sex ratio and predominance of the

working male population in the age group of 20 to 35. Struggles for sharing of interests and the use of political power for their interest promotion and realization are the main features in these areas. Hence, the fortunes of parties in these areas heavily fluctuate.

The introduction of the Panchayati Raj, development blocks, and other co-operative societies not only brought the cultivators nearer to politics but also activated them to consistently work for a stabilised Government under the leadership of the Congress. The traditional outlook of the peasantry and the help lent out by the Nayar Service Society to the Congress are the real sources of strength for the Congress in the Rural areas.

Big town areas have a different social structure. All these towns are service towns and are jammed with highly literate white-collar people engaged in Government services and private companies. These social groups faithfully support the Congress.

Labourer-Cultivator Ratio

On this variable the strongholds of the Congress are the Cultivator dominating areas. Among these areas, the Congress has secured as high as 54.00 per cent of the votes in 1965 general election. This perhaps is the maximum percentage of votes, the Congress has ever secured in Kerala, from any given occupational group. Further, the Congress which has suffered among all the areas very badly in 1960 has almost regained its position in 1965. Its gains among the Cultivator dominating areas are as high as 19.00 per cent in 1965. This trend is observed in the State as a whole and all the regions as well. But it is glaring in the region of Travancore.

The CPI, on the other hand, draws its maximum support from Heavy labour pressure areas. And, further, its strength is waning off as agricultural labour pressure over that of cultivators is decreasing. In fact, it is weakest in all the three general elections among the Cultivator dominating areas. Among these areas the CPI has secured only 28.00 per cent votes in 1965.

This may be due to several reasons such as lack of ideological articulation, failure of the Communists to mobilize their strength or may be even due to certain inhibitory and economic restraints exercised by some social classes. Among the Rural

areas the backbone of the Congress Party is the poor farmer or the owner cultivator, generally with a landholding below five acres. The Communist appeal seems to be effective more among the landless labourers, than among the poor peasantry in Kerala.

Political Competitiveness

On this variable also, partisan preferences are fairly stable for all the parties among the Safe areas. Marginal and Unsafe areas have exhibited big fluctuations both in the voter turn-out and voting preferences. The only conclusion on this variable can be that the electorate is very rational and capable of perceiving the competitive political atmosphere. Therefore, the cross pressures for the act of voting and for political change in terms of shifts from one party to the other, are at their peak in the Marginal areas.

So, in brief, today the tug of war in Kerala is mainly between the landed and the landless, highly literate and illiterate, technically skilled and unskilled. The rural farmers and the urban elite stand on one side while the agricultural labourers and the workers in unmechanised manufacturing pursuits stand on the other. So the conclusion that the voting preferences are based more on the social and economic considerations than on ideological orientation seems to be convincing.

These findings probably would have surprised Karl Marx and his staunch followers who held that urbanization and industrialisation create the cleavages among the population and increase the class conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is the pattern and content of industrialisation and urbanisation that determines the political attitudes than industrialisation and urbanisation as such. In fact, today the political landscape of Kerala would have been different if the socio-economic situation is more at ease.

Regionalisation of Political Affiliation

Regionalisation of politics due to all the above socio-economic, religious and demographic factors is another important trend in Kerala politics. There is a tendency on the part of each

party to consolidate its support base in the region which offers best electoral opportunities to itself. In such regions other parties tend to fade out gradually. The position of the Communists and the Muslim League in Malabar and that of the Congress in Travancore are such. In Travancore, particularly almost all the losses suffered by the other parties are simply swallowed down by the Congress. Communists' strength in the region of Travancore is gradually receding. And even though the Congress is gaining in terms of votes in Malabar, in view of the present internal factions its electoral prospects against the combined opposition of the Muslim League and the Communists do not seem to be bright.

In the region of Cochin both the Communists and the Congress are equally powerful. Political affiliations and voting preferences also are comparatively more consistent and stable. Here, while the positions of the Communists and the Congress remain stable, the shifts are occurring between the SSP and the ML. The SSP is gradually disintegrating and the ML is pushing its way up.

Factors such as higher levels of education, industrialisation and urbanisation are often attributed by some as the basic fertile grounds for the emergence of Communist ideology. Our results in this study invalidate such unfounded beliefs. The stronghold of the CPI seems to be the areas where there are landless labourers and towns of unmechanised manufacturing pursuits. However, the intensity of ideological articulation and commitments and political involvements are very weak in Communist controlled areas. It needs more exploratory studies to further confirm our findings.

Further, the effective key to Kerala politics yet remains at the economic and educational levels. An immediate and strict land reform and distribution of the land so as to involve more people with property interests and a sincere effort to improve the present unproductive and unmechanised industries to be more paying and wage earning and a more occupational and purposeful education can easily change and soften the existing political complexion.

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TABLE I

**Per cent of Valid Votes Polled in Each Category and Per cent Valid Votes Secured by Each Party in Each Category—By Size of Towns**

| REGION       | Valid Votes Polled and Party | Big Town Areas |       |       |                | Middle Size Town Areas |       |       |                | Small Town Areas |       |       |                | Rural Areas |       |       |                |
|--------------|------------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|----------------|------------------------|-------|-------|----------------|------------------|-------|-------|----------------|-------------|-------|-------|----------------|
|              |                              | 1957           | 1960  | 1965  | 1967           | 1957                   | 1960  | 1965  | 1967           | 1957             | 1960  | 1965  | 1967           | 1957        | 1960  | 1965  | 1967           |
| KERALA STATE | V.V.P.                       | 68.71          | 85.46 | 74.14 | 74.35          | 63.07                  | 84.15 | 77.33 | 75.43          | 65.76            | 83.79 | 74.10 | 73.62          | 66.63       | 84.79 | 72.70 | 71.44          |
|              | I.N.C.                       | 40.45          | 43.62 | 44.49 | 43.48<br>40.45 | 34.95                  | 34.78 | 48.69 | 43.02<br>34.82 | 37.23            | 35.62 | 47.46 | 42.79<br>38.10 | 38.83       | 31.74 | 47.15 | 43.00<br>32.95 |
|              | C.P.I.                       | 29.28          | 35.37 | 28.45 | 30.93          | 38.68                  | 40.23 | 27.89 | 28.00<br>20.56 | 37.74            | 40.93 | 38.11 | 26.64<br>23.32 | 33.59       | 38.14 | 33.57 | 36.38<br>24.33 |
|              | M.L.                         | —              | —     | 8.77  | 4.22           | —                      | 4.13  | 9.59  | 7.65           | —                | 5.68  | 5.31  | 12.64          | —           | 5.89  | 4.37  | 4.08           |
|              | S.S.P.                       | 7.91           | 9.82  | 8.72  | 6.15           | 14.35                  | 13.12 | 11.05 | 15.45          | 11.21            | 11.66 | 9.39  | 8.52           | 8.79        | 17.07 | 6.41  | 6.71           |
|              | O.P.                         | 3.28           | —     | 8.35  | 10.56          | 4.07                   | 0.16  | 2.12  | 1.48           | 2.48             | —     | 2.77  | 1.75           | 3.17        | 0.07  | 6.46  | 5.05           |
| MALABAR      | IND.                         | 19.08          | 11.19 | 1.22  | 4.61           | 7.95                   | 7.59  | 0.67  | 4.34           | 14.35            | 6.12  | 1.96  | 7.59           | 15.31       | 7.10  | 2.24  | 4.73           |
|              | V.V.P.                       | 60.19          | 83.43 | 75.48 | 75.31          | 54.85                  | 81.07 | 75.14 | 71.95          | 63.16            | 80.51 | 70.96 | 71.68          | 57.82       | 80.09 | 66.84 | 63.41          |
|              | I.N.C.                       | 42.50          | 57.43 | 38.87 | 39.04<br>39.04 | 32.45                  | 24.68 | 33.91 | 28.92<br>28.50 | 33.59            | 29.34 | 37.01 | 35.26<br>35.04 | 35.74       | 24.62 | 31.13 | 31.86<br>31.31 |
|              | C.P.I.                       | 35.49          | 29.90 | 33.13 | 34.72          | 34.84                  | 44.06 | 24.72 | 20.34          | 26.18            | 33.64 | 39.87 | 27.63          | 27.17       | 33.07 | 35.54 | 34.28          |
|              | M.L.                         | —              | —     | 19.81 | 19.60          | —                      | 8.63  | 18.01 | 15.20          | —                | 17.12 | 11.23 | 18.88          | —           | 17.30 | 13.99 | 13.65          |
|              | S.S.P.                       | —              | —     | —     | 0.00           | 17.87                  | 17.61 | 19.58 | 26.09          | 5.86             | 8.18  | 9.57  | 7.94           | 8.60        | 15.43 | 14.05 | 14.92          |
| COCHIN       | O.P.                         | —              | —     | 7.28  | 6.43           | 0.49                   | 0.14  | 3.55  | 3.24           | —                | —     | 1.74  | 2.43           | —           | 0.19  | 3.26  | 1.99           |
|              | IND.                         | 22.01          | 12.67 | 0.91  | 0.19           | 14.36                  | 4.87  | 0.24  | 6.17           | 34.37            | 11.72 | 0.59  | 7.82           | 27.54       | 9.38  | 2.04  | 3.26           |
|              | V.V.P.                       | 72.73          | 87.66 | 78.08 | 78.80          | 66.51                  | 87.45 | 78.26 | 76.62          | 68.81            | 85.62 | 78.21 | 76.97          | 72.58       | 89.30 | 77.20 | 78.21          |
|              | I.N.C.                       | 51.34          | 53.12 | 46.24 | 48.49<br>44.44 | 45.54                  | 44.91 | 53.15 | 48.55<br>40.28 | 44.64            | 37.69 | 45.06 | 49.44<br>44.95 | 49.77       | 57.49 | 52.95 | 49.49<br>39.92 |
|              | C.P.I.                       | 13.60          | 29.63 | 27.01 | 35.67<br>25.03 | 36.77                  | 29.41 | 24.89 | 25.41          | 34.99            | 45.49 | 35.33 | 32.15<br>24.56 | 41.46       | 34.02 | 36.87 | 39.58<br>28.78 |
|              | M.L.                         | —              | —     | 10.00 | —              | —                      | —     | 10.41 | 11.00          | —                | —     | —     | 9.25           | —           | —     | —     | —              |
| TRAVANCORE   | S.S.P.                       | —              | —     | 8.64  | —              | 8.56                   | 10.49 | 10.22 | 7.07           | 15.84            | 15.96 | 8.88  | 7.83           | 4.75        | —     | 1.07  | —              |
|              | O.P.                         | —              | —     | 5.54  | 1.63           | 0.26                   | 0.65  | 0.34  | —              | —                | —     | 9.11  | 0.46           | —           | —     | 6.85  | 3.08           |
|              | IND.                         | 35.06          | 17.25 | 2.56  | 14.19          | 8.86                   | 14.54 | 0.99  | 7.95           | 4.52             | 0.86  | 1.61  | 0.84           | 4.02        | 8.49  | 2.26  | 7.82           |
|              | V.V.P.                       | 71.81          | 85.26 | 71.11 | 71.73          | 69.70                  | 87.07 | 79.44 | 77.93          | 65.79            | 85.41 | 76.63 | 74.82          | 71.66       | 86.93 | 75.03 | 74.31          |
|              | I.N.C.                       | 32.78          | 30.00 | 45.66 | 42.60<br>38.84 | 33.71                  | 43.68 | 62.79 | 51.89<br>37.41 | 34.01            | 39.73 | 62.91 | 50.80<br>38.68 | 37.63       | 29.15 | 55.11 | 46.95<br>30.66 |
|              | C.P.I.                       | 35.37          | 42.01 | 27.46 | 26.69<br>19.25 | 42.05                  | 39.52 | 32.75 | 35.41<br>30.24 | 43.15            | 43.64 | 22.77 | 21.47<br>15.46 | 35.29       | 42.66 | 30.30 | 36.19<br>15.91 |
| TRAVANCORE   | M.L.                         | —              | —     | 3.21  | —              | —                      | —     | —     | —              | —                | —     | —     | 4.64           | —           | —     | —     | —              |
|              | S.S.P.                       | 16.95          | 21.42 | 12.49 | 12.17          | 13.46                  | 8.44  | 2.11  | 10.72          | 12.31            | 10.92 | 9.41  | 9.90           | 10.06       | 22.99 | 3.83  | 4.74           |
|              | O.P.                         | 7.00           | —     | 10.75 | 17.25          | 7.80                   | —     | 1.37  | 0.74           | 7.29             | —     | 0.90  | 1.46           | 6.02        | —     | 8.40  | 7.9            |
|              | IND.                         | 7.87           | 6.57  | 0.43  | 1.20           | 2.99                   | 8.36  | 0.98  | 1.19           | 3.23             | 5.72  | 4.01  | 11.55          | 11.00       | 5.20  | 8.36  | 4.18           |

*Note :* In the General Election in 1967, in the row of the I.N.C. upper figure represents the combined strength of the I.N.C. and K.C. and lower figure represents the strength of the I.N.C. In the row of the C.P.I. upper figure represents the combined strength of the C.P.I. and the Right C.P.I. and lower figure represents the strength of Left C.P.I. alone. In 1967 General Election Right C.P.I. did not contest any seats in the region of Malabar.

TABLE II

Per cent of Valid Votes Polled in Each Category and Valid Votes Secured by Each Party in Each Category  
By Labourer-Cultivator Ratio

| REGION       | Year   | Heavy Labour Pressure Areas |       |       |       | Moderate Labour Pressure Areas |       |       |       | Low Labour Pressure Areas |       |       |       | Cultivator Domination Areas |       |       |       |       |
|--------------|--------|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|              |        | 1957                        | 1960  | 1965  | 1967  | 1957                           | 1960  | 1965  | 1967  | 1957                      | 1960  | 1965  | 1967  | 1957                        | 1960  | 1965  | 1967  |       |
| KERALA STATE | V.V.P. | 57.06                       | 81.23 | 67.50 | 64.67 | 66.02                          | 85.25 | 74.29 | 74.34 | 64.79                     | 83.88 | 73.53 | 72.50 | 75.07                       | 87.81 | 78.52 | 77.61 |       |
|              | I.N.C. | 41.14                       | 35.50 | 41.16 | 37.89 | 32.28                          | 42.07 | 41.81 | 48.63 | 44.43                     | 39.91 | 35.58 | 32.20 | 45.89                       | 42.06 | 39.53 | 34.83 | 54.39 |
|              | C.P.I. | 42.84                       | 50.00 | 38.87 | 39.65 | 32.15                          | 37.81 | 42.34 | 36.16 | 37.49                     | 33.16 | 32.99 | 37.26 | 30.45                       | 31.16 | 34.91 | 38.57 | 24.64 |
|              | M.L.   | —                           | —     | 3.22  | —     | —                              | 5.03  | 6.34  | 7.90  | —                         | 6.49  | 7.37  | 8.41  | —                           | —     | —     | —     |       |
|              | S.S.P. | 7.17                        | 10.44 | 12.10 | 11.18 | 8.36                           | 5.36  | 3.61  | 6.01  | 12.26                     | 15.99 | 9.99  | 9.75  | 8.07                        | 18.57 | 3.63  | 3.83  |       |
|              | O.P.   | 1.37                        | —     | 3.20  | 9.78  | 0.61                           | 0.16  | 4.33  | 0.96  | 2.35                      | 0.06  | 4.50  | 3.04  | 11.15                       | —     | 10.44 | 13.58 |       |
|              | IND.   | 7.47                        | 3.96  | 1.46  | 1.47  | 11.14                          | 5.29  | 0.92  | 3.17  | 16.61                     | 8.00  | 1.81  | 5.53  | 6.34                        | 8.03  | 3.12  | 9.75  |       |
| MALABAR      | V.V.P. | 54.55                       | 79.17 | 63.13 | 58.86 | 55.65                          | 81.71 | 69.94 | 69.71 | 59.63                     | 80.78 | 71.51 | 69.09 | —                           | —     | —     | —     |       |
|              | I.N.C. | 40.72                       | 29.58 | 32.29 | 35.25 | 35.25                          | 34.94 | 35.19 | 39.85 | 37.74                     | 36.89 | 34.00 | 25.77 | 32.85                       | 31.72 | —     | —     |       |
|              | C.P.I. | 42.75                       | 56.99 | 41.76 | 41.23 | 40.83                          | 46.74 | 35.26 | 31.93 | 25.66                     | 30.39 | 33.07 | 25.57 | —                           | —     | —     | —     |       |
|              | M.L.   | —                           | —     | 0.51  | —     | —                              | 17.50 | 13.02 | 17.05 | —                         | 15.62 | 16.91 | 18.44 | —                           | —     | —     | —     |       |
|              | S.S.P. | —                           | 13.35 | 19.03 | 18.27 | 7.30                           | —     | 5.30  | 5.26  | 11.19                     | 16.06 | 13.74 | 14.14 | —                           | —     | —     | —     |       |
|              | O.P.   | —                           | —     | 4.67  | 3.50  | 0.85                           | 0.57  | 6.27  | 1.73  | —                         | 0.06  | 2.17  | 2.78  | —                           | —     | —     | —     |       |
|              | IND.   | 16.53                       | 0.08  | 1.74  | 1.73  | 16.09                          | —     | 0.32  | 6.25  | 28.65                     | 12.10 | 1.27  | 5.31  | —                           | —     | —     | —     |       |
| COCHIN       | V.V.P. | —                           | —     | —     | —     | 66.52                          | 84.21 | 76.98 | 76.69 | 72.07                     | 88.97 | 78.22 | 78.44 | 69.25                       | 87.11 | 76.49 | 77.18 |       |
|              | I.N.C. | —                           | —     | —     | —     | 46.91                          | 43.87 | 46.80 | 48.69 | 45.53                     | 46.59 | 45.23 | 50.79 | 49.02                       | 42.13 | 51.08 | 64.01 | 57.58 |
|              | C.P.I. | —                           | —     | —     | —     | 38.71                          | 37.66 | 36.97 | 36.55 | 30.01                     | 33.62 | 39.44 | 31.75 | 37.32                       | 23.41 | 29.40 | 26.24 | 30.15 |
|              | M.L.   | —                           | —     | —     | —     | —                              | —     | 6.34  | 6.96  | —                         | —     | 2.40  | 2.45  | —                           | —     | —     | —     |       |
|              | S.S.P. | —                           | —     | —     | —     | 10.66                          | 8.63  | 5.69  | 5.90  | 9.04                      | 9.78  | 5.76  | 1.57  | 8.45                        | —     | —     | —     | —     |
|              | O.P.   | —                           | —     | —     | —     | 0.13                           | —     | 2.46  | 0.84  | —                         | 0.18  | 6.92  | 0.41  | —                           | —     | 11.65 | 14.25 |       |
|              | IND.   | —                           | —     | —     | —     | 3.58                           | 9.83  | 1.74  | —     | 10.74                     | 5.36  | 2.36  | —     | 11.08                       | 9.75  | 0.61  | —     |       |
| TRAVANCORE   | V.V.P. | 59.31                       | 89.60 | 76.34 | 76.63 | 76.48                          | 89.97 | 77.75 | 76.89 | 67.54                     | 84.95 | 73.27 | 72.50 | 76.05                       | 87.93 | 78.95 | 77.50 |       |
|              | I.N.C. | 41.49                       | 56.79 | 56.62 | 42.06 | 27.60                          | 42.57 | 45.21 | 58.73 | 46.57                     | 37.10 | 31.84 | 32.68 | 57.01                       | 48.77 | 36.60 | 37.75 | 28.93 |
|              | C.P.I. | 42.92                       | 25.31 | 33.82 | 37.15 | 17.82                          | 34.54 | 43.94 | 36.23 | 43.81                     | 36.63 | 40.29 | 43.44 | 26.93                       | 31.37 | 18.74 | 35.77 | 40.64 |
|              | M.L.   | —                           | —     | 7.96  | —     | —                              | —     | —     | —     | —                         | —     | —     | —     | 1.45                        | —     | —     | —     |       |
|              | S.S.P. | 13.09                       | —     | —     | —     | 6.78                           | 6.23  | —     | 6.85  | 14.94                     | 18.92 | 8.37  | 9.86  | 8.01                        | 21.69 | 4.36  | 4.62  |       |
|              | O.P.   | 2.50                        | —     | 0.63  | 19.71 | 0.93                           | —     | 4.34  | 0.34  | 5.94                      | —     | 5.61  | 4.78  | 12.87                       | —     | 10.20 | 13.45 |       |
|              | IND.   | —                           | 17.90 | 0.97  | 1.07  | 15.18                          | 4.62  | 0.69  | 2.38  | 6.99                      | 4.95  | 3.68  | 2.38  | 5.61                        | 7.74  | 3.63  | 8.87  |       |

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