Preface

The thesis, ‘C. Achutha Menon, as Chief Minister of Kerala - His Contribution to the Development of the State - A Historical Perspective’ is an attempt to shed light on the period in which the state witnessed an era of socio economic developments. Though the period was only of seven years it was full of events and their repercussions including the passing of bills which had vital implications in the life of agricultural labourers, establishing centres of excellence in science and technology, putting the private college managements under control by imposing strong rules and regulations on their rights of appointment and admissions, and facing the threats from Naxalite attacks.

A significant development during this period was the creation of alliance politics between the Communists and Indian National Congress which were poles apart in their approach in national and international issues. Their cooperation was based on a minimum common agenda useful for the state. They were joined by other parties like Muslim League and Revolutionary Socialist Party which were at logger heads on many issues. Nobody expected that such an heterogenous alliance could complete the
term of office. Not only that it did complete the term of five years it also
continued to exist for another period as well giving a long spell of seven
years.

The detailed investigations conducted to make a study of the period have proved beyond any doubt that it was the extraordinary statesmanship and diplomacy of the leader of the coalition, C Achutha Menon that was the main factor responsible for maintaining it in spite of differences of opinions between the parties and within the parties that reached the stage of breakdown during many occasions.

The study is based on the investigations conducted about the working of the coalition government based on the exhaustive examinations and of authoritative sources, primarily as well as secondary. A great deal of materials for the study have been collected from State Legislative Library, Thiruvananthapuram, State Archives, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala University Library, Achutha Menon Foundation Library and Libraries attached to the head quarters of CPI and CPI(M). The reports of various commissions and committees appointed by the governments for getting firsthand information regarding many administrative problems have been consulted. The personal files of people like Prof. Bahavuddin,
who was the principal of Regional Engineering College in 1975 was of great use.

The available literature on the subject is based on the general history of the political developments of the period. No in-depth study has been done evaluating the contributions of C. Achutha Menon as Chief Minister. ‘For an Indian Model’ a book edited by K.V Surendranath in homage to Achutha Menon, examines his personality at different angles. Tekkumbhagam Mohan has written a book in Malayalam based on the letters he received from Achutha Menon throwing some light on the critical developments which took place during his period. The diary written by Menon has been published but it does not cover the complete period under review. The main source of information was, of course the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly which give a clear picture of the Chief Minister at work.

The methodology adopted in the study is primarily analytical and descriptive. The information gathered from some of the friends and colleagues of Achutha Menon have been used to supplement the gaps where ever necessary.
It is with immense gratitude I remember the affection and support given to me by my guide Dr. T Jamal Mohammed at every stage of the progress of the thesis. Without his constant help and encouragement it would not have been possible for me to complete the work.

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I cannot but keep in mind the affection bestowed on me by my beloved wife Late Dr. Latheefa who had always been a great source of encouragement for me. My mother and two kids Bazith and Juhi have spared me to concentrate on my work at home.

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