CHAPTER - VI

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AS A PRESSURE GROUP

Kerala owes its uniqueness to many features, not the least prominent of which is her higher level of literacy and her achievements in many areas and many levels of education. The uniqueness of the educational system of Kerala lies in the fact that it is marked by a clear dominance of private sector and in the private sector it is the Christian community which owns most of the educational institutions. Of course, it might be the result of the great confidence that is reposed in the future by the Christian community of Kerala that the community has no sense of insecurity. It is true that some less worthy motives too might have played their part in the rapid rise of the number of schools and colleges, like the desire to wield influence, power and prestige, the rivalry between one denomination and another and between different sections within the same denomination, etc. While analyzing the achievements of Kerala in the field of education, the efforts made by Christian missions
and missionaries deserve special admiration.

Education has always been an area of great concern for the Church. John Paul II, in *Redemptor Hominis*, spoke of the human person as “the primary route that the Church must travel in fulfilling her mission: he is the primary and fundamental way for the Church, the way traced out by Christ himself.” Hence the work of educating the human person is an irreplaceable aspect of the Church’s mission and the investment of human and material resources in the school becomes a prophetic choice for the Church. Vatican 11 highlights the role of the Church in education as, “the Church will offer its assistance to all peoples for the promotion of a well-balanced perfection of the human personality, for the good of society in this world and for the development of a world more worthy of man.”

It was only in the beginning of 20th century that Catholic Church entered in the field of education on a wider level and began investing everything, men and material. In the middle of the 20th century, the Church became the biggest private educational agency in the state having in possession the largest
number of educational institutions. Since education became the single largest area of investment for the Church, any attempt by the government to make even the slightest change in the existing system of administration of educational institutions, has been opposed by it with great vehemence. The Church does not mind going for confrontation with the government in protecting its interests in the field of education. In this chapter an attempt is made to bring to light the major confrontations the Church had with various governments, whenever the latter tried to bring about some control over the Church-run educational institutions.

In order to have uniformity and control over private educational institutions, the British Government established Vernacular Education Department in 1868. In 1895 the Travancore Government prepared education rules for the conduct of private schools. But still there existed a large number of unrecognized private schools which the government could not force to conform to departmental standards enforced by it. Meanwhile the Travancore Government prepared a comprehensive education code popularly known as the
Education Code of 1910, to ensure uniformity in school administration. It was the first effort on the part of the government to regulate private unaided schools in the state. The code prescribed the qualification of teachers, regulated school term fees, text books, school records and returns, and dealt with the recognition of schools and the rules for grants-in-aid. The object of the code was to define the position each school occupied in the system of public instruction, to improve the efficiency of the managements by regulating the powers of the managers and to bring the teachers under government control by licensing them. It improved the standard of education by strengthening department control. As a result of rigorous enforcement of the code, while the departmental institutions more than doubled, the number of aided private institutions declined from 1,329 to 870 in 1915. The table below illustrates this fact.
### Table 1
Educational progress during 1910-1915 in Travancore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of institutions</th>
<th>Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>Aided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>1329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>1020</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Including 1908 unrecognized schools/institutions.

However, the drive against the unaided schools was withdrawn by the government as a result of concerted resistance from the managements of private unaided schools⁶. It shows that even under monarchical rule, the private educational agencies were powerful enough to protect their interest.

The rapid increase in the number of educational institutions in Travancore at the dawn of independence was mainly instrumental in the spreading of secular ideas, democratic values and liberal humanism. Of the private educational institutions majority were run by Christians and
among Christians the Catholics owned most of them. Because of their control over these institutions, the literacy rate among Christians was high (65.2%) followed by Hindus (53.5%) and Muslims (35.7%) while the state average was 55.04%.

Meanwhile the Travancore Education Reorganization Committee was constituted by the Travancore Government to look into the problems of schools, especially primary schools, and it recommended nationalization of primary education and parity of service conditions between government and private teachers.

The government accepted the recommendations of the Education Reorganization Committee, especially those relating to primary education. Ramaswamy Aiyar, Dewan of Travancore, decided that government must take over the entire control and management of primary education in Travancore. This was the first systematic and concerted attempt on the part of the government to have full state control over primary education in Travancore. The Church became infuriated at the government’s move as it was in possession of most of the primary schools at that time. Apart from a joint letter of protest
submitted to the government by nine bishops of Catholic Church, on August 15, 1945, the Bishop of Changanacherry, Dr. James Kalacherry, issued a pastoral letter to his flock condemning the move of the government to take over the primary schools of the Church. The bishop declared that “if the primary rights of the individual are affected to the slightest extent, as a result of the socialistic policy of the government, nature will grow angry with the government, rouse up all the forces under the sun and wipe out from the face of the earth the unjust authors of nationalization.”

The Government, headed by C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, a Brahmin, threatened the Bishop with terrible consequences if he did not withdraw the letter. In reply to the Dewan on September 14, 1945, the bishop replied: “I do not find any reason either for withdrawing my pastoral under reference or for expressing any regret for having issued the same.” The letter was not withdrawn and the government was forced to make peace with the Catholic Church by exempting schools controlled by the Church from nationalization. Thus the first explicit, planned attempt by the government to control private
agencies in education was abandoned due to the stiff resistance on the part of organized communal pressure group, the Catholic Church, in Kerala. In fact it was a fight, in all aspects, led by Christians in general and Catholics in particular and the political parties only capitalized from it. It shows that there had been instances of confrontation between the Church and governments on educational issues, even before independence and even the stubborn C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, having the support of other prominent communities such as Nairs and Ezhavas, became bewildered before the organized strength of the Catholic Church.

The first democratically constituted government of Travancore after India’s independence was that of Pattom A. Thanupillai. Though Pattom was very particular in maintaining communal equilibrium by including C. Kesavan and T.M. Varghese, an Ezhava and a Christian respectively as ministers in his newly constituted cabinet, the Syrian Catholics were unhappy and felt most disappointed. They expected a prominent position in the government which took over power after the fall of C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer. The Church was not
at all happy with the progressive land reform bill which Pattom wanted to introduce in the legislature, as it would affect a good number of Syrian Christian land owners. Meanwhile there were demands for the formation of United Kerala on linguistic basis. The ruling Congress had long been demanding it. Pattom also accepted it. But when he realized that in the forthcoming United Kerala Kanyakumari would not be there, he took a stand which was contrary to the official stand of the government. The United Kerala Movement opposed Pattom’s stand. The Syrian Christians, who have no direct interest in the matter, joined the Movement to oppose Pattom. In October, 1948, in a gathering of the Congress Committee the majority of the members, under the leadership of the Catholics, declared no-confidence in the chief minister. Pattom immediately resigned and the ministry fell. The domination of Christians in the Congress was so conspicuous that it was even nicknamed ‘the party of the Christians’.

In 1949, when the Travancore-Cochin State was constituted, T. K. Narayana Pillai, who had been the chief minister of Travancore, became the first chief minister of the
newly formed state. Narayana Pillai took all cares to please all groups in the state particularly the communal interest groups. But regarding Devaswom Board issue, both NSS and SNDP turned against him. They formed *Hindu Maha Mandalam* to protect the interests of the Hindus. About 14 members of the legislative assembly, who joined the association, were later dismissed from the Congress party, which once again vindicated the dominance of Christians in the Congress party\textsuperscript{15}.

All democratic governments since independence received, in one form or other, representation from organized teachers’ associations demanding government’s intervention in favour of harassed teachers under private managements.\textsuperscript{16} In 1950, the Travancore-Cochin State Government introduced the Private Secondary Schools (PSS) Scheme popularly known as ‘Panampally Scheme’, under the initiative of the then Education Minister, Panampally Govinda Menon. Under the scheme, tripartite consultations involving the government, teachers and management looked into the conditions of teachers under private management and made important recommendations. The Catholic Church, naturally intolerant at any measure of
the government which affected any power of the management in respect of their schools, vehemently opposed the scheme on the ground that it was a deliberate attempt on the part of the Government to infringe their minority rights. The scheme which was intended for direct payment of teachers in private schools by the government was staunchly opposed by the private managements. It was quite natural that private managements, especially those of the Catholic denominations who were the worst in their treatment of teachers at that time, found a serious challenge presented to their almost traditional vested interests and they became extremely irate. Their opposition was not to the educational schemes of the government as such, but to the government’s decision to guarantee security of service to the teachers in private managed schools. It was unambiguously clear from the reactions of Ernakulum Bishop’s Conference when it puts thus: “for the efficient running of schools, it is necessary that the managements have all the powers in the matter of schools.”

In fact, the best way found by the Catholic hierarchy to win their case was to give a communal colour to the question
which was otherwise merely a matter of administration and management of schools. The strong opposition of the Church against the ‘Panampilly Scheme’ almost decided the fate of Narayana Pillai’s Ministry and it subsequently fell. Thus, between 1951 and 1953, the Church succeeded in keeping the government undecided about the PSS Scheme and not even the originator of the scheme could revive and implement it when he became chief minister in 1955.

The governments that were formed after the general elections of 1952 and 1954 were short lived. While the former, A.J. John’s Ministry, met an early death due to factionalism in the Congress, the latter, Pattom A. Thanupillai’s Ministry, faced premature death owing to the passing of no-confidence motion proposed by Tamil Nadu Travancore Congress (TNTC) and supported by the Congress. Pattom’s arrogance and “infallibility” complex also contributed to the downfall of the ministry.

The second government of Travancore-Cochin was that of Panampilly Govinda Menon. It was almost sure that Menon’s ministry would not last long as he lacked the support
of two prominent communities in the state—the Christians and Nairs. The Church did not consider him as an amenable ruler because of his earlier PSS scheme, and Mannath Padmanabhan, the unquestionable leader of NSS, saw in him the greatest disqualification that he was not a good friend of the NSS. Meanwhile the central government rejected the Akhanda Kerala (Undivided Kerala) proposal supported by Christian and Nair communities and somewhat accepted the “Aikya Kerala” (United Kerala) Movement, proposed mainly by the Communists. The proponents of Akhanda Kerala accused Panampilly of not having pressed the matter with the central government. Prominent Syrian and Nair leaders like T.M. Varghese, K.M. Kora, P.T. Chacko and Mannath Padmanabhan protested against the government’s decision and Panampilly was forced to resign.

In spite of all odds, the long spell of president’s rule, lack of financial support etc, the Communist Party of India (CPI) and its supporters won 65 seats out of the 126 in the elections held in 1957, to the Kerala Legislative Assembly, after the reorganization of the state on linguistic basis on 1st November,
1956. This was a significant event in the history of world Communism. It was the second time the party had been brought power through the non-violent process of free and fair elections, while the first was in French Guiana in the 1940s. The first communist government in India was voted to power in Kerala by its people on April 5, 1957 and E.M. Sankaran Namboodiripad (EMS) became its chief minister. It was rather a shock to all anti-communist forces particularly the Catholic Church. The non-communist parties, which became disillusioned over the unexpected victory of the Communists, were waiting for an opportunity to assault the government.

The progressive reforms of the first Communist Government especially in the spheres of education and land reforms invited severe wrath from vested interests, chiefly from communal pressure groups. The Education bill, introduced by Joseph Mundassery, the then education minister, was progressive in content and secular in outlook. Joseph Mundassery, who himself was a professor in a Catholic college, was determined to control the private managements and in that he even surpassed his predecessor, Panampally Govinda
Menon. He had a firm conviction that there was rampant corruption in education, especially with respect to appointments, payments, etc of teachers. The bill, he introduced in the legislature, sought to bring four main reforms, namely, determining the teachers’ payment on the basis of law, economic and administrative control of private schools by the government, control in appointing teachers to ensure that only the properly qualified were appointed, and reservation of a certain percentage of teaching posts for the backward castes and communities. The bill was passed in September 1957, two months after its introduction in the assembly.

The Catholics, particularly the Syrian Catholics of central Kerala, were determined to oppose the bill and for that matter the government by all means. The Church suspected the Communists’ hidden agenda of nationalization of their schools and introduction of Communist ideology in school text books. Among the four reforms of the bill, which are stated above, three invited strong opposition from the Church. It was determined to go to any extent to protect and sustain the economic and administrative control of the schools, discretion
in the appointment of teachers and reservation for backward castes and communities in church-run educational institutions. Regarding direct payment of teachers by the government the Church had no serious reservations. The NSS which steered clear from the Catholic agitation for more than a year after the introduction of the bill turned against the government over latter’s stand on reservation and appointments in aided schools, and joined the agitation. However, the NSS’s strong opposition towards the Education Bill was against its provision for reservation of teaching posts for backward communities and castes in aided schools. Meanwhile Mannath Padmanabhan came to the forefront of the agitation and the Church was very glad to accept him as the leader of the ‘Liberation Struggle’.\textsuperscript{23}

Meanwhile the government introduced another controversial bill, “Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill”, in the assembly and got it passed on 10\textsuperscript{th} June, 1959 and sent to the President of India for his final approval. The bill sought to limit the amount of land one could keep in possession. As in the case of Education Bill, the Agrarian Relations Bill attracted strong opposition from vested interests mainly from the upper
caste Hindus as the major portion of land was under their possession. The Nair landlords regarded Christians as their close allies because they were equally aggrieved. They declared that “if the Church wants to protect its schools the Church should protect our lands”.

In the meantime the Education Bill received the approval of the President of India and the government published it immediately. It needs to be mentioned over here that the President of India got the Education Bill examined by a bench of Supreme Court Judges before he gave his final approval to it. Also the few modifications that the president proposed were immediately accepted by the government. Thus the government completed all legal formalities and the Act became ready for its implementation.

The agitators, the communal groups and the non-Communist parties, saw that the only course left for them to defeat the government was to organize mass agitations on a large scale and create a situation of chaos to such a degree that the government was incapacitated to function normally. This anti-government agitation came to be known as ‘Vimochana Samaram’ (Liberation Struggle).
The Catholic Church, NSS and the Opposition parties, particularly the Congress, rallied behind Mannam, who candidly proclaimed that the objective of the Librarian Struggle was to throw the government out of power and that even if the government withdrew the controversial bills, it would not make any change in the nature or intensity of the agitation against the government. That means the agitators were determined to overthrow the government and for that they were willing to go to any extent and to adopt any methods. The Church used its entire available means, both official and extra-official, to amass forces against the government. Through pastoral letters, the Church exhorted the faithful to oppose the bill even at the cost of their lives. The Church organized ‘Santhisena’ at the parish level throughout the state. The working committee of the Vimochana Samara Samithi of the Archdiocese of Changanacherry requested every Catholic family to send at least one young man to the Santhisena.

The liberation strugglers used every situation to embarrass the government and stifle its functioning. The students were instigated to boycott classes and conduct demonstrations in
the streets. By 1st June, 1959, the agitation took a more violent form and the agitators declared that not only they would not open their own schools but also would not allow the government to open its schools. The government, to avoid confrontation with the agitators, postponed the opening date of educational institutions after the summer vacation. Between June 14 and July 3 the police opened fire on demonstrators in four places and 15 persons were killed. Accepting the suggestion of the then Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, who was here in Trivandrum from June 22 to 25, the government came forward for discussion with the agitators. But leaders of the Vimochana Samaram were unwilling to discuss anything with the Government. As the situation began to deteriorate further, the Congress president, Indira Gandhi, demanded the intervention of the central government and the central government dismissed the Kerala Government on July 31, 1959.

After a few months lapse, fresh election to the legislative assembly was held in 1960. The parties and groups which led the liberation struggle were determined to inflict a crushing
defeat upon the Communists. It was a necessity for them not only to come to power but also to justify the *Vimochana Samaram*. To ensure victory a three party-Congress-PSP-League- alliance was formed. The alliance won 93 seats as against the Communists who could win only 26 seats. A coalition government under the chief ministership of Pattom A. Thanupillai, the PSP leader, was sworn in on February 22, 1960.

Immediately after assuming power, what Pattom Thanupillai’s government did was the modification of the controversial education bill and it restored all the freedom and privileges that the private managements had been enjoying. Regarding the Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill, the new government showed little interest in its implementation. Later Kerala High Court struck down some of the relevant clauses of the bill as unconstitutional and hence the new government decided to introduce a completely new bill in the assembly.

The group fights within the party and between the parties in the alliance destroyed the image of the government. After the death of Sithi Sahib, the speaker, the Muslim League
withdrew its support to the government. The next fight was between the Pattom and Sankar-Chacko fronts, which resulted in the appointment of Pattom as Governor of Punjab. This infuriated the PSP and it withdrew its support to the government leaving the Congress to run it alone.

The next phase of clash was between P.T Chacko and R. Sankar within the Congress. Sankar saw in Chacko, who was administratively more capable and intellectually superior, a threat to his position as chief minister. Sankar was waiting for an opportunity to oust Chacko. Chacko’s reputation got tainted in connection with a car episode in Trichur on December 8, 1963 and he was forced to resign when the chief minister, R Sankar, publicly declared that he had lost faith in his cabinet colleague. Later the car incident was proved to be a conspiracy of the opposite group and the lady involved in it publicly admitted it through the media. A month after Chacko’s death, on August 1, 1964, fifteen Congress MLA’s (supporters of Chacko), joined the opposition and voted in favour of the no-confidence motion against Sankar. The ministry fell. These fifteen MLAs were suspended from the Congress party and
they, under the leadership of K.M. George, formed a new political party, the Kerala Congress.

In 1965 elections, no party was in a comfortable position to form government. Counting on the support of some independent candidates, the CPI (M) alone was in a position to form a government. But the party could not form government because 29 of its MLAs were in jail and the central government was not willing to release them. So Kerala came once again under President’s rule. As preparation for the next election six left parties came together under the leadership of CPI (M) and, on the basis of a Common Minimum Programme, they formed a United Front. Muslim League also joined the United Front. The Catholic leaders were puzzled on this great alliance and advised the Congress and Kerala Congress to form a common front. When the Church realized that merger of the two congresses would not take place, some bishops like the Bishop of Trivandrum openly took side with the Congress. Some of the Syrian Catholic bishops sided with the Kerala Congress. The United Front won a landslide victory with a total of 117 seats leaving only 9 seats for the Congress and 5 for the Kerala Congress.
Being the leader of the biggest party in the United Front, EMS was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Kerala. He took special care to keep the Front intact and to avoid any possible rift in it. But there were signs of tension between the two communist parties, the CPI (M) and CPI. The most disturbing thing for the new government was the inimical attitude of the central government\textsuperscript{36}. There was also rumour that the central government would use Article 356 over all non-Congress state governments in the country. The central government either withheld or reduced the quantity of rice which was due to Kerala state every month. The CPI (M) organized bandhs to protest against the neglect of Kerala by the Centre\textsuperscript{37}.

In spite of all these limitations, the state government could do some positive things like the abolition of prohibition, introduction of the state lottery, land distribution to the peasants and the landless, etc. The land reform bill the state government introduced had three main features: the right of possession of the land to hutment dwellers (kudikidapukar), total abolition of the system of landlordism, a ceiling on the amount of land one would possess and distribution of the surplus land among
the landless. When the government decided to implement the land reform bill, the Opposition and some of the member-parties became uncomfortable and began to contrive against it. They thought it best to topple the government before such a bill was given shape at all.

The Congress, the Kerala Congress and the Swathanthra Party, in a gathering at Kottayam, formed a “Citizens Front” (Paura Munnany) to fight the government. The Citizens Front was reminiscent of the “Vimochana Samara Samiti”, both in content and objective. But the opposition could not come out in the open in the name of land reform bill as it had wide mass support. They, rather, took out the issue of corruption at the ministerial level and demanded the resignation of some of its ministers. When a vote on this question was taken up in the assembly, the ‘right’ Communists and the Muslim League voted along with the opposition which led to the collapse of the 31 months old ministry.

In 1972, the Church came in for an open confrontation with the government, when the latter decided to unify the fees rate of students in government and private colleges. It was as
per the demands of Kerala Students Union (KSU), a pro-
Congress students’ association, and its youth wing, the Youth
Congress. The Private College Managements Association
immediately protested against the move on the ground that it
would be impossible for them to run their institutions on the
unified rate of fees\(^4\). They also said that they were running
their colleges at a loss and the decision of the government would
only enhance their loss. The Youth Congress and the Kerala
Students Union were in the forefront in making allegations of
corruption against the private college managements and they
insisted on the government going along with the decision of
unification of fees. They further said that the private college
managements were making immense profits and the unification
of fees would only, if at all, reduce their profits. The Deepika
and Malayala Manorama, two leading dailies in Kerala, took a
stand supportive to the cause of the managements. The
government indicated their readiness to take up the
responsibility of paying the salary of private college teachers
in lieu of surrendering some of their (managements) rights in
the selection of students and appointment of teachers. The
Christian managements rejected the government proposal and said that the government was purposefully moving to infringe the Fundamental Rights of the minorities which were guaranteed by the constitution under Article 30(1). The Kerala Private College Managers’ Association (which was dominated by Christian and N.S.S. managers) threatened closure of all their educational institutions if the government persisted on its decision.

The agitation, which was mainly Christian-sponsored, continued for two months. It generally targeted the Congress, Youth Congress and the K.S.U. The All Kerala Private College Teachers’ Association joined the government against the management. The NSS, as in 1959 agitation, vigorously took part in the agitation and its stalwarts like Kalathil Velayudhan Nair and Kidangoor Gopalakrishnan Pillai were in the forefront to give it proper leadership and direction. The Kerala Congress knowing well that it was a golden opportunity in their political life to regain their lost hold over the Christian community and woo the Church in their favour, came openly out in support of the managements.
The agitation of 1972 was unique in many respects. One novel feature of it was that the bishops personally led protest demonstrations on the streets\textsuperscript{43}. In the 1959 agitation the Church leaders only remained in the background and gave guidance and directions to the agitation from behind the curtain. There were people who deplored the idea of bishops leading protest meetings on the streets. But the Church leaders defended it on the plea that as pastors they should be physically present with their herds, especially in times of crisis\textsuperscript{44}.

The senior leaders of both the government and the Congress party were for a compromise with the Church on the issue, as they knew well that provoking a powerful community like Christians would not fetch good either to the government or the party. Except few leaders like A.K. Antony (KPCC chief) and P.P. George and organizations like the Youth Congress and KSU, all others were for an amicable settlement on the issue of fee unification with the private managements. The Christian community made Antony the main target of attack. The Deepika, which was the principal voice of Christians, cornered the Congress and its chief A.K. Antony and it did not even
spare the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The Malayala Manorama, a more powerful daily in Malayalam, was for a compromise settlement between the government and the aggrieved communities. It took such a stance as it knew well that the Communists would capitalize from this troubled situation.

The 1972 agitation was yet another occasion for the Church to prove its strength and influence. It was beyond doubt that the Church was a formidable interest group in education as it proved once again in 1972 agitation. One who closely observed from the beginning to the end of the agitation could understand that the Church still maintained its hold over the community and that the latter would go to any extent on the command of the former. It was a fact that later the Prime Minister and the national leadership of the Congress took special initiative to win back and bring back the goodwill of the Christian community.

The next phase of major confrontation started in 2006 when the Left Democratic Front (LDF) Government tried to bring about some control in the education sector especially in
the self-financing field. The period between 1973 and 2006 can be marked for its absence of any open fight between the Church and the governments except few skirmishes that occurred mainly on educational issues during the reigns of CPI (M) - led governments in the 1987-91 and 1996-2001 periods. The LDF Government which assumed office on 18th May, 2006, after a landslide victory of 99 seats out of 140 in the assembly, under the chief ministership of V.S Achuthanandan, was determined to control the self-financing colleges. The Kerala Professional Colleges (prohibition of capitation fee, regulation of admission, fixation of non-exploitative fee and other measures to ensure equity and excellence in professional education) Act 2006, widely known as Kerala Self-financing Colleges Act, 2006, opened new vistas of scuffle between the Catholic Church and the government. After independence, it was the third occasion that the Church came in for open confrontation with the government to protect its interest in the most vital area, that is, education.

When we look back at the beginning of self-financing institutions in the state we can see that the pioneers of self-
financing institutions were the government and not the private managements. As a pioneering effort in the field of self-financing colleges, almost all universities in Kerala started self-financing B.Ed centers. Later, when A.K. Antony became the chief minister in 2001, Kerala Government took a stand that sanction would be accorded to all those who applied for self-financing colleges in the state without any discrimination. Therefore, Antony Government gave No-Objection Certificate (NOC) indiscriminately to all those who applied for. Later eight self-financing engineering colleges, which got NOC from the government, filed a petition before the Kerala High Court against the government’s sanction to private managements to fill only in 15 percent of total seats in these colleges. The Kerala High Court on 2nd August, 2001, permitted an additional 15 percent of seats as community quota to all the managements of minority institutions. Meanwhile some of the minority self-financing medical colleges also went to the High Court of Kerala demanding more freedom in the admission of students in the light of Supreme Court verdict on 31st October, 2002, in the T.M.A. Pai Foundation Case. The High Court gave its
verdict on 20\textsuperscript{th} January, 2003 fixing the ratio 75:25-seventyfive percent management quota and 25 percent government quota-regarding admission of students to these institutions.

Meanwhile the UDF government passed the Kerala Self Financing Professional Colleges (Prohibition of capitation fees and procedure for admission and fixation of fees) Act, 2004. According to this, in every self financing professional college, fifty percent of the total seats in each branch of discipline shall be government quota and the remaining fifty percent the management’s quota. Seats in the government quota shall be filled up based on counselling by the Commissioner for Entrance Examinations on the basis of ranks obtained in the Common Entrance Examination conducted by him, adhering to the principles of reservation as ordered by the government from time to time. Seats in the management quota shall be filled up either from the list prepared on the basis of the Common Entrance Examination conducted by the Commissioner for Entrance Examinations or from the list prepared on the basis of the Common Entrance Test conducted by a consortium of private managements in the state\textsuperscript{48}. 
Against this Act, the Pushpagiri Medical Society filed a petition in the Supreme Court. The apex court by an interim order stayed the implementation of the Self-Financing Professional Colleges Act, 2004 and referred the case to a larger bench as it involved questions of minority rights. But the Court permitted the colleges to charge the fees prescribed by Justice K.T. Thomas Commission (Kerala Government had appointed a commission under the chairmanship of Justice K T Thomas, to determine the fee structure in self-financing colleges) from the students for the academic year 2004-2005. It cannot be denied that the Kerala Self Financing Professional Colleges Act, 2004 was a hastily prepared one and it had many inherent flaws. Meanwhile the Chief Minister, A.K.Antony, said that the self financing colleges had violated a verbal agreement made with his government, according to which two self-financing colleges were deemed to be equal to one Government College49.

Leaders of the LDF and pro-left students’ organizations like the SFI, who were furious in blaming the UDF and the erstwhile Antony Government for succumbing before the
pressures of private managements, were vehement and unanimous in controlling the self-financing college managements. It may be a sheer coincidence that, as in EMS Namboodiripad’s Government of 1957, the education portfolio under the newly elected LDF government was handled by a Christian. The Minister for Education, M.A. Baby, declared that the first priority before the government was to bring out a comprehensive legislation, rectifying all the defects of previous legislations in the field of self-financing colleges brought out by the previous UDF Government, as early as possible. Accordingly the government hurriedly prepared legislation, within a month of assuming power, and got it passed by the Kerala Legislative Assembly. The Self-Financing Colleges Act was intended to control the private managements which, by then had acquired a near monopoly in the admission of students and fixation of fees, through a succession of court verdicts, under the pretext of minority rights. Meanwhile the minister for education, who was determined to bridle the private managements by the new Act, had been nicknamed “a Second Mundassery.”
Meanwhile the Kerala Catholic Bishops Council’s (KCBC) meeting held at Kochi unanimously decided to oppose the Kerala Self-Financing Colleges Act, 2006. The meeting decided, besides other things, to continue the legal battle against the Act and resolved to join other minority communities in opposing the Act. Some of the self-financing colleges under the Catholic Church had already filed petitions in the High Court against the controversial Act.

The Chairman of the Education Commission of KCBC, Mar Joseph Powathil said that representatives of various churches would submit a representation to the President, Prime Minister, Human Resources Minister and the National Minority Commission against the anti-minority policies of the state government. He further said that a Joint Church Encyclical would be prepared by the bishops to create awareness, among the church members and the faithful, on the seriousness of the issue. It was also decided to observe July 23rd as ‘prayer day’ in all catholic churches in Kerala. Other campaigns including protest meetings and demonstrations would be held against the educational policies of the LDF government, the bishop
added. The clauses of the Self Financing Colleges Act which invited strong opposition of the Church include the clauses pertaining to:

a) Admission of students-Students can be admitted only through public entrance examination and centralized counselling (section 3).

b) Fee structure-Different fees to different categories of students (section 7).

c) Minority status of the institutions- Minority status of the institution is decided by both the number of students and the number of institutions a particular community possesses (section 8).

d) Reservation of seats- Reservation of seats for SC and ST and other backward communities in the self financing colleges (section 10).52

Meanwhile, Mar Varkey Vithayathil, Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, alleged that the new Self Financing Colleges Act was a ‘black law’53. Sturdily opposing the Act, Mar Varkey Vithayathil said that it would have serious
consequences not only in the educational sector but among all minority communities. The Major Archbishop also condemned the statement of Chief Minister V.S. Achuthanandan, which allegedly defamed the priests and bishops in the state.

The Minister for Education, M. A. Baby, while participating in a seminar on ‘Minority rights and self-financing institutions’, expressed the government’s firm resolve to end all exploitation of students by the managements in the name of minority rights. He said that if a management wanted minority status, it would have to prove that the concerned minority would be with them. He cautioned the managements against its move to fill in all seats in the self-financing colleges on their own selfish interests in the name of minority rights. Preserving minority rights should be based on social equality. Protection of minority rights should not generate severe discrimination, the minister added.

Meanwhile a joint pastoral letter was issued with the signatures of seven bishops of different church denominations both Catholic and non-Catholic, to be read out on 23rd July in churches under their respective jurisdictions. The letter,
besides exposing the intention of the Church to question the content of the Act in the court, exhorted the faithful to be prepared to protect its educational institutions and be ready to face any eventuality while doing so. The letter also reminded the congregation of the hidden agenda of the government to make the Church-owned institutions non-minority first and then take full control over them. Once the government established control over the self-financing institutions, it can easily penetrate into other fields\textsuperscript{58}. The letter concluded with a call to all its flocks to observe July 23\textsuperscript{rd} (Sunday) as ‘prayer day’ throughout the state.

The New Indian Express, a leading English daily, under the heading “The Church is for God or for Mammon” made a comparison between the present crusade of the Christian bishops against the Self-Financing Professional Colleges Act, 2006 and the “Liberation struggle” of 1959 against the first Communist government in Kerala. The paper inferred that 1959 would not be repeated in 2006 for two reasons –firstly, the Muslims are lukewarm and secondly, the Nair organizations are uninterested\textsuperscript{59}. The paper also said that the Church
hierarchy lacked credibility and respect which they enjoyed in 1959. The paper advised the hierarchy to go back to the ways of early missionaries and Jesuits who ran colleges in a spirit of sacrifice. The paper appreciated the present bill saying that it was a move in the right direction. At the same time it cautioned the government not to spoil its efforts by supporting the hooliganism of some students’ organizations like the Students Federation of India (SFI)\(^60\).

Meanwhile the division bench of the Kerala High Court struck down the most vital and controversial sections 3, 7, 8 and 10 of the Kerala Self Financing Colleges Act, 2006, which dealt with admission procedures in respect of self-financing professional colleges (section 3), fee structure (section 7), power of the government to decide the minority-status of the colleges (section 8) and reservation to various communities, including scheduled castes and scheduled tribes (section 10)\(^61\). Responding to the verdict of the High court, secretary of the SFI said that judiciary was supporting the educational business of the self-financing managements\(^62\). Meanwhile the Kerala Government decided to file an appeal petition before the
Supreme Court against the verdict of the High Court.

Malayala Manorama, which was supporting the managements’ right from the beginning along with The Deepika, in its editorial on 5th January titled “Law shall not support hasty decisions”, said that the High Court verdict would not surprise any one who had some knowledge of the constitution and the earlier verdicts of the Supreme Court on minority rights. It further said that the Self-Financing Colleges Act, in effect, had become non-existent. The paper concluded its editorial advising the government to initiate a new law by avoiding all the controversial provisions, through discussion with the managements, to protect the interest of the backward sections of the society.

In the meantime the Government filed a special leave petition before the Supreme Court in January 2007, challenging the Kerala High Court’s verdict that cancelled sections 3, 7, 8 and 10 of the Self Financing Colleges Act, 2006. The Supreme Court, on the said petition filed by the state government, refused to stay the Kerala High Court’s judgment of January 4th, invalidating the four vital clauses of the Kerala Self-financing
Colleges Act. The apex court also allowed the colleges to go ahead with the admission procedures for the next academic year. In fact, the apex court was ratifying the High Court’s order giving full freedom to the managements in matters like fees, admission and reservation. With the apex court’s ratification of Kerala High Court’s verdict on Self-Financing Colleges Act, 2006, all the efforts of the LDF Government to control self-financing professional colleges were defeated. The court’s only demand to the institutions was that the admission procedures should be completely transparent and the college managements gave an assurance to the court on this. While the managements of the self-financing colleges in the state responded to the apex court’s verdict upholding the Kerala High Court’s order joyously, the government and the pro-left student organizations referred to it as an ‘unfortunate order’. The Education Minister, the architect of the legislation, admitted the failure of the government in court litigation on Self-Financing Colleges Act and said that the Supreme Court order had given the college managements a ‘temporary upper hand’. He further said that the victory that the managements got was ephemeral and the government would continue to work
for the educational rights of the poor students. The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) leader E.T. Muhammad Basheer said that the UDF was not satisfied with the Supreme Court’s order. The order had given unbridled powers to the college managements and that was not in the interest of the society. While various factions of Kerala Congress except KC (J) welcomed the court verdict, the Congress found it convenient to blame the LDF and the government for all the unfavorable court verdicts. The State Congress President, Ramesh Chennithala, said that the reason for the current set back was the lack of interest on the part of the LDF and the education minister in pursuing the path of consensus.

Malayala Manorama in its editorial on 8th May 2007, under the title ‘Reach a consensus for the sake of children’, urged both the managements and government to arrive at a consensus at the earliest, keeping in mind the interest of students. The daily, which was supporting the Church and private managements’ right from the beginning, made a scathing attack on the Kerala Self-Financing Colleges Act, 2006, for its unconstitutional provisions and non-observance
of earlier apex court verdicts on self-financing sectors. The paper also observed that the present commotion in the education sector was the result of a politically motivated move on the part of the LDF Government against the management.

The apex court verdict was a bitter pill for the LDF Government to swallow. The legal battle which started along with the passing of the Self-Financing Colleges Act, 2006, ended up in the unilateral victory of the managements. The only course left for the government was to try for another law or try for some consensus with managements, through discussion, to ensure social justice. In the meantime, the government convened an ‘all party meeting’ on 15th May, 2007 to work out an amiable solution to the problems in the self-financing sector. The conclusion of the all party meeting was that the government should try for consensus with the managements as it was left without any other option. The private engineering and medical managements also informed their willingness for a discussion with the government, provided the government would realize the practical difficulties of running these institutions.
The Government in its discussions with the managements firmly adhered to the 50:50 seats formula (50 percent of seats each for management and government) in admission and also to the fees fixed by the government in the 50 percent government seats. On the said formula the government could sign agreements with some of the managements. For the Inter-Church Council (apex body of various Christian denominations) the 50:50 formulas in admission of students and government prescribed fees for the 50 percent of government quota students was not acceptable. The minority institutions under the Church were not willing to sign any contract with the government and went on with their own system of admission and fee structure. There lies the core of the clash between the government and the Church. The Chairman of Inter-Church Council for Education, Archbishop Mar Joseph Powathil, ruled out any agreement with the government with regard to admission of students or fee structure. Rather, the council offered 25 to 40 percent seats to students belonging to other communities and 15 percent seat reservation for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other
backward Catholics. In addition to these, the bishop said, scholarships would be arranged for bright students from economically backward classes. The secretary of Inter-Church Council for Education, Rev. Fr. Philip Njaralakkat, informed that admissions to all colleges under the Council would be made solely from the list prepared by the managements and an annual fee of Rs. 50,000 to 62,000 would be charged from each student except the 15 percent of students who come under the NRI (Non-Resident Indians) quota.

The CPI (M) state secretary, Pinarai Vijayan, warned the managements with dire consequences if they did not comply with the directions of the government. He also reminded them that the Government which ruled Kerala was of the LDF and not of the UDF. The SFI state secretary, M. Swaraj, threatened all self-financing college managements with serious consequences if they did not sign agreements with the Government regarding fees, admission, reservation, etc. In the meantime the Minister for Education, M.A. Baby, informed that Government would not accept different fee structures and seat sharing in minority-run self-financing educational institutions.
The tussle between the LDF Government and the Catholic Church took on a new dimension when the Metropolitan Archbishop of Thrissur, Mar Andrews Thazhath, warned the government of a ‘second liberation struggle’ (second Vimochana Samaram), if it persisted on the infringement of minority rights of Christians enshrined in the constitution. In the minority rights protection convention, organized by the Thrissur Archdiocese at the Town Hall, thousands of the faithful including priests and nuns took a vow to fight against the move by the LDF Government to ‘infringe’ upon the minority rights guaranteed by the constitution. Inaugurating the convention Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath said that nobody would be allowed to destroy the educational institutions run by the Church, however powerful they might be. He also said that any attempt from any corner to prosecute the institutions run by the Church would be resisted strongly.

The archbishop reminded the government of the ‘liberation’ and ‘college’ struggles in 1959 and 1972 respectively, and said that these struggles were spearheaded by the Catholic Diocese of Thrissur. He also reminded the
government that if the affiliation of 10 engineering colleges run by the Church was withdrawn, people’s affiliation to the existing government would also be withdrawn\textsuperscript{79}. Supporting the exhortation of Mar Andrews Thazhath for a ‘second liberation struggle’ against the LDF government, the Deepika daily, the habitual supporter of Church, in its 11\textsuperscript{th} July editorial asserted that the Christian community and the Catholic Church were still powerful enough to start a ‘liberation struggle’ on the model of the one that was conducted against the first communist government in 1959\textsuperscript{80}. The paper also added that Christians should not succumb before any authority except the power of God.

Criticizing the exhortation of Mar Andrews Thazhath for a ‘second liberation struggle’, Vellappally Natesan, General Secretary of SNDP Yogam, said that the state government was succumbing before the organized pressure of the Church. He demanded transfer of aided school appointments to the Public Service Commission\textsuperscript{81}. Meanwhile there were rumours that the NSS also decided to join the Church in her struggle against the government. But P.K. Narayana Panicker, General Secretary
of NSS, blatantly ruled out any such move to associate itself with the ongoing agitation of the Christian community against the LDF Government. However, he categorically stated that the NSS would oppose any move on the part of the Government to hand over the power of appointment of staff in private school to Public Service Commission.

Strongly criticizing the exhortation of Mar Andrews Thazhath for ‘a second liberation struggle’, the CPI (M) state secretary, Pinarai Vijayan, demanded the withdrawal of the pastoral letter issued by archbishop. He also said that it was not appropriate for the Church to join those who politically opposed the LDF Government. The state secretariat of the CPI (M) expressed the hope that Church believers would reject the ‘second liberation struggle’ exhortation by some Church leaders. It criticized the move of some Christian managements to oppose the efforts of LDF Government to ensure merit and social justice in self-financing colleges, in the name of minority rights.

Supporting the rights of the Church to issue pastoral letters and decide its content Kerala Congress (J) leader P.J. Joseph
demanded discussion between the Church and the LDF Government to sort out all issues of disagreement pertaining to education. He rejected the contention that the LDF government had a hidden anti-minority agenda. Meanwhile the government decided to cancel the affiliation of the rest of the five engineering colleges of the Church by using its hold over the syndicates under Mahatma Gandhi and Kannur Universities. The affiliation of other five engineering colleges of the Catholic Church had already been cancelled.

The Kerala Catholic Bishop’s Council (KCBC) raised strong protest against the cancellation of affiliation of its engineering colleges and warned the government with dire consequences if it did not retreat from its present anti-minority move. The Bishops’ Council fully supported the pastoral letters issued by different diocesan heads to oppose the anti-minority policies of the LDF government. Severely attacking the educational policies of the government, Thrissur Archbishop, Mar Andrews Thazhath again exhorted the faithful to be vigilant against the anti-minority move of the LDF government. Addressing a huge minority protection youth rally
organized by the Diocese of Thrissur, Mar Andrews Thazhath expressed his willingness to be a martyr while fighting for the protection of the educational institutions of the Church

The Syro-Malabar Major Archbishop, Cardinal Mar Varkey Vithayathil, demanded the state government to create a favourable situation for running educational institutions in the state. Referring to the Liberation Struggle of 1959, the Cardinal reminded the LDF Government that the 1959 events were the result of blunders made by certain leaders in the education sector and cautioned the government not to repeat such blunders in future. If such blunders were repeated, history might also be repeated, said the archbishop, indirectly supporting the ‘second liberation struggle’ call by Mar Andrews Thazhath, Bishop of Thrissur.

Meanwhile All Kerala Catholic Congress (AKCC) and Kerala Catholic Youth Movement (KCYM) assured full support to the ‘second liberation struggle’ exhorted by the Church hierarchy. The president of KCYM, Thomson Chiriyankandath, said that ‘protection squads’ had been set up in all the twenty nine dioceses of the Church. He also warned that the SFI
activists shall be ousted from the KCYM units, if the SFI continued their violence against the church-run institutions.

The state chief minister, V.S. Achuthanandan, refuted the allegation that the state government was trying to decimate educational institutions run by the minorities. The chief minister clarified that the present dispute (between the government and managements of minority institutions) arose because of an obstinate stand taken by some managements of minority-run educational institutions that they would levy exorbitant fees from the students. He also said: “Some management of minority-run educational institutions was working against the interest of the society. They were trying to propagate wrong impression about the approach of the government on the issue”. He was indirectly referring to the pastoral letter issued by Irinjalakkuda Bishop, Mar James Pazhayattil.

A combined meeting of the pastoral and education councils and managers of educational institutions under the Archdiocese of Ernakulam- Angamaly has decided to set up a council for the protection of education at the archdiocesan level. The official spokesman of the archdiocese said in a statement
that any encroachment upon minority rights that grant freedom to run educational institutions would be resisted. The statement further said that educational institutions run by religious minorities were also means to sustain their religious beliefs, and therefore, the government should withdraw from its move to ban religious classes or religious symbols in these institutions.

Meanwhile a number of pastoral letters were issued, either individually or jointly, in all the dioceses of the Catholic Church, calling upon the flocks to be prepared to protect the church-run educational institutions at any cost. A pastoral letter issued by Mar James Pazhayattil, Bishop of Irinjalakuda Diocese, on Sunday 15th July, called for the setting up of a ‘protection squad’ (Samrakshana Sena) to resist attacks on Church-run institutions. The letter, besides other things, urged the priests, nuns, heads of Christian organizations and parishioners to take part in the protest meeting at the Chalakudy Forane Church and asked the faithful to observe July 29 as ‘protest day’. The letter also called for setting up a ‘Forane-level Action Council’, to fight against the education polices of
the (LDF) Government\textsuperscript{94}. The pastoral letter, which was read out in all the churches under the diocese, also warned the faithful against forces that attempted to isolate the community and it asked them to identify the wolf in sheep’s clothing\textsuperscript{95}.

The Pala Diocese of the Syro-Malabar Church entered the fray-in the ongoing tussle between the Catholic Church and the LDF Government-calling for the formation of ‘vigilance teams’\textsuperscript{96}. In a pastoral letter issued to be read out in all the parishes on 22\textsuperscript{nd} July, the diocesan head, Bishop Joseph Kallaragattu, exhorted the flocks to form ‘vigilance teams’ in every educational institution of the Church for its protection. The diocese, the Bishop said, will not remain indifferent or inactive in the face of an ‘attack’ on educational institutions. The letter also stated that the community was facing serious threats to its religious freedom. This pastoral letter was a continuation of the previous one issued on 9\textsuperscript{th} July, which justified the stance taken by the Church in the discussions with the government. The letter explained why the Church did not make a consensus agreement with the government sacrificing minority rights. The letter also exhorted the flock to be bold
and be prepared to face any contingency in future. Drawing parallels between the current situation and that prevailed during the tenure of C.P. Ramaswamy Aiyer, the Dewan of Travancore State, and also during the E.M.S. Nambooripad and C. Achuthamennon Ministries, the bishop demanded from the believers the same kind of vigilance and commitment that they had shown during those periods, to protect the church-run institutions from encroachments by the present LDF Government.

Meanwhile the state secretary of CPI (M), Pinarayi Vijayan, expressed the government’s willingness to enter into dialogue with the Church leaders to allay any misgivings they might have on minority rights in Kerala. He said, “the pastoral letters are based on serious misunderstanding. There is no question of any right of the minority communities being curtailed as long as the LDF remains in government in Kerala”. He also said that the LDF and the government was ready to discuss all the issues raised in the pastoral letters and dispel the fears of the bishops.
Referring to the exhortations of some Church leaders for a ‘second liberation struggle’, Mr. Vijayan said, “Some vested interests in Kerala still nurse hopes of another ‘liberation struggle’ on the model of the one that had led to the ouster of the first EMS Government, but little do they know that 2007 was not 1957.” Establishing the fears and apprehensions of the Church as baseless, Mr. Vijayan pointed out that the LDF Government had never tried to take over the administration of private schools and place them under the Panchayaths, also it neither tried to encroach on the managements’ right to admit students and recruit staff nor permitted political party meetings in school campuses during class time.

The Chief Minister of Kerala, V. S. Achuthanandan, referring to threats posed by some Church heads, said “no one should assume that threats and concerted attempts to spread misunderstandings will cover up crass commercialization of the education sector”. Explaining the educational policy of the state government, the chief minister said, “social justice and merit should be the prime criteria for admission in the educational institutions. The mainstream society also accepts
these norms”. He also warned the communal forces against blocking the progress of the state and pulling it backward again, by mobilizing people along religious and caste lines, indirectly referring to the Liberation Movement of 1959.104

In another development, different sections of the Catholic Church in the central Travancore region were gearing up for an all-out bid to oppose the ‘hostile attitude of the state government’ towards the minorities’ by convening a protest meet at Kottayam on 12th August, 2007. Heads of the Syro-Malabar Archdiocese of Changanassery and of Pala and Kanjirappally falling under it, as well as those of the Vijayapuram Latin Catholic Diocese, Kottayam Knanaya Catholic Diocese and Thiruvalla Malankara Catholic Diocese held a ‘closed-door meet’ at Changanassery and resolved to address the angst of believers, through consistent but peaceful methods of protest105. Stressing the need and importance of the believers to be made aware of various threats looming large at the minorities on account of the education policies of LDF Government, the conglomeration of top church hierarchies decided to step up the tempo through a massive meet at Kottayam on 12th August 2007. The meeting also decided to
set up a central committee office to coordinate the conduct of the Kottayam Meet.

Meanwhile another circular issued by Changanassery Archbishop, Mar Joseph Perumthottam, which was read out in parishes on Sunday, 19th July, was capped with a call to hold July 27 as a day of ‘fasting and prayers’ to mark a protest against the alleged hostile stance of the Government against minorities and the denial of their genuine constitutional rights. The pastoral letter also ridiculed the demand made by some political leaders to withdraw pastoral letters issued earlier by some bishops. It said, “Some political leaders had threatened to whiplash us if we did not withdraw the pastoral letters. We are the disciples of the man who had suffered innumerable such beatings. So no one can hope to cow us down with such threats. The man who suffered the beatings is highly revered and those who inflicted pain on him have no place in history”.

Regarding the offer of entering into discussions with Church leaders extended by the Chief Minister, V.S. Achuthanandan; Minister for Education, M.A. Baby and CPI (M) state secretary, Pinaray Vijayan, the Archbishop Mar
Joseph Powathil said that those who were clamouring for discussions with Church heads on the self financing colleges and general education sector issues should first commit themselves to a ceasefire. He made it clear to all concerned that there was no question of diluting minority rights. In the meantime, expressing solidarity to the Church leaders in their fight against the LDF Government for the protection of their educational institutions and minority rights, Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) President, Ramesh Chennithala, called on Thrissur Metropolitan Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath at the Bishop House. The closed-door meeting that he had with the Prelate got special significance especially in the context of Christian community planning to spearhead an agitation against the LDF Government’s alleged move to infringe the minority rights and hand the school administration over to the local panchayaths. Mar Andrews Thazhath was the first prelate in the state to issue a pastoral letter against the LDF Government’s education policies and its alleged anti-minority move.

Another pastoral letter issued by the diocesan head of
Pala, Bishop Joseph Kallaragattu, to be read out in churches under his jurisdiction on 29th July, 2007, reminded the congregation about the need and importance of the ‘youth rally’ scheduled to be held on August 5, 2007, at Pala. In the pastoral letter the bishop urged the herds to participate actively in the rally of August 5 and also to express their solidarity with the Church hierarchy. The bishop particularly reminded the flocks of the importance to be vigilant against the anti-minority policies of the LDF Government. According to a notice issued to the believers a few days before the scheduled rally, (from the diocesan headquarters of Pala) the immediate targets of the rally were enlisted as: to protest against

(a) Anti-constitutional provisions of the Self-financing Colleges Act, which were deliberately aimed at destroying the legally established and well-maintained self-financing institutions run by the church

(b) Overt and covert government orders and statements to legalize political interference in aided schools and colleges and to transfer the control of these institutions to local bodies.
(c) The hidden agenda of the government to politicize the education sector through revisions of Kerala Educational Acts and Rules (KEAR) and the textbook reforms with a view to spread atheism and Communist ideology in church-run educational institutions.

(d) Restrictions imposed on the propagation of religious faith in aided schools with a view to spread atheism and materialism in these institutions.

(e) All efforts on the part of the government, political parties and party leaders to portray Catholic educational institutions as business centres.

(f) Anti-democratic and fascist approaches and policies of the LDF Government to destroy and eliminate those who disagree and criticize the government and to humiliate and mock the Church leaders.

(g) The efforts to hide the inefficiency and corruption of the government and political parties by projecting Church – run educational institutions as business firms.

(h) The move of the government to give unbridled powers
to pro-Communist students’ organizations to destroy and create terror in Church – run educational institutions and to make the Church ineffective. Also to create sexual anarchy by giving immoral sex education.

(i) The effort of the government to make education of poor students impossible, due to the great economic burden that the general public and parents of poor students have to bear for creating infrastructure facilities and payment of salaries of staff, etc, by transferring the responsibility of education from the government to the local self-governing bodies.

In the same notice, a four-fold objective of the rally was also included. It reads:

i) To prove that the Church leaders still enjoy good support of the faithful and that the believers would wholeheartedly obey the exhortations of the hierarchy.

ii) To prove the claims of some leaders of the government and political parties, that majority of minority communities were with them to be fool’s dreams.
iii) To show that the believers would not remain as mute spectators if the Church leaders were humiliated and insulted.

iv) To declare that the believers would be bold enough to defeat any move on the part of anyone, whether government or party, against the Church, by democratic means\textsuperscript{112}.

The huge rally which was organized by the Diocese of Pala against the violation of minority educational rights by the LDF Government was attended by thousands of faithful from 170 parishes of the diocese\textsuperscript{113}. The rally, started from Santhome Complex at Kottaramattom and took more than two hours to reach Stadium Junction, the rendezvous. It was led by Baselious Mar Climes Bava, Mar Joseph Kallarangattu, Mar Joseph Pallikkaparambil, Fr. Mathew Chandrankunnel, and Fr. Jacob Vellamaruthungal. Reminiscent of the 1959 agitation against EMS Namboodiripad’s Government, the rally was attended by thousands of believers and youth who raised slogans against leaders of the Government and CPI (M)\textsuperscript{114}. Inaugurating the
meeting, after the rally, His Excellency Baselios Climis Catholica Bava said: “The rally was a good reply to those who said that the faithful were not with the Church hierarchy”. Speaking at the meeting Mar Joseph Kallarangattu, Bishop of Pala, exhorted the faithful to be vigilant against atheism and the monstrous style of functioning of the LDF Government. He made a scathing attack on the educational policies of the LDF Government and warned it with stern consequences if it persisted with them in future. He urged the believers to be prepared to protect the Church-run educational institutions even at the cost of their lives.

A second joint pastoral letter against the government, signed by the heads of various Church denominations, was read out in all the churches under their respective authority on 5th August, 2007. In it heads of various Church denominations warned the government with awful consequences if the latter continued its encroachment upon Church-run educational institutions. The letter demanded the government to stop immediately all retaliatory steps it had been taking against the Christian educational institutions including the cancellation
of affiliation of ten of its engineering colleges which did not comply with the ‘unjustifiable’ orders of the universities.

The joint pastoral letter also exhorted the faithful to fight unitedly against such moves of the government like politicization of aided education sector, efforts to bring back campus politics and also attempts to illegally occupy seats in self-financing colleges\textsuperscript{118}. The pastoral letter prevailed upon the believers to realize the alleged ‘secret agenda’ of the LDF Government and its deliberate infringement of minority rights in the education sector. The pastoral letter issued just before the Minority Rights Convention scheduled to be held at Kottayam on 12\textsuperscript{th} August 2007, was read out in between the Sunday Mass\textsuperscript{119}.

According to the exhortations and directions of the joint pastoral letter issued by their spiritual heads, the faithful of various Church denominations gathered at Kottayam on 12\textsuperscript{th} August, 2007 and gave a stern warning to the LDF Government against its anti-minority stance. The huge rally of the faithful, mostly belonging to the Catholic sect, and the public meet held afterwards, turned into a war-cry\textsuperscript{120}. Thousands of the faithful
spilled over into the streets and converged at the historical Tirunakkara ground, a town closely associated with the ‘Liberation Struggle’ half a century ago. In the meeting held after the rally, thousands of the faithful joined hands to take a solemn pledge that, “they would resist attempts whatsoever to infringe on minority education rights. None could be allowed to encroach upon the constitutionally guaranteed rights even if it was through threat or by force”121.

Addressing the rally Archbishop Mar Joseph Powathil, chairman of the Inter-Church Council for Education and KCBC Education Commission, declared that, “the faithful of all denominations would stand united against the moves of the state government to impose its wish in the education sector in an autocratic manner”. He further elaborated the stern resolve of the Church to fight against the LDF Government’s anti-minority policies. He said, “even if affiliation of colleges is cut or fake cases are planted or the strategy of discussion and confrontation is followed by the Government, there is no question of succumbing to threats or surrendering minority education rights”122. In the meeting the faithful took a solemn
pledge reiterating their resolve to “continue the struggle to protect minority education rights at any cost as ‘Valiant Soldiers of the Faith’, and warned the state government of strong reaction if their rights were trampled upon”.

The mammoth meeting that was organized at Kottayam after a huge procession raised many slogans against CPI (M) state secretary Pinarai Vijayan; chief minister, V.S. Achuthanandan and education minister, M.A. Baby. The rally was organized by the heads of various Church denominations against the anti-minority policy of the state government. The Church hierarchy leading the procession through the street conveyed a clear message to those in authority that the Church would not hesitate to move to any extent, if the traditional educational rights enjoyed by it were trampled upon.

Meanwhile the state chief minister, V.S. Achuthanandan, expressed his government’s willingness to hold talks with the Church leaders to quell all their misgivings. The chief minister refuted the allegations raised by the Church one by one. Regarding the interference of panchayaths in the running of
schools, the Chief Minister said that the Panchayaths were not given any new power by his government. The second allegation was that the Government had political agenda of injecting atheism in school children. In reply the chief minister said that all the changes were being made along the lines of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF). About the third allegation that the Adolescence Education Programme would lead to sexual anarchy, the chief minister replied that, since there was a controversy regarding it in the state, the programme was immediately stopped. The fourth allegation raised by the church stated that Sunday was going to be made a working day and it would restrict the religious freedom of the Church. In reply the chief minister said that Saturday was already a working day for some schools and there was no decision to include new working days.

The historical meeting at Thirunakkara on 5th August, 2007, was the culmination of the confrontation that started between the Church and the government with the passing of Kerala Self -Finance Colleges Act, 2006. In fact, it was the temporary wrapping up of the first part of the confrontation
between the Church and the Government and the seeds for the second part of conflict had already been sown through the appointment of CP Nair Committee for revising the Kerala Educational Acts and Rules (KEAR). Though all the controversial clauses of the Act were struck down by the High Court, which was later upheld by the Supreme Court, the Government was trying to bring back, at least partially, the deleted clauses by using its own and all other available means. Realizing this, managements of the church-run educational institutions did not accept any formula suggested by the government either on admission or fee structure or reservation for the backward classes. Rather, the Church declared her own methods and processes in admission, fee structure and reservation for weaker sections which were not acceptable to the government. Meanwhile the government took some retaliatory measures like issuing notice for cancellation of affiliation of some of its self financing colleges, withholding approval of appointments of principals in aided higher secondary schools, keeping unfilled the many vacancies in aided colleges, etc.
As in previous tussles, in the 2006 scuffle also the hierarchy’s appeal to the religious sentiments of people like ‘religion in danger’, ‘infringement of minority rights’, ‘hidden agenda to destroy church-run educational institutions’, ‘plot to ruin the Christian community’, etc, had great impact on the believers and they became even violent and used abusive and threatening slogans against the government and party leaders in spite of repeated pleas made by its organizers\textsuperscript{126}. The members of ‘Minority Protection Council’ organized at the diocesan level visited all the aided schools to ‘educate teaching and non-teaching staff’ on minority rights and to instigate them to join the anti-government propaganda. There were also instances of those members trying to create terror in the minds of the staff by pointing out the impending danger of the educational policies of LDF Government which included withdrawal of salary in future or cutting down the salary by half by the panchayaths, suspension and dismissal of school staff by panchayaths, scrutiny of classroom-teaching by panchayath members, encroachment of party (Communist) members upon the administration of aided schools, etc.
Members of the Protection Council reminded the staff of the ‘hidden agenda’ of the Government to take over administration of the schools and later nationalize them. They even exhorted the staff to be prepared to face any eventuality in future which may amount even to sacrificing their lives for the cause of the community.

As in the previous confrontations in 1957 and 1972, between the Church and the Government, this time also the Church had full support of the leading newspapers in Kerala like Malayala Manorama and Deepika. Malayala Marorama, justifying the High Court’s verdict cancelling the vital clauses of the Act, made a scornful attack on the LDF Government for its hastiness and inadvertence behind the preparation of the bill\footnote{127}. The Deepika, which wholeheartedly supported the Church in the beginning, took a deviation when the management of the newspaper was changed and the Church lost hold on it. But recently the Church took back the newspaper and through a circular, the Bishop of Pala, Mar Joseph Kallarangat, urged the faithful to be subscribers of the Deepika\footnote{128}.
The LDF Government which had a severe setback in the legal battle against private managements on Self-Financing Colleges Act was determined to bring about changes in the general education sector, through Kerala Educational Acts and Rules revision and textbook modification. The Church and Nair Service Society (NSS), the largest corporate managements in the state, came out openly against the leaked core report in November 2006 itself. Two suggestions of the committee which invited strong opposition from the Church and NSS are (i) entrusting the appointment of teachers and non-teaching staff in aided schools to Public Service Commission and (ii) to bring school administration under the control of local self governing bodies. The NSS warned the government with serious consequences if it makes any amendment on section 11 of Kerala Education rules which gave absolute right to private school manager to appoint staff in his school. However, it said that it had no objection if the government made any amendment to Section 10, which prescribed the qualification of the staff. Making amendments to section 11 was the tactics of some politicians in power to help the communities which had already had reservation in government service. It is against
the interest of the upper castes which do not have any reservation\textsuperscript{130}.

The Opposition, except Kerala Congress (M), which hesitated to support the Church publicly in her fight against the LDF government over the Kerala Self-Financing Colleges Act, 2006, came out openly against the government over the KEAR revision. In fact, the Opposition had been moving in accordance with the general mood of the society which was in favour of some sort of social control over self-financing colleges. It was under the initiative of Joseph M. Puthussery MLA, with the blessings of Congress and UDF leaders, that the Church and NSS came together and formed a common forum against the KEAR revision initiated by the LDF Government. The coming together of two prominent communities would, of course, have annoyed the government and LDF leadership as was evident from the subsequent reactions of the leaders of CPI (M) and the government.

The leaders of the Catholic Church and NSS decided to move jointly against the LDF Government, if it went along with recommendations in the Core Report of CP Nair
Committee, which was leaked out in between, particularly with regard to the transferring of aided school appointments to PSC and entrusting the school administration to local bodies\textsuperscript{131}. It was decided in a meeting held at Perunna, the headquarters of Nair Service Society, attended by the top hierarchy of Catholic Churches and the NSS. The NSS, which adopted a neutral stand hitherto, in the tussle between the Church and the LDF Government on Self-Financing Colleges Act, 2006, was very much provoked by the core report suggestions of CP Nair Committee. Leaders of the NSS and the Church were unanimous in opposing these two suggestions of CP Nair Committee and decided to move together against the government, if the latter persisted on it\textsuperscript{132}.

Leaders of both the communities also decided to move closely in future to protect their interests in the education sector. For that they formed a Core Committee consisting of P.K. Narayana Panicker and Mar Joseph Perumthottam as Chairmen, and Bishop Thomas Samuel and G. Sukumaran Nair as General Secretaries\textsuperscript{133}. The meeting was attended by Church leaders like Baselios Climmis Catholica Bava, Archbishop Mar Joseph

Meanwhile state secretary of CPI (M), Pinarai Vijayan, said that the Catholic Church and Nair Service Society should not try to frighten and destabilize the Left Democratic Government and reminded them that 2007 was not 1957. He also said that the joint move of the Church and NSS was reminiscent of the Liberation Struggle of 1959 and he reminded them that such a move would not work in 2007 as the central government itself was at the mercy of the left parties\textsuperscript{134}. The Syro-Malabar Major Archbishop, Mar Varkey Vithayathil, warned the LDF Government with dire consequences if it tried to convert the Core Report suggestions of C.P. Nair Committee into law\textsuperscript{135}. He categorically stated that no teacher appointed by the government shall be permitted to teach in Church-run schools\textsuperscript{136}. 
The Aided School Managements Co-ordination Committee, formed jointly by the Catholic Church and NSS, submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister, V.S. Achuthanandan, and Education Minister, M.A. Baby, requesting them to desist from any move to hand over aided school appointments to PSC\textsuperscript{137}. The memorandum also stated that mere payment of salary to the staff and providing a nominal grant annually for the maintenance of these institutions were not sufficient reasons for taking over the administration of these schools. Any move to handover the power of appointment of staff in aided schools to PSC, and to entrust the control of schools to local self-governing bodies, was politically motivated and, therefore, could not be accepted, said the memorandum. It was signed by P.K Narayana Panicker, G. Sukumaran Nair, Archbishop Mar Joseph Perumthottam and Bishop Thomas Samuel\textsuperscript{138}.

The coming together of the Catholic Church and Nair Service Society, two powerful communal groups in the field of education, had its outcome. The immediate but cautious reactions of the leaders of the government and CPI (M) bear witness to this fact. Consequently, the government invited
leaders of the Catholic Church and NSS for discussion to sort out all issues that existed in the education sector between the government and private managements especially in the context of Kerala Educational Acts and Rules (KEAR) revision. But the joint meeting of leaders of the Church and the NSS decided not to go for discussions with government till the final report of the revision committee came out. Earlier two dates were fixed for discussions by the government but both were not acceptable to them. Questioning the propriety of fixing venerated days for discussion, leaders of the Church and NSS said, “Fixing the dates, which are holy and sacred for communities, for discussion itself indicates the attitude of the government towards others.”

After the present confrontation between the Church and the government began in June, 2006, the Church issued more than three dozen pastoral letters, individually as well as jointly, against the LDF Government and the CPI (M). While some targeted the government others were exclusively attacking the communist ideology. Kerala Catholic Bishop’s Council, on 2nd February, 2008, issued a joint pastoral letter, signed by the
top hierarchy of the Syro-Malabar, Latin and Syro-Malankara rites. It exhorted the faithful to keep away from communism saying that it was a dead ideology and harmful to the society142. Another one, perhaps more strongly-worded, specifically targeting the Communist party and communist ideology, was issued by the Syro-Malabar Archbishop of Changanassery, Mar Joseph Perumthottam, which was read out in churches under his control on 11th November, 2007. In the pastoral letter the archbishop, made a severe attack on communism and communist parties and exhorted the faithful to give up communism because it was anti-God and anti-Church143. He also said, “faith and communism would never go together and the faithful could not support or make any affinity with communism”.

Another pastoral letter which was issued by the Archbishop of Thrissur, Mar Andrews Thazhathu, made a scornful attack on communism and communist parties144. The letter, read out in churches under the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese of Thrissur, cautioned the faithful against getting lured by the communist parties by thinking about their activities
as confined only to the political domain. The archbishop urged the flocks to be vigilant against the atheism and materialism of the communist parties and said that it is this atheism and materialism that the party is trying to implant in the Church-run educational institutions by using governmental mechanism\textsuperscript{145}. Another circular of the same genre was issued by the Bishop of Pala, Mar Joseph Kallarangattu, which also made a contemptuous attack on communist ideology and communist parties and exhorted the faithful to disown communism. The circular, read out in churches under his diocesan authority, stated in unambiguous terms that faith and communism would never go together and the faithful cannot keep in touch with communism as it is anti-God and anti-human\textsuperscript{146}. These pastoral letters, along with many more of more or less same genre, issued by the Catholic hierarchy targeting communist parties and communist ideology, show that Church still nourishes its unmitigated antipathy towards communist ideology and communist parties.

The joint protest by the Church and NSS found its result in the final report submitted by the KEAR Revision Committee,
headed by C.P. Nair, to the Minister for Education, M.A Baby, on 4th February, 2008\textsuperscript{147}. The final Report, though not fully endorsed the stance taken by the Church and NSS, deliberately avoided many controversial clauses in the core report. The controversial suggestions in the core report such as entrusting the power of appointment of aided school staff to Public Service Commission, control of schools by panchayaths and changing of school timings, etc, were avoided in the final report due to the stiff and rigorous pressure exerted by the communities and communal pressure groups in Kerala. The change of school timings was omitted due to the stiff resistance mounted by some Muslim organizations\textsuperscript{148}. The report envisaged an independent agency for aided school appointments which would be formed according to the rules passed by the legislature in future. The agency would prepare a list of eligible candidates from which the manager of the school could fill the vacancies in his school according to his discretion. But the clause which made it obligatory for the manager to observe reservation rules was not likely to be accepted by the private managements.

The final report, which avoided the interference of local
bodies in the administration of schools, was generally welcomed by the Church and NSS. But the education minister’s assurance that the KEAR reforms would be implemented only after arriving at a consensus with sections concerned was not taken in its face value by the Church and NSS. Both expressed strong resentment at making any change in the existing system of aided school appointments and administration. The strong opposition of NSS and the Church coupled with the disagreement expressed by some LDF partners like the Communist Party of India (CPI) over the suggestions of KEAR Revision Committee made the chances for implementation of its final report remote and the fate of CP Nair Committee Report might not be different from that of Dr. Gopalan Committee Report

The history of educational reforms in Kerala is as old as the starting of education institutions themselves. The peculiar demographic combination and socio-political situation have made communal agencies the owners of the highest number of educational institutions in the state. So, whenever the government tried to establish some social control over these
institutions, the vested interests raised sturdy opposition against it. Since most of the private institutions are owned by the Church, it is quite natural that the Church was on the offensive whenever the government tried for some State or social control over these institutions. Not only is that, for the Church, educational freedom inextricably intertwined with religious freedom. For a true Christian faith is life. This adds a new dimension to the encounter between the Church and government on educational issues. So, whenever the government undertakes any measures to have some control over these private educational institutions, there would arise a war-like situation in the state.

The first major confrontation between the Church and the government took place in 1945, when C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer tried to nationalize primary education in Travancore. Such was the power of the Church that even the strong-willed C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer could not do anything before its organized strength. The second encounter between the Church and government occurred in 1957, when the first democratically elected government of Kerala, after its formation on linguistic
basis in 1956, led by EMS Nambooripad, tried to bring about some governmental control over the private educational institutions. The Church, which spearheaded the agitation, had the support of all other communities particularly the Nairs. The agitation saw the amalgamation of all communal forces in the state in an unprecedented way. The third major confrontation and the second after independence, was in 1972, when C. Achuthamenon was the Chief Minister of Kerala. As in 1957, in 1972 also the Church had full support of the NSS and SNDP. In the 1972 agitation too the Church could successfully guard her unrestrained freedom in the educational sphere and the government became helpless before the organized strength of the Church.

The Kerala Self-financing Colleges Act was mainly designed to curb corruption and malpractices in self-financing colleges, was not free from certain inherent flaws. It was not a well thought out legislation and its hurried preparation coupled with over enthusiasm shown by some leaders especially its architect, M.A Baby, the Minister for Education, spoiled the very purpose of the Act. It is true that there was a general
consensus in Kerala society for some sort of societal or state control over the self-financing colleges in the state, which was reflected, in a way, in the unanimous passing of the Self-financing Colleges Act in the Kerala Legislative Assembly. It was not a secret that some of these self-financing colleges were rife with corruption and they were acting against the interest of the general society. It is also true that some of the provisions of the Kerala Self-Financing Colleges Act like section 8(b) and (c) were totally uncalled for and could have been avoided. It only helped those who had strong opposition to any form of control over their institutions and earnestly desired for its non-implementation. Furthermore, it was these provisions of the Act that necessitated the interference of the court and finally led to the cancellation of many of its vital clauses and thereby the Act itself.

The Self-Financing Colleges Act 2006 became practically non-existent when the division bench of Kerala High Court in its verdict scraped off the most objectionable clauses of the Act, which was later upheld by the Supreme Court. The 2006 conflict between the government and the Church was unique
in many respects. First, it was a solitary fight of the Church against the LDF government opposing the latter’s educational policies. Secondly, there was a near consolidation of Christian denominations against the government. Thirdly, the Church machinery was geared up to oppose not only the government but also the prominent party in the LDF, CPI (M). Fourthly, a large number of pastoral letters were issued by the prelates, individually as well as jointly, against the government and CPI (M). Lastly, the remarkable victory of the Church in the legal battle against the government rather induced confidence in the hierarchy especially at a time when all other communities either turned against it or kept neutral.

The NSS, which took a neutral stand in the beginning, joined the Church when they found that the government was planning to leave aided school appointments to Public Service Commission. The coming together of two prominent communities, Christians and Nairs, in the second part of the conflict, was reminiscent of 1957 and 1972 agitations. In fact, the new move annoyed the government in no small measure that in its final report the CP Nair Committee either deleted or
amended all controversial suggestions included in the core report. Not only that the statement made by the Chief Minister V.S.Achuthanandan and Education Minister, M.A. Baby, that KEAR Revision Committee suggestions would be implemented only after arriving at a consensus with all segments concerned, was another indication of the surrender of the government before the organized educational pressure groups in Kerala. The various factions of the Kerala Congress, especially Kerala Congress (M), realizing the fact that the Church had almost abandoned them in the previous Lok Sabha (2004) and Assembly polls (2006), extended full support to the Church to get her goodwill. But the lukewarm response of the Congress and other opposition parties to the ‘second Liberation Struggle’ call by some Church hierarchy may be indicative of a changed socio-political situation in the state.
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3. Vatican 11, Gravissimum educationis, n. 3
4. A. Mathew, A History of Educational Development in Kerala, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi, 1987. p. 41
5. Ibid.
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9. George Mathew, Communal Road to a Secular Kerala, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1989. p. 103
14. Ibid. P.127
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19. Ibid.
27. V. R. K. Iyer, Daniel Came to Judgement, Ernakulam. 1959. p. 54
29. Ibid. p. 46
31. Indian Affairs Record, New Delhi, Vol. 5, p. 170
33. George Mathew, Communal Road to a Secular Kerala, Op. cit. p. 156
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
37. Ibid. p. 137
38. Ibid. p. 138
40. Dr. Cyriac Thomas, Church and Kerala Politics (Unpublished Thesis), Kerala University Library, Palayam, Thiruvananthapuram p. 331
41. Article 30 (1) guarantees the minorities whether based on religion or language to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.
42. Dr. Cyriac Thomas, Church and Kerala Politics, Op. cit. p. 332
45. Ibid. P. 334
46. Ibid.
47. Prof. E. J. John, Self-Financing Institutions and Minority’s Educational
48. Ibid. p. 49
49. A. K. Antony, The Chief Minister of Kerala, has said that his government was cheated by the managements of self financing colleges that each self financing college had promised him to surrender 50% of seats to the government and when seats of two colleges were added it would become equivalent to one government college. The management, on the other hand, ruled out any such verbal agreement reported to have been made with the government.

50. Joseph Mundassery, the Minister for Education in the Ministry of EMS Nambooripad, was determined to control private managements and for that he introduced Kerala Education Act, 1957. Some leaders of the present LDF projected M. A. Baby, Minister for Education, as the successor of Joseph Mundassery, to fulfill the unfulfilled dreams of his predecessor.

51. The Pioneer, July 11, 2006
52. Sections 3, 7, 8 and 10 of Kerala Self Financing Colleges Act, 2006
53. The Pioneer, July 11, 2006
54. Ibid.
55. While addressing a press conference in Thiruvananthapuram, the Chief Minister V.S. Achuthanandan said that some religious heads revolting against the Government’s decision in education sector were not concerned about the interest of all their community members rather motivated by their own personal interest.

56. The Pioneer, July 11, 2006
57. The Joint Pastoral Letter was signed by Mar Varkey Vithayathil- Syro-Malabar Archbishop, Baselios Marthoma Didimos First- Malankara Orthodox Church, Philipose Mar Chrisostem – Marthoma Metropolitan, Baselios Mar Thomas Firs - Malankara Yakoba Sabha, Ciril Mar Baselios- Malankara Catholic Church, Most. Rev. Dr. Daniel Acharuparambil- Latin Catholic Church, Rt. Rev. Dr. Thomas Samuel-CSI Church.

59. The New Sunday Express, July 30, 2006
60. Ibid.
61. The Malayala Manorama, January 5, 2007
62. Ibid.
63. The editorial of Malayala Manorama, January 5, 2007
64. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid.
70. The Malayala Manorama, May 8, 2007
71. The Malayala Manorama, May 15, 2007
72. Ibid.
73. The Malayala Manorama, June 12, 2007
74. The Malayala Manorama, June 10, 2007
75. The Kerala Kaumudi, June 16, 2007
76. The Mathrubhoomi, June 17, 2007
77. The New Indian Express, July 8, 2007
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid.
80. The Deepika, July 11, 2007
81. The Mathrubhoomi, July 09, 2007
82. The Kerala Kaumudi, July 10, 2007
83. The Malayala Manorama, July 18, 2007
84. The Mathrubhoomi, July 10, 2007
85. Malayala Manorama, July 22, 2007
86. Malayala Manorama, July 21, 2007
87. Ibid.
88. Malayala Manorama, July 22, 2007
89. The Deepika, July 11, 2007
90. Ibid.
91. The Hindu, July 16, 2007
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
97. Pastoral Letter-17, 09-07-2007, Diocese of Pala.
98. Pastoral Letter-18, 17-07-2007, Diocese of Pala
99. The Hindu, July 20, 2007
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid.
103. The Hindu, July 24, 2007
104. Ibid.
105. The New Indian Express, July 23, 2007
106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.
108. Ibid.
109. Ibid.
112. Ibid.
113. The Malayala Manorama, August 6, 2007
114. Ibid.
115. Ibid.
116. Ibid.
117. The Joint Pastoral Letter was signed by Baselios Marthoma Didimos First
(Malankara Orthodox Church), Dr. Philipose Mar Chrisostem (Marthoma Church), Arch Bishop Mar Mathew Moolakattil (Knanaya Church, Kottayam), Arch Bishop Mar Joseph Perumthottam (Syro-Malabar Church, Changanassery), Arch Bishop Kuriakose Mar Sevarios, Thomas Mar Kuriolos, Thomas Mar Thimothios, Bishop Thomas Samuel, Bishop Dr. Sebastian Thekkethecheril, Mar Mathew Arackal and Mar Joseph Kallarangatt.

118. The Malayala Manorama, August 6, 2007
119. The New Indian Express, August 6, 2007
120. The New Indian Express, August 13, 2007
121. Ibid.
122. The New Indian Express, August 13, 2007
123. The Hindu, August 13, 2007
124. The New Indian Express, August 13, 2007
125. Ibid.

126. In the rally organized by various Christian denominations in Kottayam on August 12, 2007, a section of the faithful became violent and pelted stones at media persons and Kottayam Press Club. Many sustained injuries and were admitted in hospitals. The New Indian Express, August 13, 2007.

127. The Malayala Manorama Editorial, January 5, 2007
129. Core report of Kerala Educational Rules consists of 21 pages and core report of Kerala Educational Acts has 170 pages. The suggestion for giving aided school appointments to Public Service Commission was included in the seventh page of the Educational Rules and 122 and 123rd pages of Kerala Educational Acts. Suggestion for control of schools by local bodies was included in the 3rd and 4th pages of Kerala Educational Rules. The Malayala Manorama, November 20, 2007

130. The Malayala Manorama, November 19, 2007
131. The Malayala Manorama, November 23, 2007
132. Ibid.
133. This Core Committee was to decide the future course of action if the government went along with steps to control private managements. The committee was named Aided School Managements Coordination Committee. Malayala Manorama, November 23, 2007.

134. Malayala Manorama, November 25, 2007

135. Malayala Manorama, November 29, 2007

136. Ibid.

137. Ibid.

138. Ibid.

139. Malayala Manorama, January 11, 2008

140. The first date Government fixed for discussion was a Sunday (Sabbath day), which was not acceptable to the church. The second date fixed was on Mannam Jayanthi Day, which was not acceptable to the NSS as it was sacred day for them. So both dates were rejected by church and NSS. Malayala Manorama, January 11, 2008.

141. Malayala Manorama, January 11, 2008

142. The New Indian Express, February 3, 2008

143. The Malayala Manorama, November 6, 2007

144. The Hindu, December 10, 2007

145. Ibid.


147. The Malayala Manorama, February 5, 2008

148. Ibid.

149. Earlier the Kerala Government appointed a committee headed by Dr. Gopalan, for revising Kerala Educational Acts and Rules (KEAR) and the committee submitted its report after a period of three and half years of study. The report the committee submitted has not been implemented so far. The Malayala Manorama, November 6, 2007.