Chapter IV

FORMATION OF EFFECTIVE LIBRARY ORGANISATIONS

In the history of the library movement in Kerala, the formation of Kerala Grandhalaya Sanghom (Kerala Library Association) and the establishment of Akhila Thiruvithamcore Grandhasala Sanghom (All Travancore Library Association) were remarkable events. In June 1943, a public library workers' meeting was held at Tellicherry where the library workers explored the feasibility of forming an all Kerala organization for a strong library movement. Following this, the Malabar Vayanasala Sanghom passed a resolution on 26 September 1943, to convert it into the Kerala Grandhalaya Sanghom. Accordingly, on 6 December 1943, Kerala Ghandhalaya Sanghom was formed which brought the public libraries of Kerala under its control, and it was registered under the Charitable Act of (Act XXI of 1860) Madras Government.

The total number of libraries affiliated to the Kerala Grandhalaya Sanghom on 31 December 1944 was 134 of which 108 were...

ordinary members while 14 were permanent members and 12 were founder members.\textsuperscript{3} The Sanghom established relations with other contemporary library organisations in India like Madras Library Association and Indian Grandhasala Association. It also took membership in these associations.\textsuperscript{4} Soon it was recognised by the local bodies of Malabar like Malabar District Board, Palghat and Cannanore Municipal Councils, and they took membership in the Sanghom.\textsuperscript{5}

In order to propagate the idea of library movement, the office bearers of the Sanghom conducted extensive tours in different parts of the State, and arranged many programmes like, public meetings, library workers' conference, writing of articles and publishing of books dealing with various aspects of the library movement and so forth. They also opened certain branches of the Sanghom in Chirakkal, Kottayam, Calicut and Valluvanadu, but this move was a failure owing to the non co-operation of the people. They also prepared a list of worthy books and sent it to all the libraries which helped them select proper books.\textsuperscript{6}

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{5} Government Memorandum No.44, 472-A (Edn.), 21 September 1944, (Trivandrum: Directorate of State archives, Kerala). \\
\textsuperscript{6} Kerala Grandhalaya Sanghom, No.2, p.1.
In the meantime, under the auspices of the Kerala Grandhalaya Sanghom, Sauhrdaya Samajam (Association for Friendship), a sister institution of the Sanghom, was formed at Calicut on 8 December 1943. Its main aims were encouraging the post-graduate studies in the subjects like literature, history, natural science, sociology, fine-arts and cultural developments. M.P. Sivadasa Menon (Chairman), M.K. Raj, T.P. Mathew (Secretaries) were the persons behind the setting up of this institution. They conducted many seminars and discussions under this institution. The birth days of eminent persons of Kerala like Thunchath Ezhuthachan and the centenary days of famous Malayalam writer Kerala Varma Valiya Koyithampuran were colourfully celebrated as a part of the programme. But this institution could not thrive owing to the lack of organisers. But attempts were often made to enliven this organisation, and to install similar institutions in other parts of the State, as centres of non-formal education for uneducated people, especially the downtrodden and illiterate.\(^7\)

In 1945, Kerala Grandhalaya Sanghom invited S.R. Ranganathan to visit the libraries of Kerala.\(^8\) Accordingly he visited many libraries of Malabar and Cochin and gave valuable instructions to the library workers regarding the organisation of library movement in the

\(^7\) Ibid., p.6.

\(^8\) Kerala Grandhalaya Sanghom, No.2, p.5.
State. His visit certainly inspired the library workers and it was considered as an important event in the history of library movement in Kerala.9

The libraries of Malabar were centres of political activity too. But very often this created problems to the smooth functioning of the libraries. It was the timely guidance of the Kerala Grandhalaya Sanghom that saved the libraries from disunity. The leaders of the Kerala Grandhalaya Sanghom were also leaders of National Movement. So when they were imprisoned for political reasons, the functioning of the Grandhalaya Sanghom, naturally, faced difficulties.10

It was proposed to have a central library at Calicut, through which all books published in Malayalam language and other important books published in different languages were made available to the affiliated libraries.11 But it was not materialised due to the inactivity of the Sanghom.

When the thirty fifth State Education Conference was held at Calicut in May 1945, the Sanghom organised a Grandhasala (Library) Exhibition which attracted a large number of people. This was the first of its kind ever conducted in Kerala.12

10. Ibid., p.6.
11. Ibid., pp.3-4
12. Ibid., p.6.
In Cochin, there was no central association, as in Malabar and Travancore, for the development of libraries. It was a part of Government department and so the policies and programmes of the libraries were directly conducted by the Cochin State Government. After the visit of S.R. Ranganathan in Cochin, in 1945, certain changes were effected in this field. A step for forming a Central Association for the libraries of Cochin was made by M.K. Raj who was an executive member of Kerala Grandhalaya Sangham. When the Kerala History Conference was convened at Trichur on 21 August 1945 an attempt was made by him for forming an association for the libraries of Cochin for their future development.

Accordingly an All Cochin Library Association was formed and the employees in the state were allowed to serve as the Committee members. But no grant was made available to this Association for its functioning. M.K. Raja was elected as the President of the Association. Some of the suggestions forwarded by them to the Cochin government for improving the existing public library set up were accepted. However, the venture in Cochin was a total failure.

16. Ibid.
In South Kerala, another library conference was convened at Ambalapuzha, (P.K. Memorial Library) which was considered to be the cultural centre of Travancore, on 16 September 1945, and it gave birth to a central organisation for the libraries of Travancore called Akhila Thiruvithamcore Grandhasala Sanghom. It was a milestone in the history of library movement in Kerala. It was that day that the representatives of 47 libraries of erstwhile Travancore State met at the initiative of P.N. Panicker, the secretary of the P.K. Memorial Library at Ambalapuzha, and resolved to form an All Travancore Library Association. Eminent library workers like Vettukattu G.N. Nair, V.N. Narayanakurup, P. Kunjan Kurup, Parthasarathi Iyengar and Vayanasala Kesava Pillai rendered all helps to P.N. Panicker in his attempts.

P.N. Panicker narrates the formation of the Sanghom as follows: "Eventhough Ambalapuzha was advanced in education, there was no library worthy of its name in the area. The Sahithya Panchanan Library, which had been started in honour of the High Court Judge, Sahithya Panchanan P.K. Narayana Pillai, could not survive even for six months. Meanwhile, I had to stay at Ambalapuzha as I was employed there as a teacher. I summoned a meeting of the people of the locality. Fortunately, a group, including K.K. Kunjan Pillai, a leading activist of the Travancore

19. Ibid., pp.3-4.
State Congress and others strongly supported me. According to their proposal, the Sahithya Panchanan Library was renamed P.K. Vilasam Library in 1937. It was functioning in a hired shed in the southern part of Srikrishna Temple, Ambalapuzha.\textsuperscript{20} The name of the library was again changed into P.K. Memorial Library when Sahithya Panchanan P.K. Narayana Pillai died in 1938.\textsuperscript{21} Then a double storeyed new building was constructed with the help of eminent personalities of Travancore. The new library building was inaugurated by K.G. Parameswaran Pillai, the owner of the \textit{Malayala Rajyam} daily, and the meeting was presided over by a famous advocate of Travancore, Malloor P.K. Govinda Pillai.\textsuperscript{22}

During this time, the Travancore State Congress was very powerful in Ambalapuzha and the Congress leaders like K.K. Kunju Pillai and others were very active workers of the P.K. Memorial Library. The Government became antagonistic to this library and transferred P.N. Panicker to a remote hilly area, Peerumedu. But later it was cancelled due to the instruction of some influential persons of Travancore State Service.\textsuperscript{23} The P.K. Memorial Library

\begin{itemize}
  \item P.N. Panicker, \textit{KANFED's, 13th Anniversary Souvenir}, (Mal.), (Trivandrum: Saksharatha Bhavan, 1990), p.11.
  \item P.N. Paniker, No.20, p.11.
\end{itemize}
took a keen interest in the literary and cultural activities, from the very beginning. It instituted an award for the best Malayalam writer in every year. Thus, M.R. Krishnan Warrier received the first award from the P.K. Memorial Library. Every year a big cultural meeting was held under the auspices of the P.K. Memorial Library at Ambalapuzha in which prominent writers of Malayalam literature participated. The smooth functioning of this library was made possible with the financial assistance rendered by the eminent persons of Travancore. In addition to this, a drama written by T.N. Gopinathan Nair, son of Sahithya Panchanan, was staged by the organisers of this library for the purpose of raising a fund. During that time A. Gopala Menon, the Director of Education of Travancore, paid a visit to the library. Even after this, no financial help or any other assistance was extended by the Government to this library.

According to P.N. Panicker, around this time he thought of the necessity of forming a library association to draw the attention of the Government on the problems of libraries. He held discussions with many people about it, and thus arrangements were made for a library conference at Ambalapuzha.

24. Ibid., pp.47-49.
26. Interview with P.N. Panicker on 9 July 1990 at Saksharatha Bhavan, Sasthamangalam, Trivandrum by the researcher.
By this period, it was decided to invite Dewan Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer for inaugurating a library conference at Ambalapuzha.\(^{27}\) Some of the activists of the Travancore State Congress were opposed to the invitation extended to C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, for the latter was known for his anti-state Congress posture. They made an attempt to raise black flag against him in order to register their protest. Ambalapuzha and surrounding areas like Punnappra and Vayalar were strong centres of the State Congress and Communist Party. The followers of both these parties were totally against him.\(^{28}\)

However, C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer inaugurated the library conference on 16 September 1945, with Director of Education of Travancore, A.N. Thampi, presiding and N. Narayana Kurup, M.L.C. (Member of Travancore Legislative Council) welcoming the gathering.\(^{29}\) In the inaugural speech the Dewan criticised the Catholic community of Kerala and the Communist Party; his two protagonists in politics.\(^{30}\) Of the libraries he said, he could do nothing during his ten years in


\(^{28}\) Interview with Chakrapani Warrier on 10 February 1990 at Ambalapuzha at his residence who is staying near to the P.K. Memorial Library and he participated the Ambalapuzha Library Conference in 1945.

\(^{29}\) Akhila Thiruvithamcore Grandhasala Sanghom Working Committee's note, (Mal.), No.18, pp.75-77.

\(^{30}\) Pirappancode Murali, "Keralathile Grandhasala Prasthanam". Granthalokam, (Trivandrum), (Mal.), Special issue, September 1990, p.58.
power mainly because nobody approached him with definite proposals. But he offered the maximum help from the part of the Government to the library movement.  

The Ambalapuzha Library Conference elected 14 members as office bearers of the Akhila Thiruvithamcore Grandhasala Sanghom and entrusted them with the task of preparing a constitution for the sanghom. The following resolutions were passed in the conference:

1. This meeting will show all kinds of piety and respect to the Travancore Maharaja and his Royal Family. (Resolution moved by the Chairman of the meeting.)

2. This conference proposed to form an All Kerala Travancore Library Association by including all libraries of Travancore


(Resolution moved by M.K. Kesavan, supported by T.A. Kasim Pillai.)

3. The libraries registered as members in this meeting by paying Rs.5/- each should be considered as members of the Sanghom. In future other libraries can join this Sanghom by paying membership fee. (Resolution moved by P.R. Sasthri seconded by P. Raghavan.)

4. A separate department as a part of the department of education may be formed for the unity and the efficient functioning of the libraries of the State. (Resolution moved by L. Vijayamma, seconded by K.C. Nair.)

5. To purchase books, periodicals and furniture, and to meet the establishment charges, the Government should give a grant of fifty percent of the total amount required, or an annual grant equal to that of the annual income of a library as in the case of Charitable Institution. (Resolution moved by P. Kunjan Kurup, Seconded by J. Muthayya).

6. Though the Government has agreed that all the Government publications would be made available free of cost to the libraries, the meeting invited the attention of the Government to the fact that things were not actually so, and requested the Government that steps might be taken to make available all the Government publications in the libraries. (Resolution moved by Ananthasivayya, seconded by D.C. Kizhakkemuri).
Besides, the meeting took the following decisions which were to be carried out in the following years.  

1. Enrole all the existing libraries and reading rooms.  
2. Revive the libraries which have become inactive or defunct.  
3. Help to start new libraries wherever is necessary.  
4. Enrole individual members in this association.  
5. Raise a working capital.  
6. Publish pamphlets and organise campaigns.  
7. Organise a preliminary survey of the libraries.  

The organisers of the Sanghom got encouragement and assistance from the Government. To convey the matters of the Sanghom to the Government, a Committee, consisting of N. Narayana Kurup, K.P. Kumara Pizharady (Editor of Chakravalam), B. Narayana Pillai (Editor of Dakshina Bharathi), N. Kesavan Pillai, P.N. Panicker and P. Madhavan Pillai was constituted. The delegation was received by the Dewan of Travancore on 6 August 1946. The Government carefully considered the proposals submitted by the Association for the betterment of the library movement, in the State. "In view of the usefulness of the movement, and of the good work done by the All Travancore Library Association, the Government  

35. Kerala Grandhasala Sanghom Rajatha Jubilee Souvenir, No.27, p.27.
considered that the Association deserved encouragement.\textsuperscript{36} The Government, placed at the disposal of the Association an initial grant of Rs.250/- per mensem for supporting a body of enthusiastic workers. Government further proposed to enhance the maximum annual grant payable to a library from Rs.200/- to 240/-. The actual amount to be paid to each library would be, decided on the basis of the continued usefulness of the institution as judged and certified by the Department of Public Instruction. "The Government wish to make it clear that it will be the duty of the Association to organise the library movement in the State on sound and up-to-date lines and to see that the libraries are well managed and properly equipped" (See Appendix-C).\textsuperscript{37}

In view of the above, All Travancore Library Association appointed four organisers for organising libraries in the State. They were (1) P.N. Panicker (Chief Organiser), (2) S.K. Swamy (in-charge of Southern division of the State), (3) P. Madhavan Pillai (Central division), and (4) W.O. George (Northern division).\textsuperscript{38} The Chief Organiser P.N. Panicker was a Primary School teacher who had been deputed from the Department of Education to the Grandhasala Sanghom. He continued to serve the Sanghom as General Secretary as well from

\textsuperscript{36.} Proceedings of the Government of His Highness, the Maharaja of Travancore, Order No.12 D.C.No.6065/45/Edn, 12 September 1945, (Trivandrum: Directorate of State Archives, Kerala).

\textsuperscript{37.} Ibid.

1945 to 1977, till it was taken over by the Government. Later, two lady organisers, namely, J. Thankam and L. Vijayamma were appointed by the Sanghom for inviting ladies also into this field.

A ten-point programme to be executed every month was chartered out for the organisers, and it was expected that they would act according to this programme. They were (1) at least four non-members of the Association shall be made members of the Association (2) At least a new library or a reading room shall be established. (3) A new taluk Union shall be formed, and the meeting of the union shall be held twice a month. (4) A survey regarding each village shall be held. (5) At least one adult education centre shall be opened. (6) To visit each Taluk library and send a progress report to the Association office. (7) In different taluks public meetings were to be held for the spread of the idea of library movement. (8) Each organiser shall jointly work with the Chief Organiser for seven days in a month, the latter has to conduct his chartered work independently for ten days. The remaining days of the month may be used by both parties for the purpose of organising libraries in different parts of the State. (9) As per the instruction of the All Travancore Library Association, Library Conferences and exhibitions shall be organised. (10) According to the instruction of the Central


41. Pirappancode Murali, No.30, pp.60-61.
Committee of the Association, the function of the affiliated libraries are to be improved.

In consequence of this planned programme and its meticulous implementation, a large number of libraries sprang up in various parts of the State. It was a healthy sign that people had come to recognise the usefulness of library and reading rooms, and had given unstinted support to library workers. Several local organisations and public spirited individuals had given lands and buildings to house libraries. Many libraries began to set up their own buildings. Further developments were registered through the selfless efforts of enthusiastic library workers. Necessary funds were partly raised from the public. Popular enthusiasm had indeed gained momentum during the last few decades and the Government had given grants-in-aid to libraries which deserved support. However, apart from giving grants occasionally, (which also had not been done in the case of some libraries), the Government did not seem to have paid any attention to matters connected with the functioning of the library so as to make it really useful to the people.

The expansion of popular education and the changed conditions of life in the State, at that time, had made libraries and reading rooms a basic social need. It was the recognition of this fact and

42. Report submitted by the Committee appointed to inspect the work done by the All Travancore Library Association, (Trivandrum: 1948), p.2. (Letter No.9003/111 of D.P.I. dated 21 Dec. 1947, a Committee under Sooranad Kunjan Pillai was constituted)

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.
appreciation of the manifold problems confronting libraries in relation to the public on the one hand, and the authorities, on the other, that had led to the establishment of All Travancore Library Association.

Just before the formation of Akhila Thiruvithamcore Grandhasala Sanghom, another organisation called Sahithya Pravartakha Sahakarana Sanghom [Co-operative society of men of letters (S.P.C.S.)] was formed by some of the men of letters of the State at Kottayam. It was actually the realisation of a long-cherished desire of the writers as well as readers of Kerala. It was registered as a co-operative society on 19 March 1945 and it opened its sale stall by the name of National Book Stall (N.B.S) at Kottayam on 15 June 1949. Through this book stall, the sale of important books written by famous Malayalam writers was carried out. The Malayalam literary men have got a rare opportunity for publishing their works through this co-operative society. Besides, they were properly rewarded. It was because of the formation of this society that most of the Malayalam writers now live with self-respect and proper means of subsistence. The libraries of Kerala purchased books published mainly by this Sanghom. The development of the


46. Ibid., p.9.

Sahitya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Sanghom and the financial gains of the literary men were mainly due to the development of library movement in the State. 48

Ambalappuzha P.K. Memorial Library was the Headquarters of the All Travancore Library Association for a year. 49 From these the organisers and the office bearers of the Association worked for the development of the libraries of the State. By their effort 320 new libraries were enrolled as affiliated libraries of the Sanghom. At that time 53 new libraries were established by the Sanghom while 140 defunct libraries were re-established. Moreover, twelve Adult Education Centres were opened by the Sanghom in its affiliated libraries and thus the relationship between the libraries and adult education programmes was revealed to the public. 50 Thus, the attempts of the Sanghom bore fruit.

Meanwhile attempts were made to re-open those libraries of Travancore which had once been functioning properly, but were closed

48. Speech delivered by D.C. Kizhakkemuri on 15 September 1990 in connection with 45 Kerala Grandhasala Sanghom State Conference held at Ernakulam, Mariya Complex. He was the founder member of the Sahitya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Sanghom and the Manager of National Book Stall from June, 1949 to 1965, and Secretary to Sahitya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Sanghom from 1 July 1965 to 1 January 1974.


50. Akhila Thiruvithamcore Grandhasala Sanghom, No.40.
down during 1940's for various reasons. The members of the Akhila Thiruvithamcore Grandhasala Sanghom led by P.N. Panicker probed into the reasons for their closure. Neyyur Dewan Nanu Pillai Library, Thuravur Narasimhavilasam Library, Padmanabhapuram Lalithavilasam Library, Eattumannur Shashtiapthipurthy Memorial Library were reopened in such a way. The Sanghom Library Association has helped many such libraries to increase their resources and improve the quality of their service.

On 27 May 1947 (13 Edavam 1122) the All Travancore Library Association was registered as per the Travancore Company Act as a Joint Stock Company, [Act IX of 1114 M.E (1938)] with the following objectives.

1. To function as the Central Organisation of all libraries of the State.
2. To work for the improvement of existing libraries

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52. Report submitted by the Committee appointed to inspect the work by the All Travancore Library Association, No.42, p.3.


3. To render all possible help for the promotion of adult education.

4. To prevent the neo-literate from relapsing into illiteracy and to provide facilities for the educated to read and acquire knowledge.

5. To work for the establishment of a library department in the State.

6. To conduct training courses for the library workers.

7. To start a central library in each Taluk.

On 3 and 4 February 1947, Second All Travancore Library Conference was held at Kottayam in which M.O. Thomas presided over the meeting. It was inaugurated by S.R. Ranganathan. A separate meeting for adult education was also held under Bishop Alexander Chulappara along with this meeting. Kottayam Municipal Chairman Palampadan P.T. Thomas was the Chairman of the reception committee formed for this meeting. In the meeting a library exhibition was also held and technical training was given to library workers. Special speeches by library scientists were also included in the meeting. 55

The Kottayam Conference marked a turning point in the history of the Association. It passed some resolutions and forwarded them to the Government for necessary actions. 56

The meeting extended special thanks to S.R. Ranganathan who prepared a library bill, and a scheme for the overall development of the libraries of the State. A Committee, consisting of M.O. Thomas (Madras University), Kodikal P. Balakrishnan Thampi, N. Narayana Kurup, D. Joseph and P.T. Thomas (President of A.T.G.S.), was formed for modifying the Library Bill prepared by S.R. Ranganathan to suit the existing conditions in the Travancore State and submit the same to the Travancore Government. 57

56. 1. The Government may enact a library legislation for the manifold scientific development of the library movement; 2. A library department may be organised for the development of libraries; 3. The amount sanctioned for the library movement was found to be insufficient when its importance was considered. So it may be increased; 4. When new buildings were to be constructed, books and furniture were purchased, the fifty percent of its expense may be met by the Government; 5. The land for the construction of new libraries may be purchased by the Government or the Government land may be given for that purpose; 6. Libraries should send their application for grant through the All Travancore Library Association and the Libraries recommended by it may be awarded atleast rupees twentyfive as grant. The rules regarding the library grant may be amended; 7. The Travancore Government Publications and the Travancore University publications may be freely sent to all libraries of the State.

57. Ibid., pp.71-78.
S.R. Ranganathan felt that in spite of official lukewarmness, the people of Kerala have been running many libraries, and they were eager about the library service and library legislation.\footnote{58} He writes: "it was 3 February 1947, I went to open the Travancore Library Conference at Kottayam. Then the Education Minister of Cochin invited me for a talk on the library development of Cochin. I presented to him a draft library bill and a memorandum setting forth a thirty years' development plan. He was keen to implement them. But his Dewan was not. The Dewan of Travancore, on the other hand, was keen. There was soon a change of Dewan. There was a consequential change in outlook. The Director wrote to me that there was no need for library legislation as we have many libraries already in our State."\footnote{59}

In this conference an important decision was taken on adult education programme.\footnote{60} A separate session was held for this purpose in the conference. It showed the interest of the Association for adult education, from the very beginning. In order to prepare strategies for the effective implementation of adult education programme, a Central Committee consisting of eminent educationalists of Travancore was formed. The Committee comprised of N. Gopala Pillai, P.C. Joseph, N. Narayana Kurup, Sooranad Kunjan Pillai, 


\footnotesize{59. Ibid.}

\footnotesize{60. Akhila Thiruvithamcore Grandhasala Sanghom, No.40, p.77.}
Kainikkara Kumara Pillai, P. Ulahannan Mappila, Mathew M. Kuzhiveli and N. Kesava Pillai. Another Sub Committee consisting of P.S. Abraham and K.M. Kesavan were formed to report on this matter within three months. The timely help rendered by these educationalists were always used by the All Travancore Library Association for the development of adult education programme through libraries. Besides, decisions on a few technical and functional matters were also taken in the conference.

In the conference a new fifteen members' Committee was elected as office bearers of the All Travancore Library Association in which P.T. Thomas and P.N. Panicker were elected as President and Secretary of the Association respectively.

The resolutions of the Kottayam conference were considered by the Travancore Government. But the Government felt that it was not necessary to have either a separate department for libraries, or an Act exclusively for it. The rules containing in the then Educational Code for the maintenance of libraries were adequate. The supervision

62. Ibid.
63. 1. A United Library Association may be established in every taluk; 2. to prepare a taluk-wise survey report of the libraries; 3. to open an adult education department along with libraries; 4. to make rules in the Travancore University for training library workers; 5. to publish a journal as the publication of the Sanghom; 6. to publish a library manual.
of libraries would be conducted by the education department in future. The government grant to libraries was raised. With regard to the distribution of grant to libraries the Government thought that the existing rule would be enough. The Government did not think it necessary to give grant for the purchase of books and other items used in the libraries. Maintenance grant was mainly meant for this purpose. Building grant was given still to those who deserved it. It was not exigent that land must be purchased on Ponnum panam for the libraries. It would be done on the basis of merit. In section 194(14) of the Education Code, the free cost publications list was attached. In every request of the libraries the recommendation of the Education Director would be considered by the Government. The Government did not think it relevant to publish the library development plan prepared by S.R. Ranganathan.

Politically C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, could not conform with the Travancore State Congress activities for the establishment of responsible government in the State. According to the founders of the Sanghom, he was very helpful to the library movement despite the fact that he was opposed to the Travancore State Congress, the pioneer political party championing the cause of self Government.

65. Ponnum Panam - Acquisition of a property for a public purpose by giving the highest price available in that area.


Following a threat to his life, on 9 August 1947 he resigned Dewanship and left the State. After his resignation P.G. Narayanan Unnithan was appointed as Officiating Dewan of Travancore.  

On 10 October 1947, a Committee consisting of P.T. Thomas, K.R. Elankathu, N. Augustalinga Pillai, N. Kesava Pillai, S. Parameswaran Pillai and P.N. Panicker visited Dewan P.G.N. Unnithan, and gave him a memorandum. It sought the approval of the Government for the Association. The major other issues raised in the memorandum were enhancement of grant to the Sanghom, recognition of the Sanghom as the spokesman of libraries, removal of conditions for sanctioning grant to libraries, bringing of all libraries under the administrative control of the Association and the starting of Library Science Course in the University of Kerala (See Appendix - D).  

It resulted in the setting up of a Committee consisting of Sooranad Kunjan Pillai, Mathew M. Kuzhiveli, Sivarama Subramoni Iyer by the Government. The Committee was intended to review the work done by the Association, and also to recommend feasible assistance and encouragement.

69. Grandhasala Sanghom Rajatha Jubilee Souvenir, No.27, pp.31-32.
70. Ibid.
The Committee reported as follows: "Our inspection of libraries has given abundant proof of the great goodwill and support that we can expect from all classes of people for the movement, and also of the benefits of an organised endeavour to make public libraries play an essential and important part in the social scheme. We came back with the conviction that the time has really come for a big leap to library expansion in the State." The Sanghom had made successful effort to unite all persons interested or engaged in library work in the State, and to demonstrate the benefit of team work based on an intelligent appreciation of the present needs and future possibilities.

The Committee strongly recommended the formulation of a planned library policy to be adopted by the Government in collaboration with non-official agencies, obviously meaning Akhila Thiruvithamcore Grandhasala Sanghom. It also recommended the doubling of the annual grant to the Sanghom, and authorising the Sanghom to inspect libraries, including the department libraries. All Thiruvithamcore Grandhasala Sanghom may be allowed to conduct training to the librarians.

72. Report submitted by the Committee appointed to inspect the work done by the All Travancore Library Association, No.42, p.1.
73. Ibid., pp.3-4.
74. Ibid., pp.8-10.
In 1946, the office of the Sanghom was shifted from Ambalapuzha to Trivandrum for activating its programme; Sree Chithira Tirunal Library at Vanchiyoor provided a temporary room for the Sanghom. Later on a room was rented out near the University College, Trivandrum for its functioning. After a prolonged discussion with the University Authorities, on 26 June 1948, a room was allowed to house the Sanghom Office in the Sanskrit College, Trivandrum. Thus it began to function from the capital city of the State and this enabled the Sanghom to catch the immediate attention of the Government and attract the elite section in the capital.

75. Grandhasala Sanghom Rajatha Jubilee Souvenir, No.27, p.32.