



*Prof. B S Bhargava Chair on Decentralized Governance & Development  
Centre for Rural Management (CRM), Kottayam, Kerala*



## *Post Covid Lecture Series National Online Lecture on*

### **“Elections to the Kerala Local Governments A Plea to Introduce the System of Proportional Representation”**

*by*

**Professor Jose George**

*Former Professor and Head  
Department of Civics and Politics  
University of Mumbai*

**Speaker**

**31 October 2020 at 6.15 p.m (IST)**



Professor Jose George is, currently, a practicing lawyer and Director of T S Padanakendram at Wayanad, Kerala. He is, formerly, Professor and Head, Department of Civics and Politics University of Mumbai. He has a chequered career in teaching and research spanning over more than 40 years. He holds his Ph.D. in Political Science from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi and M.A. and LL.B. from Jabalpur University, Madhya Pradesh. He started his academic career at St. Joseph's College, Devagiri, Kozhikode in 1981 as a Lecturer in Political Science. In 1982, he moved to Indian Institute for Regional Development Studies (IIRDS), Kottayam as Associate Professor. In 1987, he joined the faculty of Political

Science at University of Mumbai wherein he served in different capacities as Lecturer, Reader, Member of Syndicate, Senate, Board of Studies etc. till his retirement in 2016 as Professor. He has authored 11 books and 60 research papers in addition to presenting papers in 120 national and international conferences and completing six research projects. His prime areas of interest are Development Administration, Decentralized Administration and Politics, Agrarian Movements, Indian Government and Politics, Trade Union Movements, among others.

**Moderator :** Dr. T M Joseph, Hon.Professor, Prof.BS Bhargava Chair on Decentralized Governance and Development, CRM, Kottayam & Principal, Mount Carmel College, Karukadom, Kothamangalam, Kerala.

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*All are Welcome*

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*Please sign in at least 10 minutes before 6 .15 p.m (IST) on 31 October 2020*

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**Greetings from Dr. Jos Chathukulam, Director, CRM, Kottayam, Kerala**



## *Post Covid Lecture Series* *National Online Lecture on*

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Dr. B R Ambedkar in his last speech in the Constituent Assembly on 25 November 1949 warned that the political democracy we obtained cannot be sustained without ensuring Social and Economic democracy. The history of the functioning of seven decade long Indian democracy shows that even the limited political democracy we achieved through freedom struggle are frequently subjected to very many trials. India has adopted the FPTP (First Past The Post) electoral system where the candidate who gets more votes than all other candidates in a given territorial constituency is declared elected as member of the Lok Sabha, State Assemblies and Local Government Bodies. Our experiment with the FPTP system showed that none of the Prime Ministers at the Centre, most of the Chief Ministers at the states and Local Body Chiefs did not secure absolute majority of popular votes, that is more than 50 percent of the total polled votes, though many a time they might have managed to get a brute majority in their respective houses. Given this background, introducing a system of Proportional Representation, ideally the List System, in which voters give their votes to a Political Party who come out with a list of candidates in a specific order. After counting the entire votes the respective Election Commissioner can declare the list of selected candidates as per the proportion of votes the respective political party could muster in the given election. If there is any reluctance in introducing the List System at a stretch, it can be commenced with a Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system, in which 50 percent members are elected as per the List System and 50 percent members are elected through the territorial constituency-wise FPTP system. As Kerala has initiated very many experiments in electoral system, pioneered a stable coalition system of government in India, and being the most politicized electorate, probably in the world, it can at least be initiated in its Local Body elections. An amendment to the article 243 C (2) to the Indian constitution replacing the existing FPTP system with a List based Proportional Representation will serve the purpose. There may be some practical difficulty to introduce it in the scheduled December 2020 Local Body Elections. But If we succeed to build up a powerful popular campaign, it can become a reality in Kerala in the 2025 Local Body elections. This would definitely give a fillip to the genuine representative character to the elected bodies and prevent the leaders from turning autocratic on account of their brute majority in the respective house. This would also pave the way for political contest based on political ideology of parties rather than individual appeal.

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*Organized by*

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