# Table of Contents

- Message from the Chief Minister 3
- Message from the Minister for Finance 5
- Message from the Vice Chairperson, Kerala State Planning Board 7
- Message from the Chief Secretary 9
- The Keraleeyam Seminar Series 13
- Seminar Calendar 14
- Agriculture in Kerala 15
- Food Security in Kerala 19
- Dairy Development in Kerala 24
- Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Kerala: Issues of Socio Economic Development 27
- Land Reforms in Kerala 30
- Kerala Economy 35
- School Education in Kerala 39
- Kerala’s Fisheries Sector 42
- Information Technology in Kerala 46
- Public Health in Kerala 50
- Industry in Kerala 54
- Cooperatives in Kerala 58
- Development Issues Concerning Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens 61
- How Kerala Dealt with the Pandemic 66
- Local Governments in Kerala 70
- Kerala Diaspora 74
- Gender and Development in Kerala 78
- Water Resources in Kerala 82
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism in Kerala</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers’ Rights and Welfare in Kerala</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education in Kerala</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance and the Provision of Digital Services in Kerala</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pluralism and Multiculturalism in the Changing Times</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare and Growth: Economic Alternatives for the Future</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Media in Democracy: Changing Mediascape in the</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing Department/Institution &amp; Seminar Coordinators</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
‘Keraleeyam’, the festival of Kerala, slated to be celebrated from 1 to 7 November, 2023, will showcase Kerala’s distinguished excellence, triumphs and heritage. It will enable the world and Kerala, to teach one another and learn from each other, so as to understand both better.

Keraleeyam will be a global platform that ensures the interaction between stalwarts of different sectors from around the world and Kerala. They will experience Kerala’s arts and culture, and enlighten us about the new trends in the world on development and welfare. It will thus enrich Kerala’s unique development experiences that have won international acclaim.

A series of events such as Seminars, Cultural Fest, Trade Fair, Food Festival, Flower Show, Exhibitions, Book Fair, Film Festival and B2B Meet, organized as part of Keraleeyam will throw light upon Kerala’s illustriousness across various aspects of human life. The 25 Seminars planned on different social, economic, political and cultural aspects will gather and consolidate the perspectives of experts across the globe on Kerala’s development. The deliberations will help to transform Kerala into a true knowledge economy and innovation society.

Keraleeyam is going to be a grand success of historical magnitude. This unique festival will enlighten our intellect and enrich our experiences.
Government of Kerala envisions ‘Keraleeyam 2023’ as a highly distinctive event to showcase Kerala’s achievements to the world. It is not only an opportunity to highlight these accomplishments but also a project aimed at igniting productive and commercial activities within Kerala. The Government aims at making this event an annual occurrence. In addition to cultural activities, ‘Keraleeyam’ features 25 seminars. Scholars and academicians from various fields around the world will participate and discuss various aspects of Kerala and its developmental perspectives. We anticipate that the discussions and deliberations in these seminars will pave the way for new directions in Kerala’s developmental paradigms.
Keraleeyam, scheduled from November 1 to 7, 2023, will be a global platform aimed at showcasing to the world Kerala’s remarkable achievements and journey to becoming a modern economy founded on democratic values, sustainable development, social welfare, and scientific temper. This event continues Kerala’s long-standing tradition of public consultation and debate and will be an opportunity to reflect on the state’s achievements and the challenges ahead.

Keraleeyam will host twenty-five seminars at five venues, spanning from November 2 to 6, 2023. More than 200 experts - academicians, activists, administrators, others will participate in the session. Stakeholders from all sections will also participate. Panellists and others will discuss the issues raised to the seminar on the light of their own wide experience.

Message

Professor V K Ramachandran
Vice Chairperson, Kerala State Planning Board
Chair of the Seminar Committee
Kerala is well known across the world for excellence in various sectors including education, modern healthcare and authentic Ayurveda, as the homeland of our incredible diaspora, as a top must-visit destination in the world and so much more. We have been fortunate to be recognized and celebrated by the world for our achievements. However, there is still much about Kerala that remains unknown to people, both within the State and outside.

As we endeavor towards Navakeralam, it is imperative that we truly embrace and showcase who we are, as a State and people, to the world. Keraleeyam is designed as an annual event which will present a holistic view of Kerala through seminars, exhibitions, cultural festivals, etc. The event is aimed at creating greater awareness about Kerala, and the discussions and in-person experiences are expected to aid in shaping in Navakeralam, renowned for excellence, fostering greater socio-economic prosperity, promoting sustainable development and in formulating forward-thinking developmental policies.

Keraleeyam is a platform for the exchange of ideas and the Government of Kerala welcomes people from across the world to actively participate. The seminars on twenty-five key topics will provide opportunities for detailed discussions and to gain an in-depth understanding of the complexities, challenges and successes of Kerala’s development. The topics explore various aspects such as agriculture, education, diaspora, public health, economy, tourism, development issues concerning persons with disabilities and senior citizens, gender and development, governance and provision of services, etc.

Message

Dr. Venu V IAS
Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala
The seminars will provide an overview of the State’s distinctive development model, founded on socialist democratic principles, which has been implemented by the Government throughout its tenure. The State’s progress, which is comparable to that of many developed countries in terms of human development indicators, is largely attributed to the Government’s people-oriented approach.

I hope that all distinguished speakers and participants of the seminars of Keraleeyam 2023 will be able to jointly explore the various aspects of Kerala’s ongoing developmental journey and that the deliberations will contribute significantly to the formation of a unified vision for a revitalised Kerala. A Navakeralam focused on holistic development with a strong knowledge economy equipped to meet the growing aspiration of our people and for the state to achieve a prominent position among the best in the world.
Seminar Organizing Committee

Chairman  
Professor V K Ramachandran  
Vice Chairperson, Kerala State Planning Board

Vice Chairman  
Shri. Puneet Kumar IAS  
Additional Chief Secretary,  
Planning & Economic Affairs Department

Convenor  
Smt. Priyanka G IAS  
Director  
Programme Implementation Evaluation & Monitoring  
Department
Keraleeyam 2023

Seminar Series

Keraleeyam 2023, to be held from November 1 to 7, 2023 in Thiruvananthapuram, is a festival of Kerala- of its culture, heritage, and the achievements of its people. It is a global platform that will celebrate the efforts of the people of Kerala in achieving a modern economy founded on democratic values, sustainable development, social welfare, and scientific temper.

As a festival of Kerala’s culture and heritage, Keraleeyam 2023 will feature a variety of events, including seminars, exhibitions, trade fairs, food festivals, film festivals, flower shows, book festivals, cultural events, street performances, and public art installations.

Twenty five public seminars will be held as part of Keraleeyam 2023. The seminar series reflects Kerala’s long-standing tradition of public consultation and debate, and will be an opportunity to discuss the State’s development achievements, and vision. The seminar series will be a platform for scholars, activists, administrators, and others across the world to come together to discuss development issues. We expect that discussions across sectors will help contribute to the formulation of policy in the State.

The 25 seminars will cover the fields of
- agriculture, land reforms, fisheries, dairy, food security, and water resources
- welfare and growth, Kerala’s economy, industry, information technology, cooperative institutions, labour, and the diaspora
- local governments and e-governance
- Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes development, social justice, and gender and development
- public health and health policy during the pandemic
- school education and higher education
- culture, tourism, and the mass media

The seminars will be held in five venues, from November 2 through 6. Registration for the public is at www.ssonew.keraleeyam.kerala.gov.in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day/Venue</th>
<th>Niyamasabha Hall</th>
<th>Tagore Theatre</th>
<th>Jimmy George Stadium</th>
<th>Mascot Hotel</th>
<th>Central Stadium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Day 1</strong>&lt;br&gt;November 02&lt;br&gt;Thursday&lt;br&gt;9.30 to 13.30</td>
<td>Agriculture in Kerala</td>
<td>Food Security in Kerala</td>
<td>Dairy Development in Kerala</td>
<td>Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Kerala: Issues of Socio Economic Development</td>
<td>Land Reforms in Kerala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Day 2</strong>&lt;br&gt;November 03&lt;br&gt;Friday&lt;br&gt;9.30 to 13.30</td>
<td>Kerala Economy</td>
<td>School Education in Kerala</td>
<td>Kerala’s Fisheries Sector</td>
<td>Information Technology in Kerala</td>
<td>Public Health in Kerala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Day 3</strong>&lt;br&gt;November 04&lt;br&gt;Saturday&lt;br&gt;9.30 to 13.30</td>
<td>Industry in Kerala</td>
<td>Cooperatives in Kerala</td>
<td>Development Issues Concerning Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens</td>
<td>How Kerala Dealt with the Pandemic</td>
<td>Local Governments in Kerala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Day 4</strong>&lt;br&gt;November 05&lt;br&gt;Sunday&lt;br&gt;9.30 to 13.30</td>
<td>Kerala Diaspora</td>
<td>Gender and Development in Kerala</td>
<td>Water Resources in Kerala</td>
<td>Tourism in Kerala</td>
<td>Workers’ Rights and Welfare in Kerala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Day 5</strong>&lt;br&gt;November 06&lt;br&gt;Monday&lt;br&gt;9.30 to 13.30</td>
<td>Higher Education in Kerala</td>
<td>Governance and the Provision of Digital Services in Kerala</td>
<td>Pluralism and Multiculturalism in the Changing Times</td>
<td>Welfare &amp; Growth: Economic Alternatives for the Future</td>
<td>Role of Media in Democracy: Changing Mediascape in the Country</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
November 02, 2023 | 9:30 to 13:30

Session 1

Agriculture in Kerala
Venue: Niyamasabha Hall
Chairperson: P Prasad, Minister for Agriculture

Hosted by the Department of Agriculture Development and Farmer’s Welfare

SCHEDULE

Remarks

P PRASAD Minister for Agriculture

Presentation

B ASHOK IAS Agriculture Production Commissioner and Principal Secretary, Department of Agriculture Development and Farmers’ Welfare

Panellists

K C BANSAL Secretary, National Academy of Agricultural Sciences

CHRIS JACKSON Senior Economist, World Bank

P RAJASEKHARAN Chairman, Kerala State Agricultural Prices Board

SREEVIDHYA M Participant in Israel Exposure Visit

KADAMBOT SIDDIQUE Hackett Professor of Agriculture, Chair and Director, Institute of Agriculture, University of Western Australia

CAO ĐÙ’C PHÁT Chair, Board of Trustees International Rice Research Institute & former Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Vietnam

C N NEERAJA Principal Scientist, (Biotechnology), Crop Improvement, Indian Council for Agricultural Research-Indian Institute of Rice Research
CONCEPT NOTE

Kerala is a location of world significance with regard to its plant diversity and wealth, and is, in addition, endowed with a coastline rich in marine fisheries and with inland water bodies. Its agriculture is characterised by the existence of a series of agricultural micro-environments suited to different kinds of mixed farming, and by a substantial proportion of high-value and perennial crops in total agricultural output. As a result, its value of production per hectare in agriculture is the third highest among all Indian States. The State’s historical strengths — in land reforms, education, decentralised governance, and the co-operative sector — are its unique features. These strengths provide the State with human resources for agriculture that are unavailable in most other parts of India.

Kerala has long been famous as the “Spice Capital of the World”. This State’s favourable climatic conditions — in particular, a humid tropical climate and fertile soil — have allowed for the cultivation of a wide variety of spices, making it a significant global player in the spice industry. Among its numerous spice exports, spice extracts have gained significant prominence due to their versatile uses in various culinary and medicinal applications.

The Government of Kerala is undertaking various measures to arrest the recent slowdown in the State’s agricultural growth rate. The area under harvested paddy has been maintained in a steady manner despite the severe and unfavourable weather conditions. Kerala provides the most broad-based public support for agriculture in India. The Government of Kerala provides direct cash assistance of Rs 5500 per ha to every paddy farmer. For farmers of other crops, such as vegetables, Kerala’s State and local governments provide another Rs 25,000 to Rs 30,000 per ha from the Plan funds as additional assistance. The State Government also pays
the highest Minimum Support Price (MSP) for paddy in India. In paddy, a large proportion of the output is procured by the State government. Every panchayat in the State has an agricultural office.

A key emphasis of the Government of Kerala in the 14th Five Year Plan period is to raise the productivity of crops in agriculture, which must be its primary instrument to revive its agricultural growth rates. Production relations in agriculture must be reformed in alignment with the broader development of productive forces. Kerala’s agriculture must embrace the possibilities of new technologies, particularly in biotechnology, digital technology, and nanotechnology. Youth should be attracted by making agriculture economically rewarding and intellectually stimulating. Production and marketing must be restructured on collective and cooperative lines to ensure aggregation of fragmented produce. Here, interventions in marketing using the strengths of the State’s cooperative sector must become a priority. Kerala must also open its doors to private investment in value addition and processing. In the post-flood context, Kerala’s agriculture should also become resilient to climate variabilities. This requires the promotion of scientific agriculture and focus on innovations in agricultural research.

The agricultural policy of the Government of Kerala is showing results. After consecutive years of decline, annual growth in the agriculture sector increased to 3.7 per cent in the year 2021-22. In the post-Covid economy, agriculture can be an important platform for economic recovery. The Government of Kerala has already announced a large-scale agricultural programme that emphasises production, value addition, and marketing.

Internationally, it is well accepted that scientific modernisation will be the basis for future breakthroughs in agriculture. Kerala has much to learn from new developments in the world. The development of agriculture is increasingly focused on new research to increase productivity, particularly in biotechnology and nanotechnology. These new means also constitute the best ways to ensure sustainability of agriculture. Precision farming, which ensures a more efficient use of soil, water and minerals is also an important new area of growth.

The future of agriculture in Kerala depends on how far and how fast it travels on the road to agricultural modernisation. To learn from international and national best practices in selected areas, Keraleeyam will concentrate on certain selected themes.1. How can Kerala ensure ecological sustainability, bridge the yield gaps in its major crops,
and increase production? Low yields hinder efforts to raise farmer’s incomes. To ensure productivity growth, Kerala must embrace the best technologies available, particularly with respect to modern seeds and planting material, and agronomic management.

1. How can Kerala ensure ecological sustainability, bridge the yield gaps in its major crops, and increase production? Low yields hinder efforts to raise farmer’s incomes. To ensure productivity growth, Kerala must embrace the best technologies available, particularly with respect to modern seeds and planting material, and agronomic management.

2. How can Kerala ensure efficient aggregation of farmers produce through the active mobilisation of farmer cooperatives and other forms of group action? Most farms in Kerala are small. Fragmentation of farmer’s produce leads to unremunerative prices and unstable markets. Here, Kerala must learn from global experiences in farmer’s collectives.

3. How can Kerala attract private and cooperative investment in agricultural value addition? Kerala must viably link its efforts at the aggregation of farmer’s produce to the value addition and processing sectors. Kerala has several food parks and industrial parks, but these have not yet picked pace. The building of efficient supply chains is an essential part of this exercise.

4. How can the development of climate-resilient, sustainable agriculture suited to different agro-ecological zones and its adoption be ensured? Kerala has initiated the identification of suitable climate-resilient agricultural technology. This needs to be further developed, learning from global models and best practices.

5. What is the future of Kerala’s spices and plantation crops sector? The markets and price formation of Kerala’s spices and plantation crops lie outside the control of the State government. Kerala needs a specific plan for the development of this sub-sector of its agriculture.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for agriculture in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Preeth V S, 9447859326, preethkprm@gmail.com
November 02, 2023 | 9:30 to 13:30

Session 2
Food Security in Kerala

Venue: Tagore Theatre
Chairperson: G R Anil, Minister for Food and Civil Supplies

Hosted by Department of Food and Civil Supplies

SCHEDULE

Remarks:
G R ANIL  Minister for Food and Civil Supplies

Moderator
K RAVIRAMAN  Member, Kerala State Planning Board

Presentation
SRIRAM VENKITARAMAN IAS, Chairman and MD, SUPPLYCO

Panellists:
GLENN DENNING Director, Master of Public Administration in Development Practices, Columbia University
K V THOMAS former Union Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
MADHURA SWAMINATHAN Professor and Head of the Economic Analysis Unit, Indian Statistical Institute Bengaluru
J JEYARANJAN Vice Chairman, State Planning Commission, Tamil Nadu
M MEHABOOB Chairman, Consumerfed, Kerala
NEETHU SHARMA Co-Director, Right to Food, Centre for Child and the Law, National Law School of India University (NLSIU), Bengaluru
R V BHAVANI former Poverty and Social Protection Specialist, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Bangladesh

K V MOHANKUMAR IAS (retd.) Chairman, Kerala State Food Commission

A brief reporting of English speeches in Malayalam

General discussion

Closing remarks by chairperson

(The session will include a tea break)

CONCEPT NOTE

Kerala has one of the most effective and best-run public distribution systems in India, and has made pioneering achievements in implementing a universal rationing system. Perhaps the earliest example of a rural rationing system was introduced in Malabar in 1942, in response to demands from progressive sections of the freedom movement in Malabar. The State Government introduced an informal system of distribution of rice at subsidised rates to lower-income groups in 1957, which continued till 1964. In pursuance of the Essential Commodities Act 1955 by the Government of India, the Public Distribution System formally came into existence on July 1, 1965. It has since grown into a universal rationing system across India. The State introduced the Targeted Distribution System in 1997 based on policy changes made by the Government of India. Prior to the 1997 introduction of the targeted system, Kerala was the only State in India that had an almost total coverage of the population by the Public Distribution System (PDS). Kerala adopted the requirements of the National Food Security Act (NFSA) in 2016, one of the first few States to do so since the Act was passed in 2013. Though the Act restricted ration to the card holders of the Antyoday Anna Yojana (Yellow) and Priority HouseHold (Pink) categories, Kerala extended rationing to a far wider section of the population.

Around 93 lakh beneficiary households are covered by the public distribution system in the State. Under the PDS, fortified wheat flour, wheat grains, rice and sugar and kerosene are distributed to various categories of beneficiaries.

Food security for all and a hunger-free Kerala by 2030 is the agenda of the
State. In recent years, the State has implemented significant modernisation and digitisation activities including renovation and automation of ration shops in a unified pattern, implementation of the e-Ration Card Project, and introduced One Nation One Ration Card for easy accessibility of ration from anywhere. E-PoS machines were installed in all fair price shops in the State and enforcement mechanisms have been strengthened to ensure the supply of food grains at right quantities with good quality. The entitlement of persons each month is communicated to them via SMS. Kerala’s good internet connectivity in both urban and rural areas has helped achieve a higher percentage of successful Aadhaar authenticated transactions for ration than elsewhere. The Government of Kerala has initiated the K Store project to upgrade ration shops into multipurpose stores, with financial services, utility payments, and retailing of Supplyco and Milma products, among other services.

Doorstep delivery of ration with mobile ration shops to tribal/coastal destitute living in forest/tribal/coastal remote areas and for people affected by natural calamities has been introduced.

Transgender persons, street dwellers, and renters whose building owners refuse them rent receipts have been allotted ration cards on the basis of their Aadhaar cards alone. Priority ration cards are being swiftly issued to families identified in Kerala’s Extreme Poverty Identification survey. Highly subsidised rice is supplied to Subiksha hotels, an essential component of the Hunger-Free Kerala programme.

The State Government has constituted a Council for Food, Research and Development (CFRD) as a registered charitable society with the objective of promoting indigenous foods of Kerala and maintaining competitive quality in the food market.

Hunger-Free Kerala is a State Government initiative under the 13th Five Year Plan. In keeping with the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, different districts in Kerala followed different methods of enacting the project to ensure food and nutrition security, such as meals at subsidised rates, meals delivered to the elderly, or customers allowed to pay whatever they could.

The State Government has initiated the Subhiksha Keralam programme, focusing on increasing food production by enhancing the area under cultivation and introducing advanced technology. The programme aims
to accelerate self-reliance in food production, enhance the incomes of farmers, generate employment, attract youth and repatriates to agriculture, strengthen the animal resources and fisheries sectors, and promote organic farming. Fallow land cultivation, homestead cultivation, improved market facilities, interventions in post-harvest management and long term interventions, are among the activities included under Subhiksha Keralam.

Government policy has kept the prices of essential commodities low and stable compared to other States in India. The Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation-Supplyco- has been effectively involved in the PDS in the State and intervened in the open market to stabilise the price of 13 essential commodities. In addition, Supplyco retails more than 6,000 fast moving consumer goods items at an average price 10 per cent less than the open market, including own-branded products under the name “Sabari,” conducting special festival fairs, retailing medicines through 95 medical stores and five wholesale divisions at an average of 15 per cent discount, conversion of PDS wheat into atta and distribution at Rs 17 per kg, supply of PDS sugar to AAY card holders, distribution of rice under the mid-day meal scheme, and doorstep delivery of food grains under NFSA from the FCI and CMR mills to intermediary godowns to authorised ration retail dealers. Supplyco has been designated as the implementing agency for paddy procurement, processing and distribution in the State as envisaged under the decentralised procurement of Ministry of Food and Public Distribution, GoI.

Over the last few years, Kerala witnessed a series of crises, including the Ockhi cyclone, the Nipah virus outbreak, floods and, with the rest of the world, the Covid-19 pandemic. During such crises, the Government was quick to take effective steps to make food grains and other essential commodities available to all to ensure that no one went hungry. Measures included allotting rice at the MSP-derived rate to the State for families affected post cyclone Ockhi, and free ration for families affected by the 2018 and 2019 floods. The Government of Kerala was able to use the infrastructure and wide network of PDS in the State to deal with the crisis generated by the outbreak of Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdowns. Fully automated FPSs with e-POS machines, online allocation systems, effective supply chain management, well-categorised beneficiary data and smart grievance redressal systems helped the State successfully implement activities in response to Covid-19 related emergencies. During the lockdowns, for the first time in the history of State’s public distribution system, more than 97 per cent of the beneficiaries availed
their ration allotments. Students up to primary-level who are covered by the mid-day meal scheme were given provisions and rice kits. Fish workers affected by the seasonal trawling ban were provided with food kits during the pandemic, as were migrant workers.

The key challenge is to ensure food and nutrition security for all, that is, a healthy diet including adequate calories, proteins and micronutrients.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for food security in Kerala.

_____________________________________________________________________
Session coordinator: Vijay R, 9895090532, vijay.kazhivoor@gmail.com
November 02, 2023 | 9:30 to 13:30

Session 3

Dairy Development in Kerala

Venue: Jimmy George Stadium
Chairperson: J Chinchurani, Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development

Hosted by Department of Dairy Development

SCHEDULE

Remarks:
J CHINCHURANI Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development

Presentation

PRANABJYOTI NATH IAS Secretary, Dairy Development Department

Panellists

MEENESH SHAH Chairman & Managing Director, National Dairy Development Board
R S SODHI President, Indian Dairy Association
K S MANI Chairman, MILMA
PRAKASH KALARICKAL Vice President, Business Development, Sexing Technology, USA
S RAMKUMAR former Dean, Puducherry Veterinary College
P SUDHEER BABU Registrar, Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Kerala
BEENA THANKACHAN Dairy Farmer, Wayanad
JITHIN JOSE THALIAN Dairy Entrepreneur, Wayanad
CONCEPT NOTE

The animal husbandry sector in Kerala contributes about 27 per cent of the Gross State Value Added (GSVA) from agriculture and allied sectors. It is estimated that about 8.8 lakh households are involved in animal husbandry in the State. Many women are also involved in the workforce in this sector.

Kerala holds the second rank among Indian States, after Punjab, in the level of production of milk. The rises in production and productivity of dairy animals in Kerala have been significantly aided by dairy cooperatives and the leading role of the government in increasing the share of crossbred cows in the animal population.

The dairy cooperatives, which are community-owned and democratically governed organizations, have revolutionized the dairy industry in the State by contributing to higher milk production, ensuring fair prices for farmers, and improving the overall economic well-being of rural communities. Traditionally, milk production in Kerala was carried out by small-scale farmers who had limited resources and followed unscientific farming practices. However, with the establishment of dairy cooperatives, farmers were provided with access to modern technology, improved animal healthcare, and training programmes to enhance their knowledge and skills. Kerala’s dairy cooperatives provide the much-needed infrastructural facilities, such as chilling plants, milk collection centres, and storage facilities, which help in preserving the quality of milk and reducing waste. All these, in turn, resulted in improved milk yields, as cows and buffaloes were well cared for and provided with nutritious diets. The overall production capacity of milk in Kerala has increased significantly, meeting the ever-growing demand of consumers in the State. As a collective platform, dairy cooperatives have enabled small-scale farmers to pool their resources, share knowledge, and bargain collectively for fair prices. This has empowered farmers to negotiate with milk processors and effectively counter the exploitation that often occurs in
the conventional milk market. Dairy cooperatives also undertake various social welfare activities such as the provision of medical and education facilities, contributing to the overall socio-economic development of the communities.

In addition to the contribution of dairy cooperatives, the government has played a central role in increasing the population of crossbred cows through an intensive programme of artificial insemination. The Indo-Swiss project in Kerala, which began in the 1960s, aimed to improve the productivity of milch cattle through the introduction of crossbred cows. Crossbred cows, a result of crossbreeding exotic breeds like Holstein-Friesian, Jersey, and Brown Swiss with indigenous breeds, are in demand in Kerala today. The main objective of crossbreeding was to obtain animals that possessed desirable traits of both the exotic breeds (e.g., higher milk yield) and indigenous breeds (e.g., disease resistance, adaptability). As a result, Kerala has witnessed a significant increase in the population of crossbred cows over the years. Up to 95 per cent of the cows in Kerala are crossbred. Government schemes have provided farmers with access to superior quality bovine semen, breeding infrastructure, and technical support. This has been a game-changer in the dairy sector of Kerala.

The success of artificial insemination has also contributed significantly to improvements in milk production and milch animal productivity in Kerala. Milk from crossbred cows also has a higher fat content, making it more suitable for milk processing and value-added products. Increased milk production has created new employment opportunities in the dairy sector, providing a source of income and livelihood for rural households.

In summary, the efforts of the Government of Kerala and the widespread presence of dairy cooperatives have helped dairy farmers increase milk yields, improve milk quality, enhance adaptability to local conditions, enhance reproductive efficiency, and gain knowledge on modern dairy farming practices. These improvements have contributed substantially to the growth and development of the dairy industry and the overall socio-economic progress of dairy farmers in Kerala.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for dairy development in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Abdul Gafoor, 9747524727, abdulgafoornarokkavu@gmail.com
November 02, 2023 9:30 to 13:30

Session 4

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Kerala: Issues of Socio Economic Development

Venue: Mascot Hotel
Chairperson: K Radhakrishnan, Minister for Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes and Devaswams

Hosted by Scheduled Caste Development Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks:
K RADHAKRISHNAN Minister for Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes and Devaswams

Presentation:
A JAYATHILAK IAS Additional Chief Secretary, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Development Department

Panellists
GOPAL GURU former Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University and former Editor, Economic and Political Weekly
BEZWADA WILSON Co-founder and National Convenor, Safai Karmachari Andolan
A VIJAYARAGHAVAN former Member of Parliament
BASAVI KIRO Chairperson, Dayton International School
MEERA VELAYUDHAN former President, Indian Association for Women’s Studies
K SOMAPRASAD former Member of Parliament

O R KELU Member of Legislative Assembly, Mananthavady Constituency

P K SIVANANDAN IAS (retd.) former Director, SC Development Department

P K JAMEELA Member, Kerala State Planning Board

_A brief reporting of English speeches in Malayalam_

General discussion

Closing remarks by chairperson

(The session will include a tea break)

**CONCEPT NOTE**

In Kerala, the population of people of the Scheduled Castes is 30.39 lakh (9.10 per cent of the population), and Scheduled Tribes is 4.88 lakh (1.45 per cent of the population) (Census 2011). Kerala has a history of long and arduous struggles for the social, economic, and political empowerment of the people of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The State recognises that special efforts are needed to address the social and economic issues faced by the people of Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Adhering to the principles of the Constitution, and of Kerala’s history of egalitarian politics, the Government has specifically addressed the development needs of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes through various schemes and programmes. As is well known, Kerala continues with the Five-Year Plan process, and a share of resources that is more than the share of Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the population, has been allocated for the specific development needs of Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

The policies and schemes of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes Development departments intervene through various policies and schemes in the spheres of educational development, economic empowerment, against discrimination, and the protection of civil rights. With regard to educational development, the departments provide scholarships and financial assistance and provide special facilities at all
levels of education for pupils and students of Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Areas that are now receiving special attention is the improvement of the Gross Enrolment Ratio among students of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in higher education, and improving the quality of school education of Scheduled Tribes pupils.

The efforts of the State are also focused on solutions to landlessness, homelessness, and neighbourhood infrastructure enhancement, and the particular vulnerabilities of the poorest social groups within the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes categories.

In the sphere of health, Kerala has, in addition to its regular health schemes, special schemes for the treatment, financial assistance, and institutional support, to the people of Scheduled Tribes.

The Government has a range of schemes for promoting self-employment, skill training, entrepreneurship development, and for enhancing livelihoods. The State Government is committed to the strict implementation of the Protection of Civil Rights Act of 1955 and the Prevention of Atrocities Act of 1999.

Despite the fact that such initiatives have improved socioeconomic conditions among the people of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, the people of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, in general, still lag behind the population as a whole in many indicators of development. The committed and continuous efforts of the State are needed to ensure that all people of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes enter a new stage of socioeconomic development and achievement in human welfare and income growth.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for the socioeconomic development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Saji V, 9447799496, sajivenugopal@gmail.com
Session 5

Land Reforms in Kerala

Venue: Central Stadium
Chairperson: K Rajan, Minister for Revenue and Housing
Hosted by Revenue Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks:
K RAJAN Minister for Revenue and Housing

Presentation
INKU BISWAL IAS Secretary, Department of Revenue

Panellists
JOHN HARRISS Professor Emeritus, International Studies Simon Fraser University
BINOY VISWAM Member of Parliament
A K BALAN former Minister for Law, Kerala
ABBAS RAJABIFARD Director, Center for Spatial Data Infrastructure and Land Administration
PRAKASH BABU former Member of Legislative Assembly Kerala
E P JAYARAJAN former Minister for Industries, Kerala
KALEESWARAM RAJ Lawyer, Supreme Court of India
VINOD K AGARWAL IAS former Commissioner, Survey Settlement and Land Records, Bhu Bhariti Land Titling Project
SEERAM SAMBASIVA RAO IAS Director, Survey and Land Records
CONCEPT NOTE
Pre-capitalist agrarian relations in Kerala have been famously described as a jati-janmi-naduvazhi (upper caste-landlord-chieftain) system. Feudal society in Kerala involved the combined domination of landlords in the economic sphere, Brahman-dominated upper castes in social life, and chieftains in the political sphere. The hegemony of landlords, upper castes and chieftains was built on extreme conditions of unfreedom for the working population. The practice of a detailed system of untouchability – based on a graded system of distance pollution – was another characteristic of social life in Kerala.

A foundational feature of Kerala’s modern development experience, and its social and economic progress, was the transformation of its agrarian relations through land reform. A more radical transformation of agrarian relations has been brought about by the people of Kerala after independence, than of any other State of India. The history of this change was a history of public action – that took the form of mass struggle and of legislative action – against some of the most complex, exploitative, and oppressive rural social formations in the country.

During the colonial period, big landlordism dominated social and economic arrangements in villages throughout Kerala. Land reform, or passing and implementing new laws to alter or abolish old land tenures and to create new ones, was crucial to the transformation of agrarian relations. The first Government of Kerala represented a turning point in that transformation. A few days after it took office in 1957, the legislative process for land reform began.

Land reform in Kerala had three major components. The first component involved ending the burdensome system of tenancy. Kerala’s tenancy legislation had four main features. First, it sought to provide security of tenure to tenants. All evictions were prohibited, and land holdings were restored to tenants who were evicted after the State formation. Secondly,
arrears of rent were cancelled. Thirdly, the rights of janmi landlords and intermediaries on tenanted land were taken over by the Government. Fourthly, tenancy legislation sought to give land to the tiller.

The second component of land reform involved homestead land (kudikidappu) occupied by the rural poor. Occupants of such land were to be given ownership rights. Government subsidized half the purchase price, and the rest was due in installments. There were subsidiary provisions in respect of kudikidappu regarding, first, security of tenure; secondly, making occupancy rights heritable; thirdly, discharging arrears of rent; and, fourthly, rent control.

The third component of land reform concerned the imposition of limits on land ownership and the distribution of land identified as surplus to the landless. The land ceiling in Kerala, which was imposed on household landholdings, varied with the size of the household; it did not exceed 25 standard acres.

There is agreement among scholars on the conclusion that land reform in Kerala was successful with respect to tenancy abolition and the distribution of homestead lands. The above two measures led to a substantial transfer of cultivated area from landlords to tenants and the landless. However, land reform was not as successful with respect to acquiring and distributing the surplus agricultural land available after tenancy abolition and homestead land distribution.

In summary, land reform in Kerala abolished statutory landlordism and ended the jati-janmi-naduvazhi hegemony. It reduced the concentration of ownership of land holdings. It broke the back of upper-caste landlordism and weakened big landlordism. It protected tenants, and ended systems of rack-renting and those illegal exactions from the poor that characterized the old system. It provided house sites to lakhs of families. Traditional forms of servitude, and various forms of caste discrimination, such as untouchability, have ceased to be the dominant features of Kerala society. The jati-janmi-naduvazhi system was the material base on which forms of discrimination like untouchability survived.

Land reforms in Kerala were important, both intrinsically and instrumentally. Intrinsically, land reform was important as it weakened the foundations of an oppressive agrarian regime and freed workers
from different forms of unfreedom. Land reforms were instrumentally important, as the post-land reform society that emerged was favourable to advances in the social and economic conditions of the poorer sections. The movement for land reforms in Kerala brought within its ambit a host of social issues that concerned the standard of living of the poor. These issues included access to education, public health systems, food distribution networks, and better working conditions.

Reliable, up-to-date, and digitised land records are necessary for economic development. They are necessary to ensure people’s titles to land, to provide a record of ownership, and to integrate information on all kinds of land ownership and control with information on land use. Reliable, accurate, and up-to-date land records are thus necessary for land use planning. Good land records are one of the important components of a State’s statistical system. A fully digitised document management system allows easy storage, is accessible from anywhere, permits multiple access, is time-saving, provides better security, reduces costs associated with document search, reduces costs associated with physical storage of paper copies, improves preparedness against disaster, ensures document recovery, and permits easy movement. In Kerala, land records have specific features and problems. In general, we are still working with land records formats created in the pre-Independence period in the Princely States of Travancore and Cochin, and in the British Indian Malabar district. The process of survey/resurvey and settlement that began in Kerala in 1964 is incomplete and, in many instances, is already out-dated.

It is in this context that the Government of Kerala has taken up the task of modernising and updating land records using the most modern technologies available. It plans to use a mixture of CORS (Continuously Operating Reference Station) technology, drone-based aerial photographs and LIDAR surveys to usher in a system of updated land records, automated and automatic mutation, integration between textual and spatial records, interconnectivity between revenue and registration, and to replace the present deeds registration and presumptive title systems with that of conclusive titling with title guarantees. Kerala aims to go beyond the above objectives by including robust land use planning, water resources management, infrastructure planning for disaster management and related objectives in the proposed list of objectives of modernisation and digitisation of land records.
We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for land reforms in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Sajin Gopi, 8943193937, mail.sajingopi@gmail.com
November 03, 2023 9:30 to 13:30

Session 6

Kerala Economy

Venue: Niyamasabha Hall
Chairperson: K N Balagopal, Minister for Finance

Hosted by Finance Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks:
K N BALAGOPAL  Minister for Finance

Presentation
RABINDRA KUMAR AGARWAL IAS Principal Secretary, Department of Finance

Panellists
M A OOMMEN Honorary Fellow, Centre for Development Studies and Distinguished Fellow, Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation

T M THOMAS ISAAC former Minister for Finance, Kerala

K M CHANDRASEKHAR IAS (retd.) former Union Cabinet Secretary, Government of India and former Vice Chairman, Kerala State Planning Board

ROBIN JEFFREY Emeritus Professor, Australian National University and La Trobe University

LEKHA S CHAKRABORTY Professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi

P C MOHANAN ISS (retd.) Chairman, Kerala State Statistical Commission

PATRICK HELLER Professor, Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs, Brown University
At the time of its formation in 1956-57, the State of Kerala was a typical underdeveloped region with low levels of economic growth, per capita income, consumption, savings, and investment. The per capita income of Kerala was estimated to be nearly 20 percent lower than the national average.

Commendable social sector achievements at relatively low levels of economic growth became the characteristic feature of Kerala in the subsequent decades. This phenomenon came to be celebrated as “Kerala’s Development Experience” and was made possible by years of public action. The State was able to create socioeconomic conditions in which most of its citizens enjoy a superior standard of living and human dignity than in most parts of India or in parts of the Third World with comparable economic development. Kerala showed that an economy need not wait indefinitely for the benefits of economic growth to “trickle down” to lower levels so that its people gain access to universal education, primary health care, minimum food and social security, homestead, minimum wages, access to formal credit, and the abolition of worst forms of social unfreedom.

Yet, till around the mid-eighties, the basic character of the regional economy in terms of per-capita income consumption, savings and growth remained locked to a low-level equilibrium. This situation gave rise to serious questions regarding the sustainability of Kerala’s achievements. However, from the 1980s, the State’s economy witnessed higher rates of economic growth. This trend gathered momentum in the 1990s and...
2000s, when the State’s per capita consumption expenditure and annual economic growth rose much above the national averages. As per an estimate of the Fifteenth Finance Commission, Kerala has the fourth highest per capita income among all Indian States. Consequently, Kerala has moved from a stage of “high human development index with low per capita income” to a stage of “high human development index and relatively high per capita income”.

The acceleration in economic growth from the 1980s has underlined certain positive factors that have contributed to a new paradigm of development combining equity and growth. The first is the availability of substantial potential investment in the form of remittances-led savings in the State. Secondly, the domestic consumer market in Kerala is one of the largest in India, as evident from the high levels of per capita consumption expenditure. Thirdly, the nature of human resource development provides Kerala with a comparative advantage in the new growth sectors that are knowledge-based (Information Technology and biotechnology) and service-based (tourism). Fourthly, the State has made a demographic transition. Fifthly, social achievements of the State and the vibrant political and civil life have acted as a platform to experiment with innovative ideas like democratic decentralisation.

Serious fiscal barriers have arisen that threaten to disrupt the sustainability of the State’s social sector achievements and its plan for income growth. Kerala is currently a rich State with poor public finances. The failure at the national level to implement fair principles of cooperative federalism has led to a lowering of the share of resources transferred to the State. The fiscal crisis resulting from these imbalances in Centre-State financial relations has weakened the ability of the State Government to undertake crucial investments in social and economic sectors. Kerala today must tap its internal resources more effectively and also devise strategies to prevail upon the Union for a higher share in the distribution of resources.

Kerala will continue to build on the strengths in social investment (particularly in health, school education, and housing), social welfare, and social and gender justice. It will use these strengths as a springboard for further and accelerated growth in the productive forces of the economy. The 14th Five Year Plan will ensure sustained efforts to apply science, technology, cutting-edge skills, and the skills available to a “knowledge
“Modernisation of the economy” to enhance growth in agriculture, allied activities, modern industry, infrastructure-building, and income-bearing services. Economic policy will be designed to modernise and enhance the system of higher education, and to provide Kerala’s youth with the best forms of skilled employment available in a modern economy.

The main objectives of the 14th Five Year Plan are the following: i) to build on strengths in social investment (health, school education, and housing), social welfare, and social and gender justice; ii) to use the strengths of the State in human development to build a knowledge society and accelerate growth of the productive forces in the economy; iii) to apply science, technology and modern skills to enhance growth in agriculture, allied activities, modern industry, infrastructure development, and income-bearing services, including information technology, tourism, and retail trade; iv) to build a modern, high-employment, productive economy; v) to modernise and enhance the system of higher education and provide Kerala’s youth with the best forms of skilled employment available in a modern economy; vi) to end extreme poverty in Kerala; vii) to establish comprehensive and innovative systems of waste management; viii) to help Local Governments become engines of growth; and ix) to promote an inclusive development process – the guiding principle of the development process will be to leave no person behind.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for the Kerala economy.

Session coordinator: Arun Shyamnath, 9995356100, arunshyamnath@gmail.com
Session 7

School Education in Kerala

Venue: Tagore Theatre
Chairperson: V Sivankutty, Minister for General Education and Labour

Hosted by General Education Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks
V SIVANKUTTY Minister for General Education and Labour

Presentation
RANI GEORGE IAS Principal Secretary, Department of General Education

Panellists
MIKA TIRRONEN Team Finland Knowledge expert in India
TERRY DURNNIAN Chief, Education UNICEF representative, India
ANITA RAMPAL Professor (retd.), Elementary and Social Education, Department of Education, Delhi University
FARAH FAROOQI Professor, Faculty of Education, Jamia Milia University
SONAjHARIA MINZ former Vice Chancellor, Sidokkannhu Murmu University & Professor, School of Computer and Systems, JNU
GURUMOORTHY KASINATHAN Director, IT for Change, Bengaluru
ANWAR SADAT Chief Executive Officer, Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education (KITE)
C RAMAKRISHNAN Senior Consultant, Vidyakiranam

A brief reporting of English speeches in Malayalam

General discussion

Closing remarks by chairperson

(The session will include a tea break)

CONCEPT NOTE

Kerala occupies the premier position among States in the school education map of India. School education in Kerala attempts to provide students with the highest standards of learning. It also attempts to inculcate ideals of social justice, equality, democracy, secularism and the scientific temper, in the pupils of Kerala.

The bedrock of Kerala’s development achievements is school education, because school education was the instrument that made progress in other fields possible in the 1990s. The task that the Government of Kerala set in 2016 was to make the best possible school education available in the public sector to children in the State, regardless of considerations of income, region, or social group.

The 13th Five Year Plan period was one of transformation in school education, particularly in Government and aided schools. The period was marked by new investments in school education, particularly in infrastructure, the improvement of the quality of schools and instruction, and by the improvement of social coverage and inclusion in the school education system. High quality school education was made available to wider sections of people than ever before. Between 2016 and 2022, 8,91,046 additional children enrolled in Government and aided schools.

The 14th Plan focuses on academic improvement, and an enhanced quality of pedagogy and teaching. Schemes include curriculum revision, gender audit of textbooks, and special programmes in language and communication skills, and mathematics. The State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT) has begun the massive task of reforming the Kerala Curriculum Framework and revisions of all school textbooks. These will impart an updated scientific education and create the building blocks of a secular, democratic society.
Kerala learnt valuable lessons in methods of bridging the digital divide during the Covid 19 pandemic, when online learning became the major mode of school education. Initiatives to close the digital divide, ensure better connectivity to school education, and give the poor access to digital study material and library networks are being driven on a completely new scale.

Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education (KITE) is a State Government enterprise set up for the modernisation of educational institutions in the State. KITE has revolutionised the education system of the State with its decade-long operations, which include information and communication technology, capacity building, content development, connectivity, e-Learning, satellite-based education, support and maintenance mechanisms, e-Governance, and the upgradation of physical infrastructure in schools. With the efforts of KITE, schools in the State are now equipped with the latest ICT devices supported by high speed broadband connectivity, digital resource portals, and trained teachers, creating a total ICT-enabled ecosystem.

Gender justice is crucial to school education, and considerations of gender equity are issues of the curriculum, pedagogy, and school education. Teacher education and teacher professional development programmes, as well as training educational functionaries at all levels are also informed by considerations of quality and equity.

Planned efforts to enhance the quality of school education received by children of Scheduled Tribes with regard to pedagogy, infrastructural facilities, and facilities for high quality residential education are now a policy issue of special focus. There is work being done to end the digital divide between children of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the rest of the population.

The State Government is now directing a special policy effort to help schools serve children with special needs.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for school education in Kerala.

_________________________________________________
Session coordinator: Sajin Gopi, 8943193937, mail.sajingopi@gmail.com
Session 8

Kerala’s Fisheries Sector

Venue: Jimmy George Stadium
Chairperson: Saji Cherian, Minister for Fisheries and Cultural Affairs

Hosted by Department of Fisheries

SCHEDULE

Remarks
SAJI CHERIAN Minister for Fisheries and Cultural Affairs

Presentation
S SRINIVAS Principal Secretary, Department of Fisheries

Panellists
S SHARMA former Minister for Fisheries, Government of Kerala.

ANTONIO GARZA de Yta AWJ Innovation Senior Science Advisor for Fisheries Development, Oman

JOSE THOMAS Managing Director, Choice Group of Companies

DUNG VIET LE Head of Aquaculture Department, Faculty of Fisheries, Vietnam National University of Agriculture

SHAKUNTALA HARAKSINGH THILSTED World Food Prize Winner, Research Co-ordinator, International Network on Genetics in Aquaculture, Fisheries and Protein Security, Denmark

PRADEEP KUMAR T Vice-Chancellor in-charge, Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies

November 03, 2023 9:30 to 13:30
LEELA EDWIN former Head of Division, Fishing Technology, ICAR, Central Institute of Fisheries Technology

M ROSALIND GEORGE Dean (retd.) and Vice Chancellor in-charge Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies

ALEX NINAN President, the Seafood Exporters Association of India (Kerala Region) & Head of Baby Marine International

MANOJ SREEKANTA KURUKKAL founder of Ash tree Ventures

*A brief reporting of English speeches in Malayalam*

*General discussion*

*Closing remarks by chairperson*

*(The session will include a tea break)*

**CONCEPT NOTE**

Kerala is the leading State in India in the implementation of successful sustainable marine fisheries policies. Kerala’s fisheries management policy is primarily community-led. Local fisher communities actively participate in decision-making processes concerning fishing practices, conservation, and governance. The government empowers local communities, ensuring that their knowledge and perspectives are considered in policy formulation.

Kerala has established a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) along its coast to protect critical marine habitats and ecosystems. These MPAs serve as sanctuaries for fish populations and help restore biodiversity. They have been successful in preventing overfishing, allowing fish stocks to recover and sustainably support the fishing industry.

Kerala has implemented policies to minimize bycatch, i.e., the unintentional capture of non-target fish species or other marine organisms. Bycatch reduction measures, such as mandating the use of selective fishing gear, turtle excluder devices, and larger mesh sizes in nets, have been effective in mitigating the impact of fishing on non-target species and promoting sustainable fishing practices.
Kerala has adopted an Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) approach to ensure the sustainable development of its coastal areas. This comprehensive management framework combines conservation, development, and social welfare considerations to achieve a balance between environmental protection and economic growth in coastal regions.

Public policy in Kerala recognizes the important role of women in fisheries and has implemented policies to empower women fish workers. These include providing financial and technical support to women fishers and promoting their active engagement in decision-making processes.

Kerala’s fish processing sector benefits from the State’s long-standing tradition of marine, inland, and brackish water fisheries. The fish processing sector in Kerala is dominated by small-scale and artisanal processing units. These units are often family-owned or community-based enterprises that focus on traditional methods of processing, such as drying, salting, smoking, and canning.

At the same time, Kerala is known for producing high-quality fish products that cater to both domestic and international markets, with a variety of value-added products, including fish pickles, fish fry mixes, canned fish, fish cutlets, and ready-to-cook fish preparations.

Kerala’s fish processing sector also shows a strong emphasis on sustainable practices, especially in the context of environmental conservation and responsible fishing. There is increasing awareness and adoption of eco-friendly processing techniques and practices, including waste management and energy efficiency.

The small producers in the fisheries sector in Kerala face numerous challenges, such as lack of access to capital, market exploitation, and unfair pricing. In this context, fisher cooperatives have emerged as a strong institution that safeguards the interests of small fish producers and promotes sustainable fisheries practices. By eliminating intermediaries, cooperatives also reduce the marketing costs and increase economic returns for their members.

Cooperatives in the fisheries sector are community-based organizations that are owned and controlled by the small producers. They are guided
by the principles of democracy, self-help, and mutual cooperation. By pooling their resources and expertise, these small producers effectively assert their collective bargaining power. One of the significant advantages of cooperatives in Kerala’s fisheries sector is their ability to provide financial support and access to credit to small producers.

Cooperatives also play a crucial role in ensuring fair prices for small fish producers. They also take measures to implement sustainable fishing practices such as stakeholder consultations, awareness campaigns, capacity building programs, and encourage responsible fishing methods. The Government of Kerala also plays a vital role – government social security measures – in protecting the livelihoods of coastal communities. Government social security measures encompass a range of policies and programs designed to protect marine fishermen and their families from economic uncertainties. The government has established schemes to provide insurance coverage for fishing vessels, equipment, and crew members against risks like accidents, natural calamities, and loss of life at sea. The government provides pension schemes to aged fishermen. It offers financial assistance to retired fishermen, helping them lead a dignified life after years of hard work. The government also offers health and medical assistance to fisher persons including access to medical facilities, financial aid for treatment, and the provision of necessary healthcare infrastructure in coastal areas. Moreover, preventive healthcare campaigns are conducted regularly to address prevalent diseases and improve the overall health of fisherfolk.

The Government also emphasizes skill development and organises training programmes for fisher people to enhance their capabilities. These include workshops on modern fishing techniques, navigation, safety training, and entrepreneurship development.

State government policy is to enhance catch in the marine sector, and multiply production in the brackish and internal fisheries sectors. The government policy is one of inclusion and is marked by its commitment to improving incomes and living standards among coastal communities. We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for the fisheries sector in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Praveen P, 9446107617, praveen7882@gmail.com
November 03, 2023 9:30 to 13:30

Session 9

Information Technology in Kerala

Venue: Mascot Hotel  
Chairperson: V Abdurahiman, Minister for Sports, Wakf and Haj Pilgrimage, Post & Telegraph, Railways

Hosted by Department of Electronics and Information Technology

SCHEDULE

Remarks  
V ABDURAHIMAN Minister for Sports, Wakf and Haj Pilgrimage, Post & Telegraph, Railways

Presentation  
RATHAN U KELKAR Secretary, Electronics & Information Technology Department, Kerala

Panellists  
PALANIVEL THIAGA RAJAN Minister for IT and Digital Services, Tamil Nadu

S D SHIBULAL Co-founder, Infosys

SAM SANTHOSH Entrepreneur & Author, SciGenom Research Foundation

SENAPATHY ‘KRIS’ GOPALAKRISHNAN Co-Founder, Infosys

V K MATHEWS Founder and Executive Chairman of IBS Software

SUJA CHANDY Managing Director, Zafin India

SRIKANTH SRINIVASAN Vice President and Head, Membership and Outreach, National Association of Software and Service Companies
Kerala is among the first States in India to recognize the transformational potential of Information Technology (IT). Kerala is the first State to establish IT parks to promote industries in the sector. The IT sector has an important place in the state’s economy today. The information revolution— the unprecedented growth in the capacity to collect, analyse, and process data—has transformed the main productive and income generating sectors of our economy such as agriculture, industry, and services. This has led to the creation of many employment opportunities for youth in the IT/ITES industries. Given the continuous advance of information technology and its impact on all aspects of people’s lives, Kerala’s long-term vision is to build a knowledge economy to be achieved by means of a set of integrated initiatives.

Kerala was also early to recognize that the transformational potential of IT could only be realised by opening access to this technology to all sections of society. Early institutional innovation through its village service centres as well as the more recent Kerala Fiber Optic Network (KFON) scheme for broadband access serve as path breaking models for the rest of the country. The State has very extensive mobile/telephone penetration, with 32 million households connected. Internet penetration through broadband and mobile is 20 percent and 15 percent respectively. Kerala leads the country in this regard. According to an impact assessment report by the Digital Literacy Mission, Kerala tops the list of States in terms of digital literacy in the 14-49 age group; the figure is very high in other age-groups as well. Kerala’s achievements in literacy and schooling and emphasis on computer education in the school curriculum have
helped the State in achieving such levels of digital literacy.

The KFON project aims to build resilient core networks that can be scaled up. It will be an access network to connect over 30,000 government institutions including offices and educational institutions and provide free internet in collaboration with local service providers to 20 lakh economically backward families. It is fed through a new optic fibre route created parallel to the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) power network.

The Skill Delivery Platform Kerala connects the State’s engineering colleges with IT parks through a tele-presence network, connecting 150 hi-tech classrooms and imparting skill training to nearly 50,000 students in a year.

The development of digital infrastructure with emphasis on broadband connectivity and other high-quality public computing facilities is essential to create an enabling environment for the IT industry. The Covid pandemic has made us realise the importance of such infrastructure in facilitating flexible working arrangements.

The other important lesson from Kerala is the role of continuous efforts to develop human resources development in this fast-changing technology sector. Kerala has established the Kerala University of Digital Sciences, the first of its kind in the country, to promote research and develop human resources in the cutting edge areas of artificial intelligence, machine learning, blockchain technology, and other significant areas. The objective is to encourage interdisciplinary research and collaborations with industries to generate applications to take advantage of the potential of recent technological developments.

Kerala is the first State to declare internet access as a basic human right. The growth of digital literacy and the importance given to e-governance can be expected to benefit the development of the State.

Kerala is the first state to declare internet access as a basic human right. The growth of digital literacy and the importance given to e-governance can be expected to benefit the development of the state.

The Government of Kerala looks forward to discussions among experts
on the technological future of the IT sector in Kerala, issues of access and inclusion, human resource development in the IT sector, and the requirements and prerequisites of a knowledge economy.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for the IT sector in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Francis Thomas, 9447551945, franciskareenattu@gmail.com
November 03, 2023 9:30 to 13:30

Session 10

Public Health in Kerala

Venue: Central Stadium
Chairperson: Veena George, Minister for Health and Women and Child Development

Hosted by Directorate of Health Services

SCHEDULE

Remarks
VEENA GEORGE Minister for Health and Women and Child Development

Presentation
MOHAMMED HANISH APM IAS Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department

Panellists
P K SREEMATHI TEACHER former Minister for Health, Kerala
K SRINATH REDDY President, Public Health Foundation of India
T SUNDARARAMAN Member, Global Steering Council of the People’s Health Movement and Adjunct Faculty, JIPMER International School of Public Health
M V PILLAI MD, Jefferson Medical College, USA
M R RAJAGOPAL Founder and Chairman, Pallium India
DEVAKI NAMBIAR Programme Director, Healthier Societies, George Institute for Public Health
V RAMANKUTTY Emeritus Professor, Sree Chitra Thirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST)
CONCEPT NOTE

Kerala’s progress in its public health system has received national and international appreciation. Kerala has also been a model for other States of India in dealing with public health exigencies, as the experiences in dealing with the Nipah virus outbreak in 2018 and the COVID-19 pandemic have shown. Kerala continues to be the best performer among States in the country in respect to indicators such as life expectancy at birth, infant mortality, maternal mortality, and the ratio of males to females in the population. Special attention is given to health facilities through various schemes for marginalised sections of society. Kerala’s system offers palliative care to the incurably ill, elderly, and the bedridden.

In order to address the issue of out-of-pocket expenditure by families on health, substantial funds have been pumped into the health sector through the Budget and Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB). In 2021-22, according to revised budget estimates, health expenditure as a proportion of expenditure was 7.34 per cent.

The Aardram Mission was started in order to make Government hospitals people-friendly by improving their basic infrastructure and capacity to provide services. Under the Mission, all Primary Health Centres are being converted to Family Health Centres that provide a range of services locally. The Aardram Mission also aims to transform all district hospitals into institutions that provide all basic specialty services and essential multi-specialty services. Various infrastructure facilities including OP computerisation, providing adequate facilities in consultation rooms, and guideline-based management are being implemented in Government medical colleges and at district-level hospitals. As part of Nava Kerala Karma Padhathi II, Aardram Mission 2 has been launched in 2022.
Karunya Arogya Suraksha Padhathi (KASP) is the comprehensive health insurance programme of the Government of Kerala. It also includes the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. KASP covers all Government-sponsored health insurance schemes, namely, Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY), Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CHIS), Senior Citizen Health Insurance Scheme (SCHIS), and the State scheme titled Karunya Benevolent Fund (KBF). A total of 41.79 lakh families are covered by the KASP scheme, of which 22.03 lakh families are covered under PMJAY. Kerala will also become the first State in India with universal health assurance coverage for persons with disabilities and transgender persons.

The basic objective of the National AYUSH Mission (NAM), is to promote AYUSH medical systems through cost-effective AYUSH services. The International Ayurveda Research Institute, Kannur is a research institute with modern bio-medical research facilities and a hospital, museum, and medicinal herb garden.

One Health is a collaborative effort of multiple health science professions, together with their related disciplines and institutions- working locally, nationally, and globally- to attain optimal health for people, domestic animals, wildlife, plants, and our environment. It deals with diseases of animal origin (zoonotic diseases) and their prevention, antimicrobial resistance, environmental contamination, and food safety measures. Projects have been initiated by the Health Services Department and Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (KVASU) in this sphere.

Kerala experienced a first-ever outbreak of a novel virus disease, Nipah, a highly fatal emerging zoonotic disease. The outbreak response activities undertaken by the health system in Kerala contained the outbreak in a short time of 10 days. The response of the State Government received international appreciation.

The State experienced another public health challenge in the form of a natural calamity caused by an extreme rainfall event during August 2018. The public health response of the State and local governments, and the strengthening of disease surveillance systems, counseling services, and the continuation of treatment of non-communicable diseases, set a national example.
Kerala reported the first case of COVID-19 in the country, less than a month after the disease was first notified by the World Health Organisation. Learning from previous experiences of managing the Nipah virus outbreaks and natural disasters, the State responded by activating its public health emergency response system. Kerala quickly established a surveillance system, enhanced its existing infrastructure capacity, and trained its entire workforce to tackle the new challenges. Kerala had a relatively low case fatality rate and also ensured social and psychological support to all its citizens during the lockdown period and beyond. Elderly and other vulnerable persons were protected by ensuring reverse quarantine. The quality of Kerala’s COVID 19 response has been widely commended internationally.

Improvement in the health status of the people is one of the crucial indicators of human development in a community. Good health is of intrinsic importance; it also contributes to economic development. Kerala’s strength lies in its strong public care system. Health facilities have to be continually upgraded to meet new and existing challenges.

In the current era, the State has to tackle problems of non-communicable diseases and of the resurgence of certain infectious diseases. The State has to take special care of the health of specific sections of people, including people of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, fisheries workers, plantation workers, and others. The public healthcare system has to be strengthened to face these challenges.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for public health in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Saji V, 9447799496, sajivemugopal@gmail.com
Session 11

Industry in Kerala

Venue: Niyamasabha Hall
Chairperson: P Rajeeve, Minister for Law, Industries and Coir
Hosted by Directorate of Industries and Commerce

SCHEDULE

Remarks
P RAJEEVE Minister for Law, Industries and Coir

Presentation
SUMAN BILLA IAS Principal Secretary, Industries Department

Panellists
PAMELA ANN MATHEW Chairperson and Managing Director, O/E/N India Ltd

CHETAN MAKAM Managing Director and Board Chair, Terumo Penpol Pvt Ltd.

THOMAS JOHN Managing Director, Agappe Diagnostics Ltd

KISHOR RUNGTA Chairman and Managing Director, Fertilisers and Chemicals Travancore Limited

NABOMITA MAZUMDAR National Chairperson to Confederation of Indian Micro Small Medium Enterprises

SHINYA TAKAHASHI Director (Technical), Nitta Gelatin Ltd

JOHN CHACKO Chairman, Federation of Indian Coir Exporters Associations

N DHARMARAJ former Chief Executive Officer, HML Plantations

November 04, 2023 9:30 to 13:30
CONCEPT NOTE

The Government of Kerala is committed to industrial development in the private, public, and cooperative sectors, with a focus on enhancing income among the people and on generating more employment opportunities for youth. A comprehensive draft Industrial Policy has been released for public consultation keeping in view the challenges and opportunities available in fast-changing national and global circumstances. The policy provides a long-term framework for the industrial development of Kerala.

The new industrial policy seeks to make effective use of advanced technologies, including biotechnology, nanotechnology, biomedical sciences, electronics, computing, media technologies, and biochemical engineering to produce new and more value-added products. Areas such as (i) agro-based industry and food processing; (ii) chemicals and petrochemicals, including paint, urea, titanium, minerals, and cement; (iii) electronics; (iv) medical equipment, health care and biotechnology; (v) anchor industries including industrial corridors, ports, shipping logistics and inland water transport systems; (vi) textiles and garments; (vii) handlooms and powerlooms; (viii) traditional industries such as cashew and coir; and (ix) construction and allied activities offer high potential for growth.

Kerala has achieved substantial progress in diversifying its industrial sector over the last decade. Kerala’s share of Gross Value Added by the factory sector increased during this period, indicating a higher growth than the all-India average. The Government of Kerala aims to build on this positive trend.
Kerala is a high-consumption State, with per capita consumer expenditure that is substantially higher than the all-India average, where the demand in many segments is met by commodities produced elsewhere. Efforts are being made to promote a dual-circulation economic strategy in which capacity is built within Kerala to meet domestic demand and national and international trade are developed in areas of strength. The development of agro-based industry is a key component of this strategy.

The “Year of Enterprise” initiative is part of the integrated efforts taken by the Government to encourage economic growth and facilitate structural changes to Kerala’s economy. The main objective of this program is to encourage and promote micro, small, and medium-level entrepreneurs in the State by creating one lakh new enterprises in Kerala during FY 2022-23. The Government was able to achieve the ambitious target of commencing one lakh new enterprises within a remarkable period of 250 days, from 1st of April to 7th of December 7, 2022. As part of this achievement, Rs. 6,274 Crore was invested and 2,20,285 new employment opportunities were created in the State. It would be instructive to learn the reasons for the success of this program, as well as from similar international experiences to work out a sustainable strategy for the future.

In this setting, the Government of Kerala declared 2022-23 as the “Year of Enterprises”. The success of this program led to the launching of “Year of Enterprises 2.0”, with special emphasis on the scale of enterprises. It aims to create 1000 firms with a Rs 100 crore turnover.

An important component of Kerala’s approach to industrial development is to promote modern MSMEs by leveraging Kerala’s competitive advantage. Availability of land for industrial use is scarce in Kerala. Hence, the public sector industrial promotional agencies including KSIDC and KINFRA are mandated to develop industrial parks with modern facilities to ease MSME operations. Efforts are being made to create land banks for industries by identifying unutilised land held by State PSUs and Local Bodies. The State Government is also bidding in Central PSU sales in Kerala in view of the land resources attached to them.

Institutions such as the Digital University and organisations and programmes such as the Additional Skill Acquisition Programme Kerala
(ASAP) and Information and Communication Technology Academy of Kerala (ICT-K) aim to create new employment in the industrial sector through career guidance, skill development, and entrepreneurship development programmes. Industry-education links are fostered so that certain sectors of teaching and research support industrial development.

Kerala’s approach to employment in traditional industries is unique in many ways. The focus of this approach is on modernisation, diversification, and marketing, rather than mere subsidisation of costs and livelihood support. The second reorganisation of Coir industries is an outstanding example of this. Supply chain challenges in traditional industries are uniquely different, and Kerala’s experiences will be of wide relevance.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for industry in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Jishnu M J, 8075227493, jishnuspb@gmail.com
Session 12

Cooperatives in Kerala

Venue: Tagore Theatre
Chairperson: V N Vasavan, Minister for Cooperation and Registration

Hosted by Department of Cooperation

SCHEDULE

Remarks
V N VASAVAN Minister for Cooperation and Registration

Presentation
MINI ANTONY IAS Secretary Department of Cooperation

Panellists
K V SHAJI Chairman, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
GANESH GOPAL Lead Entrepreneurship Development-International Co-operative Alliance-Asia and Pacific (ICA-AP)
SIMEL ESIM Head, Cooperatives Unit, International Labour Organization
SHAMBU PRASAD, Institute of Rural Management Anand
MIKEL LEZAMIZ Representative from Montragaon
RITA GHEDINI President, Legacoop Bologna
GOPI KOTTAMURICKAL President, Kerala Bank
KOLIYACODE N KRISHNAN NAIR Chairman, Kerala State Co-operative Union
REMESHAN PALERI Chairman, Uralungal Labour Contract Co-operative Society

November 04, 2023 | 9:30 to 13:30
CONCEPT NOTE

The cooperative movement is strong and deep-rooted throughout Kerala, and its historical foundations were laid by progressive political movements in the State. In large parts of the State, the cooperative movement was a direct offshoot of the freedom struggle as well as the struggle for land reforms by the peasant movement in the 1940s and 1950s. Over the years, the development of cooperative credit institutions was key to the weakening of usury in rural areas of the State. Cooperatives also play a vital role in mobilising people and pooling their resources to meet the common needs of their members and thereby, of society at large.

Credit cooperatives continue to be an important source of credit, particularly rural credit, in Kerala. Kerala has more than 1600 primary agricultural credit societies (PACS), and such a network matches, if it is not actually larger than, the branch network of commercial banks. About 62 per cent of Kerala’s population is registered as members of PACS, while in India the corresponding share is just 10 per cent. About 70 per cent of deposits in all PACS in India are in Kerala. About 60 per cent of all deposits in Kerala are in cooperatives, while in India, just 20 per cent of all deposits are in cooperatives. For every 100 credit accounts in the banks, the number of borrowers in the PACS is 35 in India and 184 in Kerala.

As a result, Kerala’s cooperatives have also shown significant progress in bringing in borrowers into the formal banking structure. About 33 per cent of the total household debt in Kerala was raised from credit cooperatives in 2018; the corresponding share was only 8 per cent at the all-India level. The Kerala State Co-operative Bank, which serves the sector as the apex institution, the Kerala State Co-Operative Agricultural and Rural Development Bank (KSCARDB) or the Bhoopanaya Bank,
and the PACS have established an efficient rural financial system. This system has insulated the rural and semi-urban population from money lenders as well as the volatilities of the policies of financial liberalisation over the years. The political system that governs the cooperatives has consistently evolved in this direction.

The importance of cooperatives for Kerala, however, cannot be measured by their role in credit provision alone. Given their democratic and decentralised character, cooperatives (including credit and non-credit cooperatives) have expanded with panchayati raj institutions, as agents of socio economic change in Kerala.

In particular, the cooperative system of production organisation in Kerala has emerged as an alternative in traditional industries. Examples are in the beedi industry, handloom industry, and coir industry, where the mobilisation of traditional workers under the cooperative system has helped protect and enlarge employment, as well as create new forms of production organisations.

In a host of non-agricultural sectors, too, cooperatives have made a mark. The Uralungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society, established in 1926, is an example of such an initiative in the construction industry.

Cooperatives must play a major role in assisting the productive sectors of the State achieve their potential for growth. Cooperatives must also help create large-scale aggregation and marketing networks, particularly in agriculture. The Government has also been working on issues of technological upgradation, diversification, and professionalisation in this sector. Along with discussions on the growth of cooperatives, these issues will also be discussed at the Keraleeyam sessions.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for cooperatives in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Preeth V S, 9447859326, preethkprm@gmail.com
Session 13

Development Issues Concerning Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens

Venue: Jimmy George Stadium
Chairperson: R Bindu, Minister for Higher Education and Social Justice

Hosted by Social Justice Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks
R BINDU  Minister for Higher Education and Social Justice

Presentation
SHARMILA MARY JOSEPH IAS Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department

Panellists
A B DEY Director, Venu Geriatric Institute, New Delhi
ANUPAMA DUTTA Director, HelpAge India, Policy Research and Advocacy Department
SHAMPA SENGUPTA Director, Sruti Disability Rights Centre
SANJEEV JAIN Emeritus Professor of Psychiatry, Department of Psychiatry, National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences
MEENAKSHI BALASUBRAMANIAN Co-Founder, Equals Centre for Promotion of Social Justice, Chennai, Associate, Centre for Inclusive Policy, Washington DC.
SABRIYE TENBERKEN Founder Braille Without Borders Charitable Trust; Kanthari International, Leadership, Institute
SUJA K KUNNATH Director, National Institute of Speech & Hearing (NISH)

MINI SUKUMAR Member, Kerala State Planning Board

G VIJAYARAGHAVAN former CEO of Technopark; former Member, Kerala State Planning Board

K S JAMES Senior Research Scholar, International Institute for Applied System Analysis (IIAS)

*A brief reporting of English speeches in Malayalam*

*General discussion*

*Closing remarks by chairperson*

*(The session will include a tea break)*

**CONCEPT NOTE**

The Government of Kerala’s approach towards social justice and welfare is comprehensive and multidimensional, and a varied range of schemes are implemented through various departments. The State’s interventions spread across health, nutrition, palliative care, education, training, employment, livelihood development, and other sectors. This seminar is to address the issues of senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

Senior citizens constitute a higher proportion of the population in Kerala than any other part of India. Kerala’s high-levels of social development have resulted in low fertility rates, declining mortality, and increasing longevity. The proportion of elderly in the State has increased from 10.5 per cent in 2001 to 12.6 per cent in 2011 and is projected to rise to 23 per cent by 2025, closer to current rates in OECD countries. In Kerala, the dependency ratio was the highest in the country at 19.6 (Elderly in India 2016, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, GOI).

Population ageing reflects the achievements of the State in improving the health status of people. These demographic changes, however, pose some challenges for the State, its families and the elderly, as the number of elderly is on the rise. This requires responsive and pre-emptive policies and measures to prepare the State for social protection of elders who are disadvantaged, to live a life of dignity.
The Government has recognised this responsibility and has developed various programmes to help the elderly poor. The programmes that address the vulnerabilities that the elderly population faces also ensure that the elderly live better and healthier lives. The programmes and schemes for senior citizens implemented through the Social Justice Department support old age homes, day care centres, and mobile medicare units. The Department also acts as the nodal agency for the effective implementation of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 in the State. Local Self Governments and Kudumbashree are also actively involved in elderly care.

At present, about 29.42 lakh senior citizens from low income groups receive old age pensions. Under “Vayomithram”, free elderly care, medical services, palliative care, health classes, etc., are given to the elderly. “Sayamprabha”, another initiative by the Social Justice Department in collaboration with local governments, provides day care facilities and other welfare activities for the elderly. Under “Snehitha”, around 25,000 elderly neighbourhood groups have been formed under the aegis of Kudumbashree for the elderly living alone.

Kerala has an extensive network of community-owned palliative care programs, mostly availed by very old persons during the final stages of their lives. In addition, as per the Palliative Care Policy issued by Government of Kerala, 2008, palliative care is integrated into primary health care services.

The State views the elderly as a group with great potential to contribute to the socio-economic development of the community, and aims to empower senior citizens and help them lead healthy, secure, and productive lives. Kerala’s 14th Five-Year Plan supports all efforts to maintain Kerala’s position as a disabled-friendly State. Government policy seeks to give effect to all legislation that designs, protects, and promotes the rights of persons with disabilities.

In 2015, the Kerala Social Security Mission (KSSM) conducted an exclusive survey of persons with disabilities in Kerala. It was one of the first surveys of its kind in India, covering 22 types of disabilities. The survey identified that persons with disabilities in Kerala constitute 2.3 per cent of the State’s population.
Through various organisations under the Social Justice Directorate — National Institute of Speech and Hearing (NISH), Kerala Social Security Mission (KSSM), Kerala State Handicapped Persons Welfare Corporation (KSHPWCC), National Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (NIPMR), and State Commissionerate of Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD) — the Government has implemented development programmes for persons with disabilities.

Kerala implements a life-cycle approach to support persons with disabilities. The scheme “Anuyatra” for instance, is a rights-based initiative in disability management implemented by KSSM, crafted in line with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. It includes preventive initiatives, early screening, early intervention through District Early Intervention Centres (DEICs) and other health and social sector institutions, education support through special anganwadis, Kudumbashree BUDS schools for children with intellectual disabilities, model child rehabilitation centres, special schools, inclusive education, vocational training, community-based rehabilitation, and assisted living projects among others. Individual care-plan formulation and follow-up is another major initiative. Every year 5 to 6 lakh children benefit from this scheme.

Other schemes include “Athijeevanam”, a comprehensive scheme for mainstreaming persons with disabilities, “Pratheeksha”, for rehabilitation of those with intellectual disabilities, “Aswasakiranam”, for financial support to caregivers, the Barrier Free Kerala project, “Niramaya” health insurance, etc.

Disability interventions through other Departments include educational support, self-employment loans, the production and provision of the assistive technologies and services, and skill training. As of 2021, 45 special schools function under the Inclusive Education in Schools programme. The Alternative and Innovative Education Centre (AIEC) or Multi-Grade Learning Centre (MGLC) provides financial assistance to accredited institutions that offers care to intellectually disabled children. Four per cent of State Government Services vacancies are reserved for persons with disabilities, and suitable posts for such reservation have been identified.
Kerala aims to create an environment where people with disabilities can exercise equal rights, develop their talents, and live with dignity. The larger goal of achieving independent living for persons with disabilities within the shortest possible time is the target, as envisaged in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for development issues concerning persons with disabilities and senior citizens in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Abdul Gafoor, 9747324727, abdulgaornarokkavu@gmail.com
Session 14

How Kerala Dealt with the Pandemic

Venue: Mascot Hotel
Chairperson: A K Saseendran, Minister for Forest and Wildlife

Hosted by Health and Family Welfare (NHM)

SCHEDULE

Remarks
AK SASEENDRAN Minister for Forest and Wildlife

Presentation
MOHAMMED HANISH APM IAS Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department

Panellists
RICHARD A CASH Winner of the Prince Mahidol Award for Medicine and Public Health; Senior Lecturer on Global Health, T.H Chan School of Public Health, Harvard University
K K SHAILAJA TEACHER Member of Legislative Assembly, former Minister for Health, Social Justice, Women and Child Development
SOUMYA SWAMINATHAN Chairperson, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai
JACOB T JOHN Co-chair, India Expert Advisory Group on Measles and Rubella Elimination
PRIYA ABRAHAM Senior Professor in Clinical Virology, CMC Vellore
B EKBAL Chairperson, Covid Expert Committee, Government of Kerala, former Member, Kerala State Planning Board
Kerala’s response to Covid-19 was multi-dimensional, and marked by a strong commitment to development and social justice. It received worldwide acclaim and became a model in terms of management strategy, mitigation efforts, and relief measures.

The core features of the response were to ensure access to free healthcare for all, access to food and essential commodities and services for all, access to shelter, including for migrant workers, and access to information.

Kerala reported the first case of COVID-19 in the country, less than a month after the disease was first notified by the WHO. The State has a strong primary health care system augmented by the three-tier local government system, and a network of health workers and volunteers who are involved in ensuring the provision of comprehensive health care to all. Learning from previous experiences, including managing the Nipah virus outbreaks and the aftermath of natural disasters, the State responded by activating its public health emergency response system. A detailed evaluation of all healthcare facilities in the State (both Government and private) was done, and a surveillance system was quickly established to tackle the new challenge.

The system for managing Covid included State-strengthened laboratory services, ambulance services, ICU services, Covid Care Centres for quarantine, Covid First Line Treatment Centres for asymptomatic Covid positive patients, Covid Second Line Treatment Centres for severe patients, and Tertiary Care Centres for critical patients. The State also
ensured mental health support to all its citizens during the lockdown period and beyond. Steps were also taken to protect senior citizens.

A team liaised with private hospitals on multiple issues, including details of available facilities, Covid and non-Covid case management, telemedicine, mobile medical units, and treatment pricing.

In April 2020, in the wake of the lockdown, the Government of Kerala provided ration kits with 17 items to all ration-card holding households. In addition, an Onam kit containing 11 items in August 2020, and eight-item kits were distributed each month from September 2020 to December 2020 to all ration cardholders. Grain was door-delivered to the elderly and bed-ridden who were unable to reach retail outlets.

To compensate for cooked mid-day meals, a Food Security Allowance was given to eligible school pupils. Later, food kits containing rice and nine other grocery items were distributed through the Government’s supply organisation. Anganwadi workers delivered food to children below the age of 3, and in the age group of 3-6 years, through the Take Home Ration (THR) scheme. Kudumbashree, in convergence with Local Governments, started community kitchens to cook food and home deliver to persons under quarantine and the needy.

The Government also gave food kits to migrant workers, and to welfare institutions in the State. Migrant workers in Kerala were sheltered in over 21,000 camps, overseen by Labour Department officials, where food, water, and other amenities were ensured.

The Government of Kerala also ensured support to Non-Resident Keralites. Help desks were established in 14 countries, across the Gulf, Europe, North America, Africa, and South East Asia.

The public dissemination of information on the pandemic and the State’s response was spearheaded by daily public press conferences by the Chief Minister. These were recognition of the people’s right to information, and constituted a model of political accountability.

The Government of Kerala was the first to announce a stimulus package – the initial package was a 20,000 crore package – during the pandemic.
As part of this effort, welfare pensions were paid for two months in advance, families not eligible for welfare pensions received Rs 1000 each, interest-free loans were disbursed through Kudumbashree, and jobs were provided under the Employment Guarantee Scheme. “Subhkiksha Keralam,” a people’s campaign in the sphere of food production, was launched.

Kerala’s response to Covid was the coordinated effort of many departments of Government. These included the School Education Department and its allied institutions, the Fisheries, Agriculture, and Forest Departments, and Departments such as the Woman and Child Development, the Social Justice, Labour, Scheduled Caste and Tribe Development Departments, and the Revenue and Home Departments, etc.

A crucial role was played by the Local Self-Government Department and the Local Governments, which initiated both precautionary measures and follow up action when positive cases of COVID-19 were identified and mass awareness campaigns. Kudumbashree, with its vast network of members, played a multi-sectoral and substantial role through activities such as implementing the “Break the Chain” campaign, producing face masks and sanitisers on a large scale, running community kitchens, supporting house-bound elderly and vulnerable, and operating help desks.

The policy of the Government of Kerala during the pandemic, was thus shaped by its commitment to good health, development, and social justice.

We look forward to the discussions at the session.

Session coordinator: Francis Thomas, 9447551945, franciskareenattu@gmail.com
Session 15

Local Governments in Kerala

Venue: Central Stadium
Chairperson: M B Rajesh, Minister for Local Self Governments and Excise

Hosted by Local Self Government Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks
M B RAJESH Minister for Local Self Government and Excise

Presentation
SARADA MURALEEDHARAN IAS Additional Chief Secretary, LSGD

Panellists
MANI SHANKAR AIYAR former Union Minister for Panchayati Raj
T M THOMAS ISAAC former Minister for Finance, Kerala
S M VIJAYANAND IAS (retd.) former Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala
W R REDDY IAS former Head, National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj
SUNIL KUMAR IAS (retd.) former Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India
UMA MAHADEVAN IAS Additional Chief Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department, Government of Karnataka
JIJU P ALEX Member, Kerala State Planning Board
C GEORGE THOMAS Chairman, Kerala Biodiversity Board
CONCEPT NOTE

One of the unique features of Kerala is the formation of democratic institutions to ensure empowerment and inclusive development at the grassroots level. The People’s Plan Campaign (PPC) in Kerala (1996-2001) was a unique experiment in democratic decentralisation. It was far more than a simple devolution of resources and powers to local bodies. The government transferred 12 development institutions and devolved around 30% of the state plan funds to the rural and urban local governments for the first time in the country. The PPC thus transformed decentralisation from an administrative reform exercise into a social movement from below. The social mobilisation empowered local bodies to formulate local plans and utilise the substantial financial resources and powers devolved to them. It generated a new style of governance that was transparent, and participatory. It also created an enabling environment for the institutionalisation of new ideas in democratic governance.

Kerala’s attempts towards democratic decentralization began during the period of the first elected government of the unified state in 1957-59. The first Kerala Administrative Reforms Commission chaired by Chief Minister Sri. E M S Namboodiripad discussed the importance of decentralization and proposed the establishment of decentralized governance in the state. It suggested the constitution of village panchayats with adequate administrative and financial resources to plan and implement schemes and to control the staff assigned to them from various departments. Though attempts towards decentralization of governance faced setbacks in subsequent years, Kerala tried consistently to pursue
the agenda. Much later, Kerala passed the legislation to establish District Councils for district level administration for the first time in the country in 1991, followed by the PPC in 1996. Kerala’s system of democratic decentralization has been commended nationally and internationally.

Kerala’s decentralised governance has led to significant gains in infrastructure development and systems of service delivery by local governments. The range of services includes primary health care, childcare, primary education, drinking water, sanitation, roads, irrigation facilities, housing for the poor, support for cultivators, income and employment creation for women, and the people of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe. Delivery of mandatory services like civil registration and issue of licenses have been computerised and made user-friendly. The e-governance initiative in local governments has led to responsive and transparent processing of applications and decision making.

The People’s Plan movement also created a platform for grassroots economic development interventions such as the Kudumbashree Mission, which focuses on poverty reduction, livelihood security, and income-bearing employment. The Kudumbashree Mission was established in 1998 as a community organization of women’s Neighbourhood Groups (NHGs). It aimed at not just the alleviation of poverty but also the empowerment of women through an expansion of women’s employment. Though they began with thrift and loan activities, these NHGs have diversified over time into social entrepreneurship, i.e., the creation of self-employment opportunities in health, nutrition, agriculture, and microenterprises. In 2019-20, Kudumbashree groups had an overall participation of 4.5 million women in over 0.3 million NHGs. There were about 28,000 women-led microenterprises involving 64,475 female entrepreneurs, who employed more than 15,000 workers. The Kudumbashree Mission also actively promoted programmes and schemes that addressed atrocities against women.

The efficacy of Kerala’s model of democratic decentralization became evident when the State tackled major crises in recent times, including the unprecedented flood of 2018 and the Covid-19 pandemic. Observers across the world recognised and lauded the role played by Local Self Government Institutions (LSGIs) in Kerala in mitigating crises. The major and new state-level initiatives like the Nava Kerala Mission, housing for all and the LIFE Mission, the eradication of extreme poverty
and the initiatives for the treatment of solid waste Kerala are now being implemented under the leadership of LSGIs.

At this critical phase of change, beyond the basic developmental and welfare activities, the Government wants LSGI in Kerala to play a new role by fostering economic development and creating employment. LSGIs have to evolve as the engines of economic growth for the entire State. The Government also expects LSGIs to become the caring arms of the State, addressing the needs of vulnerable sections of society. They also have a major role to play in managing the natural resources and enabling sustainable development.

Today, local governments in Kerala are looking ahead to breaking new ground by creating a prosperous, self-sufficient, environmentally sustainable, and clean society. Keraleeyam will showcase their achievements of the past decades and discuss a vision for the future.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for local governments in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Praveen P, 9446107617, praveen7882@gmail.com
Session 16

Kerala Diaspora

Venue: Niyamasabha Hall
Chairperson: Ahammad Devarkovil, Minister for Ports, Museums and Archaeology

Hosted by NORKA

SCHEDULE

Remarks
Ahammad Devarkovil, Minister for Ports, Museums and Archaeology and K Krishnankutty, Minister for Electricity

Moderator
K. Raviraman Member, Kerala State Planning Board

Presentation
Suman Billai IAS Principal Secretary, NORKA & Industries

Panellists
Ray Jureidini Professor of Migration Ethics and Human Rights, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar

Azad Moopen Founder Chairman & Managing Director, Aster DM Healthcare & Director, NORKA Roots

Babu Stephen Chief Executive Officer of DC Healthcare Inc & Chairman, FOKANA

P T Kunhu Muhammed former Chairman, Kerala Pravasi Welfare Board

Sheela Thomas IAS (retd.) former Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala

Irudaya Rajan Chairman, International Institute for Migration and Development
CONCEPT NOTE

Kerala is one of the most globally connected and exposed regions of the world. It has had close social, economic, and cultural connections with the western and eastern parts of the world through in-migration and out-migration of millions of people over many centuries. A substantial part of the Indian diaspora in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and in Europe and North America are from Kerala. Women from the State have a marked presence in the health sector in all States of India, and abroad.

Kerala’s diaspora is not confined to the countries of the GCC or to a few selected occupations. It comprises an educated and well-trained workforce that is spread across the world and across diverse occupational specialisations. It comprises people who are Indian citizens who retain a home and family and social connections in India, and more permanent residents abroad.
The Government of Kerala conceived and implemented the idea of a Loka Kerala Sabha (LKS) in 2019. It is a platform for the cultural, socio-political, and economic integration of Keralites across the globe with Kerala. Three sessions of LKS have been held, in 2018, 2020, and 2022. In addition, regional meetings of the diaspora have also been held under the auspices of the LKS. LKS provided substantial support to the diaspora during the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Government of Kerala has implemented schemes such as Pravasi Chitti which enables Non Resident Keralites (NRK) to participate in the development of the State, and has put in place schemes for the welfare of returning NRKs. A separate Government department is dedicated to serving the needs of the diaspora. The Government of Kerala strongly advocated that the Union Government release a grant of Rs 2000 crore for the welfare of returning migrants in the post-Covid scenario.

Kerala’s economic growth since the 1990s has been substantially catalysed by inward remittances from NRKs. This has sustained a high level of consumer spending and pushed up the growth of the construction sector. However, there is a need to channelise these remittances into productive sectors of the economy. In order to achieve this, the Government has taken steps to provide a conducive investment climate and high quality infrastructure in the State. NRK remittances will be instrumental in making Kerala an investment destination and a knowledge society.

The diaspora of a nation or region contributes to the development in its place of origin when it has confidence in the purpose and determination of the Government in the home territory. An effective, transparent and non-corrupt Government enhances the trust of the diaspora. Today, in Kerala, there is a government of this nature and credibility. The State Government believes in using the vast experience and knowledge of NRKs for the development of the State and is also committed to ensuring that all necessary steps are taken to ensure safe migration, dignified living, and the successful rehabilitation of returning migrants.

Keraleeyam proposes to discuss ways to better facilitate NRK investments in modern technology sectors and intellectual and other contributions of NRKs in providing quality higher education through Centres of
Excellence in higher education. New ways to ameliorate the problems faced by NRKs and returning migrants will also be discussed.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for the Kerala diaspora.

Session coordinator: Ratheesh P N, 9072770295, ratheeshpilli@gmail.com
November 05, 2023 l 9:30 to 13:30

Session 17

Gender and Development in Kerala

Venue: Tagore Theatre
Chairperson: Veena George, Minister for Health and Women and Child Development

Hosted by Women and Child Development Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks

VEENA GEORGE Minister for Health and Women and Child Development

Presentation

SHARMILA MARY JOSEPH IAS Principal Secretary, Social Justice Department

Panellists

BRINDA KARAT former Member of Parliament
MRIDUL EAPEN former Member, Kerala State Planning Board
SONA MITRA Principal Economist, Institute for What Works to Advance Gender Equality in Lead, Krea University
C S SUJATHA State Secretary, All India Democratic Women’s Association former Member of Parliament
VIBHUTI PATEL former Professor at Tata Institute of Social Sciences & Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women’s University, Mumbai
SHEETAL SHYAM C S Trans rights activist
T K ANANDI Gender Consultant to Government of Kerala
SYEDA HAMEED former Member, Planning Commission
CONCEPT NOTE

The social, economic, and cultural development in Kerala is inseparable from the development achievements of women in Kerala. Universal female literacy, high levels of school education, universal school enrolment, high levels of life expectancy at birth, and low maternal and infant mortality are foundational features of Kerala’s development achievements.

Gender parity has been achieved in primary, secondary, and tertiary education. While problems of unemployment persist, organised sector employment among women is relatively high.

Kerala has a history of women-oriented policy and specific interventions. Since 1996, planning at local levels as part of decentralised planning has been gender-aware, with local governments required to set aside 10 per cent of devolved Plan funds for the Women Component Plan. Kudumbashree, set up in 1998 as a poverty eradication mission, is centred on women and has grown into a significant community network of 46 lakh members. It is a world model for the economic, social, and political empowerment of women.

A separate Department of Women and Child Development (WCD) was established in 2017 to strengthen policies in the sphere of gender and development. Gender Budgeting was introduced with the 11th Five Year Plan and strengthened in the 13th Plan, and seeks to break down the usual Budget through a well-established methodology across schemes/programmes to make women visible in each sector, recognising their contribution and emphasising the need to consider their needs/interests in the overall determination of development policy. Allocations for women have touched a high of 20.9 per cent of the total Plan outlay of 2022-23.

NFHS data indicates that women in Kerala participate actively in the household decision making more than their counterparts at an all-
The participation of women voters in Kerala is very high in comparison to the India average. Though Kerala women’s representation in Parliament and Legislative, and State Assemblies is low, Kerala reserves half the positions in decision-making bodies of local governments for women, and of the total number of persons elected to local bodies in the elections of 2020, 54 per cent were women.

The policy approach to the welfare of working women in organised, unorganised, and traditional sectors is to ensure fair wages, better working conditions, and safer work spaces. A new focus is on educated unemployed women, and women with breaks in career due to care work responsibilities. Several State agencies provide skilling and Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDPs) to serve the needs of potential women entrepreneurs, who may not have adequate educational background and skills. Kudumbashree has played an important role in enabling the financial inclusion of women, and supporting income generation activities. In Kerala, over 90 per cent of the workers in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) are women.

The Kerala State Women’s Development Corporation (KSWDC) focuses on providing financial support to women entrepreneurs, training, gender awareness programmes, and menstrual hygiene management awareness projects. The Corporation has piloted a scheme setting up an Integrated Skill Development Centre for tribal women. The Gender Park under WCD is intended to be the South Asian hub for gender activities, with a Gender Data Centre in collaboration with UN Women, along with a heritage museum and library.

The Government has initiated the “Vilarchayil Ninnu Valarchayilekku” (ViVa) program to tackle the persistent high incidence of anaemia among girls and women in Kerala.

The Government of Kerala formulated the State Nirbhaya Policy for combating sexual violence against women and children and to safeguard them from trafficking. Multiple initiatives such as shelters for survivors of sexual harassment, SOS Model Homes, One Stop Centres, and several services such as helpdesks, phone lines and online assistance
for emergency aid, grievance redressal, legal, social, and psychological support are implemented through various agencies.

In 2015, Kerala became the first State in India to declare a Transgender Policy. Kerala was the first State to introduce a separate Plan scheme for transgender persons in the Budget. The State has an umbrella scheme, “Mazhavillu”, which ensures basic rights to education, health care, and employment. The Government has issued transgender ID cards, opened a Transgender Cell under the Directorate of Social Justice, a crisis management centre, and a 24x7 helpline.

The Government of Kerala will continue to address the issues of wages, safety, occupational health, and insurance for women belonging to occupational groups such as domestic workers, fish workers, and migrant workers. Specific efforts are taken for empowering women belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Kerala supports policies to ensure safer public spaces, improve and enhance public transport facilities, ensure safer workplaces, and strengthen mechanisms for combating violence against women. Ways to quantify the value of unpaid domestic labour and care work, and rethink women’s participation in production are being developed.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for gender and development in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Vijay R, 9895090532, vijay.kazhivoor@gmail.com
Session 18

Water Resources in Kerala

Venue: Jimmy George Stadium
Chairperson: Roshy Augustine, Minister for Water Resources

Hosted by Water Resources Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks
ROSHY AUGUSTINE Minister for Water Resources

Presentation
ASHOK KUMAR SINGH IAS Secretary, Water Resources Department, Kerala

Panellists
K P SUDHEER Ex. Officio Principal Secretary, Science & Technology Department, Government of Kerala and Executive Vice President, The Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment

SUNIL KUMAR AMBAST Chairman, Central Ground Water Board

E J JAMES Pro Vice Chancellor, Karunya Institute of Technology and Sciences, Executive Director (Retd), Centre for Water Resources Development and Management

A K GOSAIN Professor Emeritus, Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi

MANOJ P SAMUEL Executive Director, Centre for Water Resources Development and Management

SUDHIR KUMAR Director, National Institute of Hydrology, Roorkee

SWAPNA PANICKAL Scientist F, Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune
Kerala has vast water resources. The average gross yield from rainfall in Kerala has been estimated at 118,523 cubic mm, with geographic variations. Forty four rivers drain Kerala, with a total average annual yield estimated at 70,323 cubic mm, and utilisable yield of 42,772 cubic mm. Another estimate indicates that total surface water availability in Kerala, after accounting for losses due to evapotranspiration and interception, is about 54,410 cubic mm, of which 41,000 cubic mm flows as surface runoff, 7900 cubic mm infiltrates to recharge ground water and the rest 5510 mm is stored in reservoirs. The availability of water, however, varies with season and geography.

The total annual groundwater recharge in Kerala is 5769.23 cubic mm and the net availability of extractable recharge is 5211.75 cubic mm. Around 46 per cent of extracted groundwater is used for irrigation, and the rest for domestic and industrial supply. There are about 4.5 million open wells in Kerala. The density of open wells is very high (around 150 per square km), perhaps the highest in the country. On an average, more than 90 per cent of wells are used for domestic purposes.

While most of the natural wetlands in Kerala are brackish, there are several freshwater bodies as well. The nine important lakes cover an area of around 16 square km, and three of these are utilised for functions such as pisciculture, irrigation, and urban water supply.

Kerala has a wealth of ponds, tanks, and springs. There are 236 perennial springs, of which about 20 per cent are being utilised. Of the 45,000 ponds identified in the Department of Water Resources’ census of the ponds, there are 995 large ponds with a minimum water storage capacity of 1500 cubic m each.

There are 54 dams in Kerala, which include 14 dams and six barrages maintained by Irrigation Department, 42 dams by the Kerala State
Electricity Board, and two dams maintained by the Kerala Water Authority. The total stored surface water in Kerala is estimated at 5500 cubic mm, or 7.75 per cent of available water.

Given this, the vision for water management in Kerala is to achieve water security, long-term sustainability of water resources, equitable distribution of water, citizen stewardship over water, and a rights-based approach to water management. Kerala’s water resources will be harnessed to provide water for agriculture as the primary sector, manufacturing, tertiary sector activities, domestic use, and drinking water. In order to achieve these, the State has embarked on a series of activities, including the restoration and protection of key water ecosystems like rivers, lakes, ponds, and floodplains, augmentation of usable water, basin-wide cooperation, the integration of surface and groundwater management, water use compatible with hydrological and environmental sustainability, and empowerment and involvement of people through institutional mechanisms of local governments.

One of the longstanding issues in Kerala’s irrigation sector has been the un-commissioned large and medium irrigation projects, such as Muvattupuzha, Karappuzha, Banasurasagar and Idamalayar. In recent years, the speed of commissioning projects has picked up. The Muvattupuzha project has already been commissioned in 2020-21 and the other three are expected to be commissioned by 2024-25. The Pazhassi irrigation project will be re-commissioned by 2025, and the Pattisery dam in 2024-25.

Climate change is likely to pose new challenges to water resource management and agriculture. A goal that Kerala must explore in the future is the ways of checking and storing west-flowing river waters in a new set of large and small reservoirs. This will help in improving the irrigated area, as well as meeting drinking water requirements over the summer months.

Kerala is also trying to shift emphasis from large and medium to small and minor irrigation projects. Micro-irrigation can play a vital role in improving water use efficiency. In 2021, the area covered under micro irrigation in Kerala was 33,264 ha. Kerala has the potential to raise it to
close to 2 lakh ha. The Department of Water Resources has already initiated the implementation of community micro-irrigation projects across the State.

The floods of 2018 have called attention to the maintenance of the natural flow of water, particularly in low-lying regions like Kuttanad. In consultation with hydrologists from the Netherlands, the government has initiated efforts to implement the “Room for the River” concept. More studies are ongoing on how best to reduce the vulnerability of low-lying regions to flood hazards. The Kerala Water Resources Information System (Kerala-WRIS) -wherein data related to water and its allied sectors are integrated in a web-enabled platform- is also being completed. Water management in Kerala is also being restructured based on an Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) strategy. The IWRM is a systematic process for sustainable development, allocation and monitoring of water resource use considering social, economic, environmental and institutional factors. Kerala is also attempting to formulate a planning process that sees the watershed or a river basin as the basic unit as a component of the IWRM strategy. Water conservation is also the objective of the Haritha Keralam Mission Programme, which aims at renovating the water surfaces like ponds, rivers, and backwaters, linking large ponds to irrigation canals, and to prevent seepage loss in irrigation canals.

The Keraleeyam seminar, thus, is expected to discuss and provide lessons on issues that include

- appropriate IWRM models of water management;
- planning for intrastate transfer of basin waters;
- planning for the construction of new structures to store river waters;
- designing scientifically informed and participative models of watershed development;
- extending strategies like Room for the River to more rivers in the State

We look forward to discussions in the session to clarify and extend our vision for Kerala's water resources.

Session coordinator: Sajin Gopi, 8943193937, mail.sajingopi@gmail.com
November 05, 2023 | 9:30 to 13:30

Session 19

Tourism in Kerala

Venue: Mascot Hotel
Chairperson: P A Mohamed Riyas, Minister for Public Works and Tourism

Hosted by Department of Tourism

SCHEDULE

Remarks
P A MOHAMED RIYAS Minister for Public Works and Tourism

Presentation
BIJU K IAS Secretary, Tourism Department

Panellists
JOSE DOMINIC Co-founder, CGH Earth
BABY MATHEW Chairman and Managing Director, Somatheeram Ayurveda Group and President, Kerala Travel Mart Society

PRADEEP MURTHY Managing Director, Muddy Boots
P M VARIER Managing Trustee and Chief Physician Kottakkal Arya Vaidyasala
SAJEEV KURUP Managing Director, Paithrukam Hospitality Group

HAROLD GOODWIN Director, International Centre for Responsible Tourism

SANTHOSH GEORGE KULANGARA Member, Kerala State Planning Board
TOURISM IN KERALA

DILEEP M R Director, Kerala Institute Tourism and Travel Studies
RUPESH KUMAR K State Co-ordinator, Responsible Tourism Mission

A brief reporting of English speeches in Malayalam

General discussion

Closing remarks by chairperson

(The session will include a tea break)

CONCEPT NOTE

Tourism occupies a proud position in Kerala’s development history. Known to the world as ‘Gods Own Country’, Kerala Tourism has over years grown from a few world class locations showcasing the best of nature, to a vibrant bucket full of exciting experiences fulfilling the senses and the mind. Like many parts of the world, Kerala has benefitted from Tourism as a key driver of economy with significant forward and backward linkages. Its contribution in terms of employment creation, income generation, resource utilization, cultural exchange, infrastructural development and ability to uplift local economy is well recognised in the State. Kerala is today one of the key destinations to visit not in India, but across the globe.

The current position of Tourism in Kerala is the result of co-ordinated efforts on part of the wide spectrum of stakeholders, led from the front by the Government of Kerala. Then it should come as no surprise that, Kerala is the first state in the country to declare tourism as an industry. Governmental effort in the industry can be summarised as being iterative, incremental, creative and value driven. Supported equally by the other pro-active stakeholders, it has resulted in the creation of wide array of tourism products which include almost all of the must haves of the industry. Pristine hill stations, exotic beaches, the grand backwaters, heritage sites, religious centres, wellness packages, culinary tourism, responsible tourism, monsoon packages, forest experiences, home stay facilities and health tourism all form part of this ever expanding list of what the state has to offer.
Throughout this journey, the state has been able to successfully leverage its advantages of bountiful nature, moderate climate, rich culture, varied heritage, good infrastructure including transport (four International Airports that stand out), safety and the friendly people. Governmental efforts have balanced returns for investments, returns to the community and sustainability of nature which has ensured a win-win situation so far. Kerala introduced the New Tourism Policy in 2017 with a vision to take the sector on a higher growth path. It formulated Kerala Tourism Regulatory Authority (KTRA) and Kerala Tourism Entrepreneurship Fund (KTEF) for addressing key issues of the tourism industry. The state launched the Champions Boat League for promoting traditional boat race and associated festivals. Driven by the value to be more inclusive, the state developed 70 disable friendly tourist destinations across the state. The state has a Tourism Vision 2025 which serves as a guiding force providing a clear vision and direction for optimizing the tourism potential of the State in a sustainable manner. Eco-tourism and Responsible tourism stand out as two innovative initiatives in the sector which has succeeded in empowering the local communities to derive benefits from tourism initiatives. The Jatayu Earth Centre Project is a unique model of public private partnership providing unique experience to visitors.

Tourism, however, is one industry which is highly vulnerable to changes at the international, national and regional levels, including economic ups and downs among others. Floods in 2018 and 2019 and the Covid 19 pandemic had adversely affected the industry in the state. However, the impressive growth in tourist arrivals and revenue generation in 2022 over 2021, is a testimony to the resilience of the sector. The Global Tourism industry is now vibrant like never before with new regions entering, new experiences being offered and competition increasing. Under such situations Kerala Tourism should be ready to meet and overcome stiff challenges from others.

Response strategy of the State as outlined in the Fourteenth Five Year Plan involves developing new locations and packages, maintaining and upgrading infrastructure, capturing new markets and up skill human resource. Given that around 90 percent of tourists are domestic tourists, balancing the requirements of foreign and domestic tourists are getting attention. Dedicated efforts to attract high spending individuals are being
matched with packages that are easy on the pockets of the common man. The Fourteenth Five Year Plan calls for tourism development which is responsive to emerging trends in tourism, such as the increasing number of young travellers, solo travellers, women travellers, and senior travellers. Renewed focus on investment involving greater participation of private sector and efforts to strengthen data are also given importance.

As the state enters the steps towards a new Kerala, the tourism industry is looked upon with great interest. We look forward to the discussions at the conference which would help to clarify and consolidate our vision for a more prosperous future for Kerala Tourism and State as a whole.

---------------------------------------------
Session coordinator: Sudhi S, 9526113132, sudhispb123@gmail.com
November 05, 2023 | 9:30 to 13:30

Session 20

Workers’ Rights and Welfare in Kerala

Venue: Central Stadium
Chairperson: V Sivankutty, Minister for General Education, Labour and Skills

Hosted by Department of Labour and Skills

SCHEDULE

Remarks
V SIVANKUTTY Minister for General Education, Labour and Skills

Presentation
VEENA N MADHAVAN IAS Director, Employment and Training; Managing Director, Kerala Academy for Skills Excellence

Panellists
T P RAMAKRISHNAN former Minister for Excise Labour and Skills, Kerala
K CHANDRU retired Judge, Madras High Court
K P RAJENDRAN former Minister for Revenue and Land Reforms; General Secretary, All India Trade Union Congress, Kerala
SYED SULTAN AHMMED Specialist on Workers’ Activities, International Labour Organization
R VAIGAI Senior Advocate, Madras High Court
A V JOSE Honorary Fellow, Centre for Development Studies; Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation
JAYAN JOSE THOMAS Professor of Economics Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
CONCEPT NOTE

Kerala has among the best records with respect to workers’ rights in the global South. Additionally, Kerala is exceptional in protecting and advancing workers’ rights at a time when workers’ rights are under pressure worldwide. In terms of forming unions, worker cooperatives, welfare boards and pension schemes, and the protection of migrant rights, the State has evolved as a role model.

By passing the Kerala Minimum Wage Rules in 1958, Kerala showed the world how the workers’ rights can be protected by assuring minimum wages. Kerala currently has the highest minimum wage rate in India, nearly double the country’s average minimum wage rate.

Kerala is the first state in India to establish welfare fund boards for its workers, beginning with the Toddy Tappers Welfare Fund Board in 1969. In the same year, the Kerala Dinesh Beedi Workers Cooperative Society was also formed. Both the cooperatives and welfare fund board experiments triggered the formation of a large number of cooperatives in the state and welfare boards across sectors. A significant turning point in the welfare of the workers was the Kerala Welfare Fund Act, 1975, which ensured financial contributions by government, employers, and employees. As a result, a large number of welfare boards were established to serve workers, particularly women workers, in the informal sector. Welfare boards were also established for traditional industries such as coir processing, handloom, cashew. In total, there are 24 Welfare Boards in the State.
Another path-breaking effort on the part of the Government of Kerala came in 1980 with the implementation of the agricultural workers pension scheme, the first major social assistance scheme in India. In recent years, there have been multiple new legislative interventions in the sphere of labour rights. These include amendments to the Minimum Wages Act, 2017, to increase penalty on the non-payment of minimum wages, amendment to the Kerala Minimum Wages Rules, 1958, to ensure payment of minimum wages, the Kerala Shops and Commercial Establishment (Amendment) Act, 2018, ensuring the “right to sit” and to create better working conditions for women employees, the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017, and the Industrial Dispute (Kerala Amendment) Act, 2017.

The Government of Kerala is working towards framing a policy to regulate the gig economy to ensure fair wages and better working conditions for the workers in the sector. The Government also plans to form a welfare fund for online delivery agents across platforms. The Government of Kerala has in several instances facilitated dispute resolution between digital labour platforms and collectives of platform workers.

The Government of Kerala has drafted a Domestic Workers (Regulation and Welfare) Bill, the first Indian state to do so. The Bill proposes that home nurses and domestic workers receive fair wages, health benefits, and paid leave.

Several labour welfare and social security measures were implemented to support workers during the Covid-19 pandemic and the period of lockdown. These included direct financial assistance, the distribution of food kits, the establishment of shelter homes, and the provision of special interest-free loans to small businesses.

The recognition of the rights of migrant workers is an integral aspect of labour policy in Kerala, with a slew of measures in place to support migrant workers. The rights of these workers have been included in the previously listed legislative measures, and through welfare interventions such as the Aawaz health insurance scheme, Apna Ghar rental housing project, and the Changathi literacy programme.

The Government of Kerala has launched schemes such as “Navashakti” to reskill head-load workers, “Kerala Savari”, an online taxi scheme to
deal with job losses because of the entry of MNCs in this sector, and a “Karmachari” scheme to ensure employability among students and for students to earn while they learn. Kerala’s focus on the creation of a knowledge economy is an important aspect of its skilling programme, and Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC) is coordinating schemes through the Kerala Knowledge Economy Mission. In May 2023, the International Labour Conclave brought to Thiruvananthapuram 150 eminent delegates from around the world, including representatives from worker and employer organisations, legal experts, administrators, and academic and policy experts. The conversations initiated on rights, legislation, and social protection, skilling and future forms of work, care workers, scheme workers, and domestic workers, traditional industries: problems of transition, internal migration and migrant workers’ rights, gig and platform workers’ welfare, and labour statistics in India, are leading to policy interventions in these spheres.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for workers’ rights and welfare in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Vijayasuryan C K, 8443072057, vijayasuryanck@gmail.com
Session 21

Higher Education in Kerala

Venue: Niyamasabha Hall
Chairperson: R Bindu, Minister for Higher Education and Social Justice

Hosted by Higher Education Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks

R BINDU  Minister for Higher Education and Social Justice

Presentation

ISHITA ROY IAS Principal Secretary, Department of Higher Education

Panellists

PRADEEP T Professor at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM)

SHYAM MENON Professor (retd.), University of Delhi

GOPINATH RAVINDRAN Vice Chancellor, Kannur University

SURAJIT MAZUMDAR Professor at Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, Jawaharlal Nehru University

ISHITA MUKHOPADHYAY Professor, Department of Economics, University of Calcutta & President, Indian Association of Women Studies

SATYAJIT MAYOR Professor, National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore

RAJAN GURUKKAL Vice Chairman, Kerala State Higher Education Council

November 06, 2023 | 9:30 to 13:30
CONCEPT NOTE

Improving the quality of higher education is a necessary condition for the success of the next stage of Kerala’s social and economic development. Kerala has received international recognition for its advances in education, particularly in universalising and improving the quality of school education in the State. Less noted are the significant advances in higher education, the broadbasing of social entry into the higher education system, and the rise of the gross enrolment ratio in higher education in the State.

Today, Kerala has the strongest public education system among States in the country, with the highest density of colleges per unit population, thanks to high investment in higher education by the public, private, and co-operative sectors. In 2022-23 alone, Plan funds for higher education increased 25 per cent over the previous year. The new thrust in higher education includes new investments in the expansion of the sector, new faculty positions, Centres of Excellence, syllabus development, postdoctoral fellowships, infrastructure development, and modernisation. These focused interventions are reflected in the accomplishments of universities and colleges. In the Ministry of Human Resource Development’s institutional rankings, 30 colleges in Kerala come in the first 200, and 17 are in the first 100.

The Government of Kerala has sought to reform the higher education sector by learning lessons from successful models across the country and the world. Three Commissions were instituted to recommend measures to improve the general administration of universities, examination systems, and university legislation. The recommendations submitted by these commissions are being examined by the Government. In the
meantime, some of those recommendations on short term reforms have been implemented.

A major programme to develop new curricula and syllabi for various courses has begun. The new syllabi will not only widen the horizons of knowledge, but will also help students inculcate a scientific temper, democratic values, gender sensitivity, and life skills. The Kerala Resource for Educational Administration and Planning (K-REAP) is an Enterprise Resource Planning software aimed at automating a range of university processes in order to improve service delivery and administrative efficiency.

Translational labs are being set up in all major universities to translate research findings to viable outputs that can lead to development of products or services and accelerate research in different knowledge domains. Centres of Excellence are being established in universities in order to develop facilities to conduct advanced research. Steps have also been taken to link academia with industry.

A continuing concern of higher education policy in Kerala is to extend and deepen the socially inclusive character of higher education, and to ensure regional balance in higher education.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for higher education in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Jishnu M.J, 8075227493, jishnuspb@gmail.com
Session 22

Governance and the Provision of Digital Services in Kerala

Venue: Tagore Theatre
Co-chairpersons: K N Balagopal, Minister for Finance & K Rajan, Minister for Revenue and Housing

Hosted by General Administration Department (IMG)

SCHEDULE

Remarks
K N BALAGOPAL Minister for Finance
K RAJAN Minister for Revenue and Housing

Presentation
A JAYATHILAK IAS Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms

Panellists
K JAYAKUMAR IAS (retd.) Director Institute of Management in Government
V P JOY IAS (retd.) former Chief Secretary, Kerala
AJAY KUMAR IAS (retd.) former Defence Secretary and Adviser Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board
SANTOSH BABU IAS (retd.) Managing Director, Kerala State Information Technology Infrastructure Ltd
RASIGAN MAHARAJH Chief Director, Institute for Economic Research on Innovation, Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa
P V UNNIKRISHNAN Member Secretary, Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council
AMIT PRAKASH Professor, International Institute of Technology, Bangalore

S R MOHANACHANDRAN General Secretary, Kerala Gazetted Officers’ Association

A brief reporting of English speeches in Malayalam

General discussion

Closing remarks by Co-chairpersons

(The session will include a tea break)

CONCEPT NOTE

The Government of Kerala is committed to equitable development and making public services accessible to all citizens, and ensuring that public institutions are responsive to people’s needs. In building Navakeralam, citizen-friendly administration is foundational.

Kerala has sturdy historical foundations on which to build its e-governance structure. It has strong institutions of local government and people’s participation in administration and development. The IT policy of the State, announced by the Government of Kerala in 2017, envisages a knowledge-powered digital society and the overall social and economic empowerment of all citizens. Young people in Kerala are educated, employable, and responsive to modern technology.

In good government, e-governance and information technology can play a pivotal role. Kerala is a frontrunner among States in e-governance, especially in local government. Along with the launch of the People’s Plan, efforts were made to introduce information technology at a local level. Now, a substantial portion of the Government’s work, particularly in relation to planning and accounting is now online and moving to mobile platforms. The access to all important citizen services of the revenue department is further enhanced through Akshaya Centres.

The Government of Kerala intends to make all citizen services available online, and has a well-established e-governance structure to enable this. Kerala State IT Mission’s (KSITM) projects like Public Wi-Fi, e-Office, e-District, e-Government Procurement (e-GP), Friends Janasevana Kendras, Akshaya, etc. enlarge the e-governance network of the State.
About 2,734 Akshaya Centres function across the State, employing 9017 persons.

The Government of Kerala is moving swiftly towards “paperless government”. The Information Kerala Mission (IKM) is a pioneering e-governance effort to computerise activities of Local Self-Government Institutions. The creation of a decision support system for IT-enabled collaboration among various departments and coordination of policy is being explored. The Core Infrastructure for e-Governance in the State consists of Kerala State Wide Area Network (KSWAN), Secretariat Wide Area Network (SECWAN), State Data Centre, and State Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG).

The Government of Kerala is keenly aware of the increasing issues of data privacy and cyber security. We are currently witnessing another paradigm shift in the technology applications used by Governments across the world with developments in Artificial Intelligence, machine learning, blockchain, etc. In recent years, several new Acts and regulations with respect to data security, privacy, and use have been introduced at the national level. These regulations have implications for the functioning of Government as a whole and for individual departments. State-level policy continuously monitors the policy environment and current regulations and legal requirements.

Kerala State IT policy declares access to the internet to be a citizen’s right. Kerala Fiber Optic Network (KFON) enables this objective. This first-of-its-kind project provides internet connectivity to government offices and free internet connectivity to 20 lakh low-income poor families.

Kerala’s specific experiences indicate that for good governance, technology alone is not the determinant, but that it supplements institutional arrangements and democratic processes. It also shows how the full potential of the technology could be realized in the socio-political context of Kerala.

We look forward to the discussions at the session to clarify and extend our vision for governance and provision of services in Kerala.

Session coordinator: Ratheesh P N, 9072770295, ratheeshpilli@gmail.com
November 06, 2023 l 9:30 to 13:30

Session 23

Pluralism and Multiculturalism in the Changing Times

Venue: Jimmy George Stadium
Chairperson: Saji Cherian, Minister for Fisheries and Cultural Affairs

Hosted by Cultural Affairs Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks
SAJI CHERIAN Minister for Fisheries and Cultural Affairs

Presentation
MINI ANTONY IAS Secretary, Department of Cultural Affairs

Panellists
M A BABY former Minister for Cultural Affairs, Kerala
SAEED AKHTAR MIRZA Screen Writer and Director, Chairman, K R Narayanan Institute of Visual Science and Arts, Kottayam
K SRINIVAS RAO Secretary, Sahitya Akademi
PRAKASH RAJ Actor, Film Director and Producer
SHAJI N KARUN Film Director and Cinematographer; Chairman Kerala State Film Development Corporation
RAVI DEECEE Chief Executive Officer, DC Books
C MRINALINI former Professor of Comparative Literature at Telugu University, Hyderabad
SURESH RITUPARNA Poet, Director, K K Birla Foundation
DEEPTI OMCHERI BHALLA former Dean and Head,
Faculty of Music & Fine Arts, University of Delhi

ANITA NAIR Writer

A brief reporting of English speeches in Malayalam

General discussion

Closing remarks by chairperson

(The session will include a tea break)

CONCEPT NOTE

The Kerala that we see today has been shaped by the interactions that we have had with various peoples, languages, cultures and nations spanning millennia. Over the last two centuries, our renaissance movements, progressive forces, agricultural struggles and labour advances have together paved the way for transforming Kerala into a modern society that is the beacon of progressive ethos, communal harmony and peaceful coexistence.

Pluralism and Multiculturalism are part and parcel of our very existence. In Kerala, there are several examples of religious festivals being observed as cultural festivals of an entire land. There are umpteen examples of the same, ranging from places like Erumeli, Changanasserry and Thrippunithura to places like Kodungallor, Ponnani and Thirunavaya. It is this common heritage that makes us proud as Keralites and on which we have built to reach such heights that remain unattainable till date for many of our fellow States in the Indian Union.

Kerala is part of India, the land that presented the novel idea of unity in diversity, to the world. It emerged as part of our glorious anti-colonial freedom struggle in which people came together barring the man-made differences of race, region, religion, caste, culture, gender, language and so on. However, we are in the midst of times when diversities are being misinterpreted to foster enmity, rather than utilised for enabling cooperation and collaboration. There is also a growing tendency to substitute unity with uniformity. Political slogans are also aired vehemently to subvert the inherent plurality in our minds and lives.
It is in these times that we need to reclaim our values of pluralism and multiculturalism. This seminar titled ‘Pluralism and Multiculturalism in the Changing Times’ is an effort to highlight the inherent beauty of our rich and heterogenous society and culture, which is sought to be substituted by a homogeneity that is manufactured.

Session coordinator: Sudhi S, 9526113132, sudhisph123@gmail.com
November 06, 2023 | 9:30 to 13:30

Session 24

Welfare and Growth: Economic Alternatives for the Future

Venue: Mascot Hotel
Chairperson: V K Ramachandran, Vice Chairperson, Kerala State Planning Board

Hosted by Planning and Economic Affairs Department (Kerala State Planning Board)

SCHEDULE

Remarks
V K RAMACHANDRAN Vice Chairperson, Kerala State Planning Board

Presentation
PUNEET KUMAR IAS Additional Chief Secretary, Planning & Economic Affairs Department and Member Secretary, Kerala State Planning Board

Panellists
PRABHAT PATNAIK Professor Emeritus, Jawaharlal Nehru University; former Vice Chairman, Kerala State Planning Board
PRAKASH KARAT Member, CPI(M) Polit Bureau; Former General Secretary, CPI(M)
C RANGARAJAN Chairman, Madras School of Economics; former governor, Reserve Bank of India
S RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI former Member of Parliament; former President and General Secretary, All India Kisan Sabha
VENKATESH ATHREYA Adjunct Professor, Asian College of Journalism; Honorary Professor, Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation
C. VEERAMANI Director, Centre for Development Studies

KANIMOZHI KARUNANIDHI Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu

A brief reporting of English speeches in Malayalam

General discussion

Closing remarks by chairperson
(The session will include a tea break)

CONCEPT NOTE

Kerala has been, and remains, the most important example in independent India of the power of public action to improve the well-being of the people and to transform social, political, and cultural conditions in a State. The Government of Kerala is committed to a path of development that will develop, enhance, and modernise the productive sectors of the economy; expand employment in various sectors with an emphasis on creating jobs for educated youth; strengthen and upgrade public education and health; and build upon the network of social welfare and reform measures that are part of the rich legacy of public action in the State; and ensure effective, timely, and monitorable delivery of the gains of development to the people.

Kerala has been acclaimed for its achievements in human development, particularly in the spheres of health and education. The life expectancy (75 years) is highest in Kerala, whereas it is 70 years at National-level. Kerala is the only large State in India with a single digit Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) of six, which is equal to the IMR of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. Kerala achieved the UN Sustainable Development Goal of reducing the maternal mortality rate (MMR) to less than 30 per 100,000 live births in 2019, one year ahead of the schedule. Kerala has topped the Sustainable Development Goal India Index consecutively for three years (2018, 2019 and 2020) consecutively. By the NITI Aayog’s Multidimensional Poverty Index (2020), the headcount ratio (the number of people in the State who were “multi dimensionally poor” as a proportion of the State population) of Kerala was 0.71 per cent, the lowest among States in India. On the other hand, Kerala has the highest monthly per capita consumption expenditure
both in urban and rural Kerala. In terms of per capita income, average income per person in the State is 1.5 times the all-India average.

Planning is central to Kerala’s development. Kerala remains the only State to have made a public commitment to continue the planning process. Five-Year Plans and Annual Plans have served as instruments to structure the aspirations of the people into schemes and programmes, and invest the scarce resources of the economy to productive and socially impactful purposes. The 13th and 14th Plan have given priority for inclusive development of the people. A fundamental constraint on planned development at the State level in India is that of shrinking fiscal space. That the structure of fiscal federalism in India is greatly biased in favour of the Centre is well known. The liberalisation regime has exacerbated the imbalance in the Indian fiscal system.

Kerala today has to meet the challenge of sustainable development in a scientific and rational manner. Climate change is bringing forth new concerns, especially coastal protection and the impact on our agriculture and natural resources.

Our aim should be that, over the next 25 years, the standard of living in Kerala will be that of an advanced middle-income country internationally - with the additional feature that our development process will be inclusive. Our guiding principle is that the development process under the leadership of the present Government will not leave any person behind.

Efforts are under way to address these unique challenges and steer the state towards a more sustainable future. Kerala’s journey towards development has been remarkable, but it is now faced with unique challenges that necessitate creative solutions. By harnessing its rich human and natural resources, adopting advanced technologies, and addressing fiscal constraints, Kerala can forge a path forward that ensures sustained prosperity while tackling the emerging development issues.

Session coordinator: Arun Shyamnath, 9995356100, arunshyamnath@gmail.com
Session 25

Role of Media in Democracy: Changing Mediascape in the Country

Venue: Central Stadium
Chairperson: Antony Raju, Minister for Transport
Hosted by Information and Public Relations Department

SCHEDULE

Remarks
ANTONY RAJU Minister for Transport

Presentation
MINI ANTONY IAS Secretary, Information & Public Relations Department

Panellists
JOHN BRITTAS Member of Parliament
SHASHI KUMAR Chairman, Media Development Foundation and Asian College of Journalism
JOSY JOSEPH Founder & CEO of Confluence Media
VIJAITA SINGH Deputy Editor, The Hindu
R RAJAGOPAL Editor, The Telegraph
N P ULLEKH Executive Editor, Open Magazine
M K VENU Founding Editor, The Wire
SEEMA CHISHTI Editor, The Wire

A brief reporting of English speeches in Malayalam

General discussion

Closing remarks by chairperson
(The session will include a tea break)
CONCEPT NOTE

The social progress Kerala has achieved over the years is unparalleled when compared with other Indian states. Several social indices, such as infant mortality, maternal mortality, life expectancy, literacy, crime, corruption, governance and sustainable development, show that Kerala is at par with many developed nations, establishing the globally acclaimed ‘Kerala Model of Development’. These advances are not only products of the committed measures taken by successive progressive governments, but also of people’s movements and struggles over decades to secure social justice and elevate living standards.

Historically, this legacy dates back to the renaissance movement of the late 19th century. The values spearheaded and the movements pioneered by it were subsequently taken up by the national movement, and later by the Communist Party. Struggles against untouchability and oppression later merged with the national movement and became dynamic anti-feudal struggles for land and livelihood and anti-colonial movements for freedom. Through people’s struggles that grew from the ground up, a society with harmony and fraternity was nurtured to stand together against social evils. This, along with the committed efforts taken by the successive progressive state governments to enhance the living conditions of the underprivileged and the marginalised sections through land reforms, and interventions for public health, public education and social welfare, have shaped modern Kerala.

The history and evolution of media in Kerala should be seen along with the transformation of the state from what Swami Vivekananda once called a ‘lunatic asylum’ to the modern Kerala that we have today. Press have immensely contributed to shaping and fuelling social movements by reflecting the ethos of the changing times and exhorting the masses to mobilise for social justice. Rajyasamacharam, Kerala’s first newspaper published in 1800, serves as a testament to this fact. Later, many social reformers, activists, revolutionaries, intellectuals and even socio-political organisations launched newspapers to circulate their ideas and ideologies, and also to educate the toiling masses to rise up against oppression. The newspapers founded by renowned writer Ramakrishna Pillai – Swadeshabhimani, journalist Balakrishna Pillai – Kesari, freedom fighter Mohammed Abdur Rahiman – Al Ameen, poet Kumaran Asan – Vivekodayam, and the Communist Party’s Janayugam, have reflected...
the changing milieu of the times. Prominent press establishments of Malayalam like Malayala Manorama, Mathrubhumi and Deshabhimani have also played substantial roles in educating and arming our people with ideas and knowledge to ignite their spirits to build a better Kerala. Contrary to this legacy, the mainstream media in Kerala now operate to obscure the big strides Kerala has been making in socio-economic indices. It is sad that the press, once known for its illuminating and constructive interventions in shaping modern Kerala, now stands at the other extreme to revert back all the progress this society has made. They work as the mouthpieces of many regressive elements and their deceitful campaigns to malign the revered ‘Kerala Model’ by giving unwarranted and disproportional coverage to the latter’s vicious claims. Such clandestine and nefarious campaigns by the press in the current perilous milieu reek of sly political interests to tarnish the state’s advancements.

It is a fact that reports about the trailblazing achievements of Kerala, a land with sizeable media density, do not get fair coverage in its newspapers and other media outlets. A thorough examination of this lopsided reportage reveals that most media outlets are driven by their corporate capital interests and political persuasions. The people-centric course of development Kerala has pursued, is against the vested interests of the corporate players, who discreetly control most of the media outlets in the state. A sound and elaborate plan of action to counter their agenda and malicious campaigns, so as to project Kerala’s ongoing progress story before the world, must become a serious matter of public discussion.

The rich legacy of the press in shaping modern Kerala cannot be written off or ridiculed to the extent of obscurity. Instead of retrogressing, the media should be able to carry out their role in constructively shaping Kerala society further. In that regard, the media should lay out a comprehensive and meticulous plan. That should include objective reporting of the state’s achievements, scientific ascertaining of the shortcomings in its developmental trajectory, and ensuring the participation of experts from around the world in implementing the future course of action. It is high time that Kerala’s public sphere takes up serious discussions on how to move forward in a progressive fashion and the state’s media have a great stake in leading such debates.

Session coordinator: Vijayasuryan C K, 8434072757, vijayasuryanck@gmail.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Name</th>
<th>Organized by</th>
<th>Seminar Coordinator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture in Kerala</td>
<td>Agriculture Development &amp; Farmer’s Welfare Department</td>
<td>Preeth V S, 9447859326, <a href="mailto:preethkprm@gmail.com">preethkprm@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Security in Kerala</td>
<td>Food &amp; Civil Supplies Department</td>
<td>Vijay R, 989.5090532, <a href="mailto:vijay.kazhivoor@gmail.com">vijay.kazhivoor@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy Development in Kerala</td>
<td>Dairy Development Department</td>
<td>Abdul Gafoor, 9747524727, <a href="mailto:abdulgafoornarokkavu@gmail.com">abdulgafoornarokkavu@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Kerala: Issues of Socio Economic Development</td>
<td>Scheduled Caste Development Department</td>
<td>Saji V, 9447799496, <a href="mailto:sajivenugopal@gmail.com">sajivenugopal@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Reforms in Kerala</td>
<td>Revenue Department</td>
<td>Sajin Gopi, 8943193937, <a href="mailto:mail.sajingopi@gmail.com">mail.sajingopi@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala Economy</td>
<td>Finance Department</td>
<td>Arun Shyamnath, 9995356100, <a href="mailto:arunshyamnath@gmail.com">arunshyamnath@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Education in Kerala</td>
<td>General Education Department</td>
<td>Sajin Gopi, 8943193937, <a href="mailto:mail.sajingopi@gmail.com">mail.sajingopi@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala’s Fisheries Sector</td>
<td>Fisheries Department</td>
<td>Praveen P, 9446107617, <a href="mailto:praveen7882@gmail.com">praveen7882@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology in Kerala</td>
<td>Electronics &amp; Information Technology Department</td>
<td>Francis Thomas, 9447551945, <a href="mailto:franciskareenattu@gmail.com">franciskareenattu@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health in Kerala</td>
<td>Health &amp; Family Welfare Department (DHS)</td>
<td>Saji V, 9447799496, <a href="mailto:sajivenugopal@gmail.com">sajivenugopal@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry in Kerala</td>
<td>Industries and Commerce Department</td>
<td>Jishnu M J, 807.5227493, <a href="mailto:jishnuspb@gmail.com">jishnuspb@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperatives in Kerala</td>
<td>Co-operation Department</td>
<td>Preeth V S, 9447859326, <a href="mailto:preethkprm@gmail.com">preethkprm@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Issues Concerning Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens</td>
<td>Social Justice Department</td>
<td>Abdul Gafoor, 9747524727, <a href="mailto:abdulgafoornarokkavu@gmail.com">abdulgafoornarokkavu@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Kerala Dealt with the Pandemic</td>
<td>Health &amp; Family Welfare Department (NHM)</td>
<td>Francis Thomas, 9447551945, <a href="mailto:franciskareenattu@gmail.com">franciskareenattu@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Governments in Kerala</td>
<td>Local Self Government Department</td>
<td>Praveen P, 9446107617, <a href="mailto:praveen7882@gmail.com">praveen7882@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala Diaspora</td>
<td>Non-Resident Keralites Affairs Department</td>
<td>Ratheesh P N, 9072770295, <a href="mailto:ratheeshpilli@gmail.com">ratheeshpilli@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender and Development in Kerala</td>
<td>Women and Child Development Department</td>
<td>Vijay R, 9895090532, <a href="mailto:vijay.kazhivoor@gmail.com">vijay.kazhivoor@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Resources in Kerala</td>
<td>Water Resources Department</td>
<td>Sajin Gopi, 8943193937, <a href="mailto:mail.sajingopi@gmail.com">mail.sajingopi@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism in Kerala</td>
<td>Tourism Department</td>
<td>Sudhi S, 9526113132, <a href="mailto:sudhispb123@gmail.com">sudhispb123@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers’ Rights and Welfare in Kerala</td>
<td>Labour &amp; Skills Department</td>
<td>Vijayasuryan C K, 8454072757, <a href="mailto:vijayasuryanck@gmail.com">vijayasuryanck@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education in Kerala</td>
<td>Higher Education Department</td>
<td>Jishnu M J, 8075227493, <a href="mailto:jishnuspb@gmail.com">jishnuspb@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance and the Provision of Services in Kerala</td>
<td>General Administration Department (IMG)</td>
<td>Ratheesh P N, 9072770295, <a href="mailto:ratheeshpilli@gmail.com">ratheeshpilli@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pluralism and Multiculturalism in the Changing Times</td>
<td>Cultural Affairs Department</td>
<td>Sudhi S, 9526113132, <a href="mailto:sudhispb123@gmail.com">sudhispb123@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare &amp; Growth: Economic Alternatives for the Future</td>
<td>Planning &amp; Economic Affairs Department (State Planning Board)</td>
<td>Arun Shyamnath, 9995356100, <a href="mailto:arunshymnath@gmail.com">arunshymnath@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Media in Democracy: Changing Mediascape in the Country</td>
<td>Information &amp; Public Relations Department</td>
<td>Vijayasuryan C K, 8454072757, <a href="mailto:vijayasuryanck@gmail.com">vijayasuryanck@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>