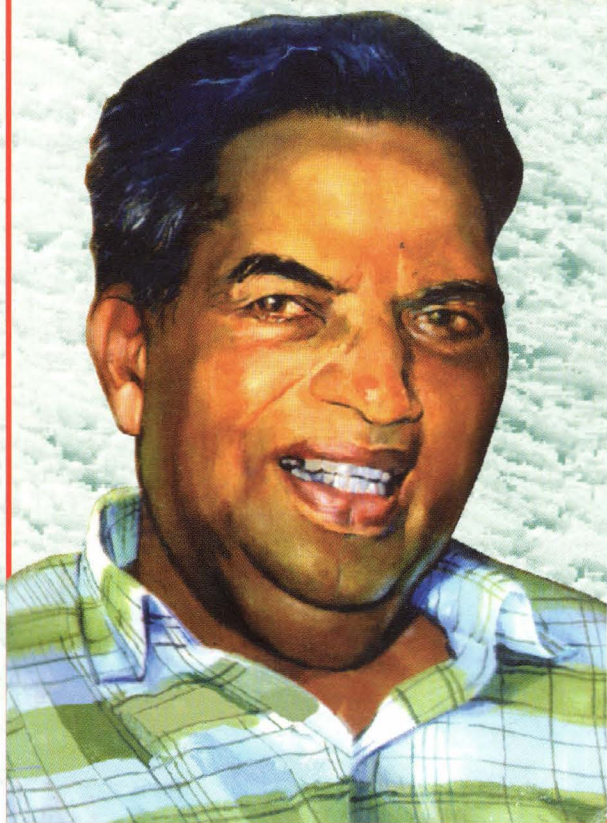


*Comrade
A. K. Gopalan*



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
DECEMBER 2004**

COMRADE A. K. GOPALAN

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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PREFACE

Comrade A.K. Gopalan was a distinguished freedom fighter and social reformer, a champion of human rights and dignity, a staunch nationalist and an outstanding parliamentarian, one of the founder leaders of the Communist Movement in the country and above all, a very humane and popular leader of the working class. He was a great social revolutionary who worked tirelessly for building a casteless and classless society and fought all through for the uplift of the downtrodden.

A grateful nation honours Comrade AKG, as he was popularly known, on 10 December 2004, when the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh will unveil his statue in the Parliament House. The initiative for installing the statue came from the General Purposes Committee of the Lok Sabha.

The statue of Comrade AKG, sculpted by the eminent sculptor, Shri Kunhimangalam Narayanan and made of bronze, is 9 feet in height and has been donated by the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

To mark the occasion, the Lok Sabha Secretariat is bringing out this publication which contains Comrade AKG's brief profile, his views on various aspects of our national life and some select photographs. An exhibition on the life and times of AKG is also being organised by the Parliamentary Museum and Archives of the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

We are grateful to the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, for his keen interest and valuable guidance in organizing the function.

We are also grateful to the *Deshabhimani* for giving us permission to reproduce some of the photographs which had appeared in the AKG Souvenir which they brought out in 2002.

This publication is a humble tribute to the memory of Comrade A.K. Gopalan. We hope it will be found useful and informative by all.

NEW DELHI
December, 2004

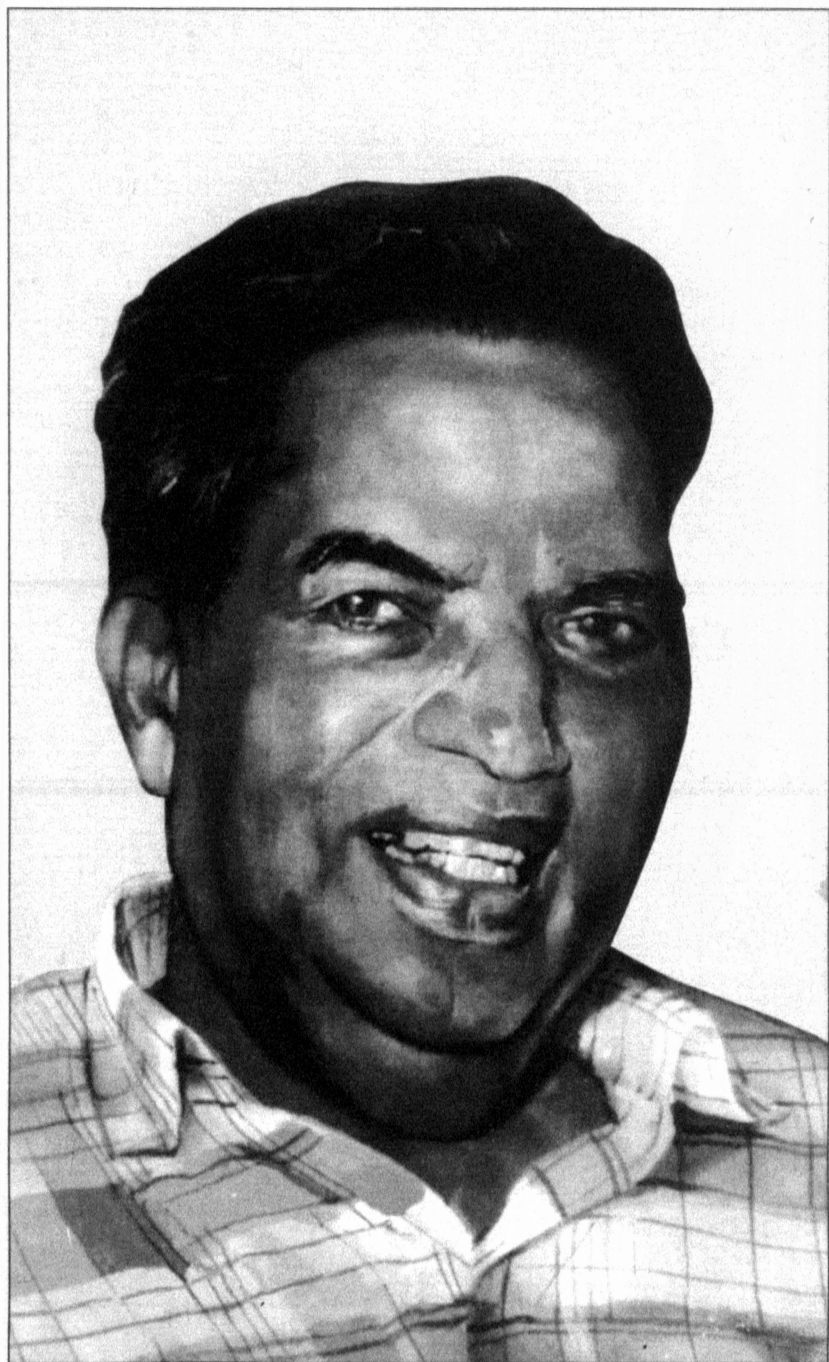
G.C. MALHOTRA
Secretary-General
Lok Sabha

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COMRADE A. K. GOPALAN

- A Profile -



Comrade A.K. Gopalan

One of the chief architects of the Communist Party and the Left and democratic movement in India, Comrade A.K. Gopalan was a multifaceted personality—a freedom fighter, a social reformer, a crusader for the cause of the workers and the down-trodden, an eminent parliamentarian, a forceful orator, a visionary and, above all, an embodiment of great human virtues and a man of the masses. He took to public life with a rare passion and zeal and was one of those outstanding leaders of the country who dedicated themselves to the uplift and betterment of the under-privileged. A committed revolutionary, he endeavoured all his life to save the suffering masses from various kinds of exploitation. Popularly known as 'AKG' to friends and followers, he was respected by millions of his countrymen, both admirers and adversaries alike.

Early Life

Comrade Ayillyath Kuttiari Gopalan was born on 1 October 1904 at Makheri village in Mavilai in the Chirakkal sub-district of North Malabar in Kerala. His father, Shri V.K. Rairu Nambiar, was one of the known and well respected social reformers of the time. His mother was a simple housewife. He was influenced by both his father and his brother; this influence prompted young Gopalan to take part in public affairs.

Gopalan attended the Mission High School and later, the Brennen College at Tellicherry. After completing his education, he taught for about seven years in various schools. He got married to Susheela Gopalan, herself a Communist leader, Member of Parliament, and Cabinet Minister in Kerala, on 10 September 1952. The Gopalans had one daughter, Laila.

Swadeshi Campaign

During those years when Gopalan was a teacher, the Indian political atmosphere was getting electrified under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. In fact, even as a student, Gopalan was involved in various public activities. During the late 1920s, he

was actively involved in spreading the message of *khadi* and in encouraging people to boycott foreign clothes and goods. During the holidays, he visited villages to promote *khadi* and *swadeshi*. He also took active part in the *Khilafat* Movement.

Endowed with a very analytical mind, AKG, as he came to be popularly known, was aware even in those days of the extent of suffering the people had to face because of foreign rule. He firmly believed that industrial growth in India was stunted because of the ruinous tariff policy of the British Government. He realized that India was only an estate for growing materials for the imperial interests and that this system plundered the entire country and a vast population. It was thus that young Gopalan advocated the boycott of foreign goods and adoption of *Swadeshi*. He felt that this could be a very potent weapon for securing political and economic objectives. He was of the view that the boycott of foreign goods and adoption of *Swadeshi* would to a large extent ameliorate the economic plight of the nation and its people. It would adversely affect the commerce of Britain with India, particularly that of foreign cloth which had captured a sizeable market in the country. It would give encouragement to the native industries as well. He emphasised the need to introduce *charkha* in middle class families. He arranged *khadi* spinning in the villages and *khadi* yarn was introduced in houses. To quote his words:

“I took interest from 1928 in *Khadi* propagation and boycott of foreign clothes. I used to visit villages on holidays for propagation of *Khadi* and ‘*Swadeshi*’ goods... I propagated *Charkha* in middle class families, spun yarn from *Khaddar* and sent it to headquarters.... It was clear to me that freedom was impossible without a struggle and I should keep myself ready for the struggle whenever it came. I knew, however, that this was no easy task. I felt that it would not be possible without rebelling against the circumstances in which I lived.”

The twin ideas of boycott and *Swadeshi* advocated by AKG brought into prominence the great value of passive resistance as a more effective weapon than petition making. It awakened the political consciousness of the people at large and gave a new and definite shape to the spirit of nationalism. The emotion involved

in *Swadeshi* and boycott aroused patriotism among the people in a great way. Gopalan's campaign for *Swadeshi* forced the foreign companies to open up a number of indigenous textile mills, soap and match factories, handloom and weaving factories, etc. This had an imprint on education as well. The Government had come down with a heavy hand on students and many Government institutions were closed. This resulted in the opening of a large number of local schools.

The nation was in a ferment in the year 1930. As AKG wrote in his autobiography:

"I was in the midst of a mighty revolutionary wind blowing throughout India. Youth leagues, workers' unions, revolutionary organisations, the activities of revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh, strikes—all these evoked sympathetic reverberations in my heart. There was a strong urge in me to break away from... only occasional public activities... (and) to dedicate all my time to the service of the country. An intense struggle began between my personal life and the tumultuous events around me. Such were the unsettling conflicts that disturbed me prior to 1930."

In 1930, Gopalan took a leading part in organising a reception for a *jatha* led by Shri K. Kelappan from Calicut (Kozhikode) to Payyannoor. Subsequently, he resigned from his teacher's job and went to Calicut to participate in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Gopalan was arrested and put in the Kannur Central Jail and later at the Vellore jail. Following the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, AKG was also released from jail. For about six months after that, he worked in the Wayanad areas organising the Congress party there. He mobilized people against untouchability and similar other social evils. He led a procession of the Scheduled Castes in Kandoth in Payyannoor through a road which was barred for them. AKG and his fellow processionists were attacked by those who were opposed to the march. He suffered serious injuries in the attack.

Temple Entry Satyagraha

Gopalan was opposed to the *varna* system; he was also highly critical of the caste system because he felt that it divided the

Indian society into thousands of groups making the task of national integration impossible. He believed that the system was not only undemocratic and unjust but positively oppressive to a large segment of the population of India. That being so, he pleaded for equal civic rights and equal freedom for the development of the individual without distinction of caste or religion. He advocated common participation in public demonstrations and public meetings during the national struggle as this would weaken caste distinctions. He worked for the spread of education among the backward people, opening the doors of schools and temples to them, for enabling them to use public wells and tanks and for removing social prejudices and distinctions from which they suffered.

Gopalan criticized those who assumed that as a result of the British capitalist system, the caste system had disappeared or was rendered weak. He emphasized that in reality the British had further strengthened this undemocratic social hierarchy. The imperialist interests demanded that the people must be kept divided so that they may not be able to pose a threat to the existence of the British rule.

Visualising well that the foundations of British imperialism were disunity, disunion, mutual distrust and feuds between the communities and castes, which the foreign rulers actively encouraged, AKG waged a struggle against untouchability and similar other social evils. On his initiative, the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee adopted a resolution on the Guruvayoor Temple Entry Satyagraha in 1931. Scheduled Castes of the surrounding areas were not allowed to walk on the public road entering the Guruvayoor temple and in the precincts of the presiding deity. Gopalan, along with a *jatha* including Scheduled Caste youths, took part in the struggle. He was the volunteer captain for the *jatha*. The Guruvayoor Satyagraha attracted attention all over India and soon, the echoes of the movement were heard everywhere. People began to take special interest in this movement. For leading this protest, Gopalan was arrested in January 1932 and was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment but the movement continued unabated. It had created an impetus for social change throughout the country which led to a sort of

transformation everywhere. The *jatha* had received such a wide and warm acceptance everywhere that it appeared it had been able to make a significant dent on untouchability. In his own words:

“The Harijan youths in the *jatha* attracted the attention of all. They were proud that they were not ‘grass growing under paddy seedlings’. As representatives of a section that had been trampled underfoot for centuries, they were glad and proud of the opportunity to take part in a hallowed struggle to usher in a beautiful new social order in place of a vicious and a stinking society. They were happy that they got an opportunity to show others that Harijans were not beasts of the forest.”

The movement gave birth to a large number of social workers from the backward classes and awakened a large section of caste Hindus to the inequity generated by so many traditional customs. After his release from jail, he returned to Guruvayoor. Later, he was involved in picketing in Travancore and was arrested. He was imprisoned at Kannur and Bellary jails. On his release, as an untiring champion of social equality, Gopalan remained a relentless fighter against every form of injustice. He fervently pleaded for social equality and preferential opportunity for the socially oppressed and weaker sections of the society to enable them to overcome their centuries old sufferings.

March from Kannur to Madras

In 1934, when the Congress Socialist Party was formed in Kerala, Gopalan became an active member of that Party. In the same year, he became Secretary of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee. He also undertook a tour of the Princely States of Cochin and Travancore for enrolling Congress members and using the occasion to popularize socialism.

Gopalan realized that the then Indian working class primarily consisted of pauperized peasants and ruined artisans who were left with no means of livelihood. In industries, in agriculture, in factories, in mines and almost every where, the workers were paid very low wages, worked under hazardous and insanitary conditions and were practically treated as serfs.

During the mid 1930's, many new worker's unions were coming up. Class war and class consciousness had taken root among the oppressed classes. A new class consciousness was manifesting itself among the peasants and the workers. With an understanding of the miserable plight of the working class, including artisans and peasants, AKG advocated socialisation and nationalisation of the means of production. He stood for securing better economic and social conditions, protection of liberties like freedom of speech, association and even strike for the working classes, participation in the national struggle from the point of view of the workers and abolition of privileges based on caste, creed, race, community and religion.

Simultaneously, AKG realized that the major problems of the time were poverty, hunger and unemployment. There was a general despair among the people. There was eagerness among the youth to build a new society. Various Committees were formed, including a Committee of the unemployed. Taking a serious note of the situation, in 1936, Gopalan along with his colleagues, decided to lead a hunger procession and unemployment *jatha* to the Tellicherry Divisional Officer. People cooperated with enthusiasm in this movement. Many public meetings were held on the way. The *jatha* received a warm and enthusiastic welcome everywhere and was joined by many people *en route*. The *jatha* finally reached Madras covering 966 kilometers on foot. It was a big success. For leading this *jatha* of the unemployed and the hungry youth from Kannur to Madras, AKG was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment.

Communist Party and Comrade AKG

A committed grassroot worker that he was, AKG was fully conscious of and sensitive to the societal and economic realities of the day. Soon, he started working among the agricultural and industrial labour—soap factory workers, fishermen, beedi workers, stone workers, municipal workers, etc. He also started engaging himself in organising these workers. In his own words:

“Until 1938, I worked among peasants and workers and participated in their struggles and was able to learn more and

more about them and their problems. I noted the pitiable conditions of peasants in the interior. I found that it was quite easy to instill class consciousness in the poor peasant who offered to the landlord whatever he had earned from the sweat on his brow. They do not know the meaning of freedom for they have suffered persecution for centuries together. When through united action they found mitigation of their misery they found a new self-respect and no longer cringed before their oppressors."

The year 1938 was very important in the history of the erstwhile Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. That year, AKG led the famous *Travancore jatha* against state oppression and demanding responsible government and was arrested at Alwaye in July 1938. Earlier, in April, he had taken over as the Manager of the *Prabhatham* weekly. After his release from jail for leading the *Travancore jatha*, he went on a trip to the then Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Singapore to collect funds for *Prabhatham*. On his return, he was again involved with the Socialist Group in the Congress Party. It was during these days that he started associating himself more with the Communist movement and its leaders and workers with greater involvement. At the Pinarayi meeting of the Congress Socialist Party in 1939, which was attended by AKG and Comrades P. Krishna Pillai and E.M.S. Namboodiripad, it was decided that the Socialist Party should work as a unit of the Communist Party. For this, it became necessary to work underground. Thus, AKG and several other leaders went underground.

In the years to follow, AKG's abiding faith in the Communist ideology and zeal earned him the reputation as one of the most outstanding leaders of the Communist movement in the country. He totally identified himself with the oppressed and the downtrodden and in his activities throughout his political career as a soldier of Communism, he believed that Communism is the best form of patriotism. For a few years, he worked among the peasants and workers outside Kerala, including in Kanpur and in Bengal where he worked in brick kiln for sometime.

AKG, who went underground in March 1940, was arrested a year later in March -1941. But he escaped from the prison in

September 1941 and remained underground for about four years. During this period, he worked continuously to organise people and make them aware of the societal realities. The post-War anti-imperialist upsurge led him again to jail and on the dawn of freedom on 15 August 1947, he was still behind the bars. But in October 1947, he was released from jail.

Gopalan vs. State of Madras Case

Comrade Gopalan was again arrested in December 1947 on charges of delivering provocative speeches. He was held under preventive custody under the Madras Maintenance of Public Order Act, a colonial piece of legislation so that he would not be released from state custody even if the trial court had acquitted him from the regular case. This happened in October 1949. In January 1950, India adopted its Constitution and also passed the first Preventive Detention Act, which the Government used to renew AKG's detention. He petitioned the Supreme Court for a writ of *habeas corpus* on the ground that the provisions of the Act contravened the fundamental right guaranteed by the Constitution. He also argued that the renewal of his preventive detention was *mala fide* since the Government could not construe a criminal intention on his part; and his continued detention was wrong as he had already been a prisoner for more than two years. Though the Supreme Court upheld the Act and renewed his detention, it turned out to be an important landmark in Indian constitutional history upholding the right to move the courts for securing fundamental rights. In his own words:

“....But the court ruled that the Act was constitutional. It was therefore held that my detention also was lawful. But the court declared that Clause 14 of the Act was illegal as it violated the constitutional right of the detenué to move the courts for invalidation of his detention. Their point was that it infringed the fundamental rights guaranteed by Clauses 22 and 33 of the Constitution. This judgment has helped a lot in safeguarding the fundamental rights of those detained under the Preventive Detention Act. Although that law suit failed to bring about my release, it was a great achievement in the sense that it raised an important constitutional issue

although the Supreme Court judgment was unfavourable to my case, I was not prepared to remain quiescent. I filed another writ in the Madras High Court. It was heard by Justice Satyanarayan Rao. I argued the case myself. Large crowds came to hear the argument. The court set me free on the last day of the hearing. I was re-arrested after release at the door of the court and escorted once more to Cuddalore Jail. I filed another writ petition which was heard two days after my re-arrest. The court released me again. The judges specially ordered the police not to touch me. The police did not dare to disregard this injunction. I had been imprisoned in December 1947 and released in 1951. Four years in Jail.”

In 1951, AKG was elected President of the All India Kisan Sabha. He participated in the Samyuktha Maharashtra and Maha Gujarat Movements in 1957 and was arrested in Gujarat. In 1958, he took part in the anti-betterment levy struggle of peasants in Punjab.

Alongwith Comrades P. Krishna Pillai, K. Damodaran, N.C. Shekhar and E.M.S. Namboodiripad, AKG sowed the seeds of the Communist Party in Kerala. He was also instrumental in spreading the roots of the Communist movement in the erstwhile Madras State. He became a member of the Communist Party's Central Secretariat in 1958. When the Communist Party split in 1964, AKG chose to be with the CPI (M). He made significant contributions to the building of a people's movement under the leadership of the CPI (M) and mass organisations of toiling people, especially of the peasantry and agricultural workers. Comrade Gopalan was one of the main leaders of CPI (M) at the national level and held various prominent positions in all the leading bodies of the party. Elected to the CPI (M) Central Committee and Politburo in 1964, he continued in these positions till his death.

Trade Union Leader

Comrade AKG was a great champion and defender of the weaker sections of society, particularly the poor and the *kisans*. He fought for their growth and uplift and demanded strict implementation of minimum wages for workers, regular

employment and legislation to improve their living and working conditions. He believed that without improving their lot, the goal of rural development was unachievable.

In northern Kerala, the beedi workers of Malabar region developed an activist and democratic consciousness in the course of the Freedom Movement. They were working in conditions of poverty and exploitation. They earned a pittance and faced all the insecurities of work. Comrade Gopalan associated himself with these workers, thereby raising their consciousness and political awareness.

AKG was active both in the trade union and kisan movements but identified himself more with the latter. He wrote once:

“It is this activity that keeps me in the touch with the masses and enables me to learn from their experiences. The plight of the agricultural poor and the landless especially concerns me. They are still bogged down in the most miserable poverty, superstition and social exploitation. But they are also the best fighting sections of our people and firm allies of the working class. It is to these two sections that my life in the last several decades has been dedicated.”

AKG was the President of the All India Kisan Sabha for over two decades till his death. He led the *karshaka jatha* (peasants march) from Kasaragode to Trivandrum in 1960. This *jatha* was protesting against the Centre's policy against the land reform measures enacted by the Communist Government in Kerala. In 1961, at Ayyappan Kovil, he fought against the forcible eviction of peasants. He was arrested in 1962 and was jailed for a while. In 1963, he undertook a fast for 12 days at Amaravathi in Idukki district for the rehabilitation of the evicted peasants.

AKG was arrested during 1965-66 and jailed. The year 1969 saw AKG once again fighting for land reforms. In 1970, AKG gave leadership to the struggle initiated by the poor peasants and agricultural workers of Kerala in which many died in police firing and attacks from anti-social elements. In 1972, he took part in the struggle demanding distribution of surplus land in Kerala and was arrested. He was once again arrested in 1975. His abiding

concern for the peasants continued till his last breath. As President of the All India Kisan Sabha, AKG attended the Kisan Sabha conferences in U.P. and Maharashtra and participated in various district and *taluk* conventions and their All India Kisan Sabha Conferences. He actively associated himself with the Kisan movements and their agitation in Punjab. He also visited various rural areas in Andhra Pradesh where the poor peasants and agricultural labourers were facing brutal attacks from the landlords and the police.

As a Parliamentarian

Comrade Gopalan was elected to the First and Second Lok Sabha from Kannur in 1952 and 1957 and remained a Lok Sabha member till his death in March 1977. He was the Leader of the largest Opposition Group in the Lok Sabha for a long time. He represented Kasaragode constituency in the Third and Fourth Lok Sabha. He was also a member of the Fifth Lok Sabha, representing the Palghat constituency. AKG was one of the longest serving members of the Lok Sabha of the time and was highly respected as an able, alert, extremely competent and indefatigable parliamentarian.

As a seasoned parliamentarian and a forceful speaker, AKG took keen interest in the proceedings of the House. He championed ardently the cause of the agriculturists, landless labourers, industrial workers, and the common man. All along, he fought for the welfare of the beedi and cigar workers of the country. As a member of Parliament, he played an important role in getting the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Bill, 1966 passed. Participating in the discussion on the Bill in the House, he observed:

“The beedi and cigar industries are among the worst sweated industries in India. Low wages, insecurity of employment, partial employment, employment of children, high incidence of T.B., absence of protective labour legislation, outdoor work and branch system all these demand introduction of an immediate legislation with a view to regulating the above industries on factory basis and securing the workers certain minimum conditions of work.”

Comrade Gopalan's speeches in the Lok Sabha revealed his high oratorical skill. He was an outstanding parliamentarian who always put questions in the House on the concerns of the people. He was a champion of the toiling masses and one of the greatest defenders of the downtrodden and the oppressed. He always fought for the democratic rights and liberties of the people. He had a very democratic and pragmatic approach to each and every issue discussed in the House—whether national or international. As a Leader of the Opposition, he always extended his constructive support to the Government. Speaking on the developments on the Indo-Pakistan border in the then East Bengal, he said in the Lok Sabha on 4 December 1971:

“By its large scale air raids and shelling on various sectors yesterday, the military junta of Pakistan has confronted this country with a full-fledged war. This has come because of the support India has given to the liberation struggle of the people of Bangladesh, and our party has always stated that in case of such a development, the nation will rally to defeat the military junta's aggression, because it is essential for the victory of the Bangladesh struggle, to defeat the game of imperialism in the sub-continent and to strengthen democracy not only in Bangladesh but also in West Pakistan... We confirm that we will be supporting wholeheartedly the struggle for Bangladesh...”

AKG was well versed in the Rules of Procedure and parliamentary practices and procedure. Very often, first timers in the House consulted him in matters relating to the Rules of Procedure in raising matters in the House. He was also a disciplined parliamentarian and used the parliamentary proceedings to raise important issues in the House. It goes to his credit that he was well respected by the Treasury benches and other party leaders and was heard with rapt attention by the House whenever he spoke.

Comrade Gopalan was a widely travelled person. In 1952, he attended the Pacific Ocean Peace Conference in China and the 19th Congress of the Russian Communist Party. He attended the Afro Asian Conference in Cairo in 1957 as an Indian Delegate.

He also attended the Conference of the International Trade Union of Agricultural Labour and Forestry Workers Union in Nicosia, Cyprus. Besides, he also visited the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Sri Lanka, Burma, Singapore, Malaysia, Egypt, Germany and the erstwhile USSR.

A Prolific Writer

AKG displayed journalistic abilities and writing skills right from his early days. As a student, he started literary societies and brought out students' magazines. He wrote extensively in Malayalam and English on many socio-economic and political issues. His writings are a testimony to his deep understanding about the various contemporary issues facing the society. His book *Kerala, Past and Present* published in 1959 by Lawrence and Wishart clearly reflects the academic mind of an activist and grassroot politician and had immense reference value in understanding Kerala. His other major work, *In the Cause of the People*, an autobiography, is the reflection of his deep understanding and analysis of various socio-economic and political issues of the society in which he lived and worked. Any student of Kerala history or the Left movement in India cannot ignore the writings of AKG in understanding the diverse issues. These have been translated into many languages. His other works include *Diary about visit to the Soviet Union, For Land, Around the World, Work in Parliament*, and *Collected Speeches*. He was closely associated with *Prabhatham* as its manager and with the *Deshabhimani*, the mouthpiece of the Left and progressive movement in Kerala.

AKG had a keen interest in games and sports, particularly in football and badminton. As a teacher, he organised the 'Patheri Kunjambu Memorial Tournament'. Though not a sportsman in the conventional sense, as a good player he had the distinction of getting some medals as well.

AKG's life was moulded by struggles against oppression and injustice. He was a mass leader unrivalled in his rapport with the people. Wherever the people had problems, wherever they were victims of repression, AKG would rush in to their aid.

His unassuming ways endeared him to all sections of society. For this reason, he was known as the commander in-chief of those fighting for the poorer sections. In the last years of his life, he worked for all the causes held dear by him, in close association with his wife Susheela Gopalan. The Emergency days saw him protesting against this measure. This outstanding leader of the masses, Comrade AKG passed away in Trivandrum on 22 March 1977. On 1 October 1990, the Government of India issued a commemorative postal stamp in memory of Comrade A.K. Gopalan to coincide with his 86th birth anniversary.

Tributes

AKG's death was mourned widely in the country. Obituary references were made in the Lok Sabha on his demise on 28 March 1977. The then Speaker of Lok Sabha, Shri N. Sanjiva Reddy said: "...A seasoned parliamentarian and forceful speaker, he took active interest in the proceedings of the House. He always championed the cause of the agriculturists, landless labourers and the common man.... In his death, the country has lost a great patriot..."

The then Prime Minister, Shri Morarji Desai, observed that in AKG's death, the country had lost "a great crusader in the cause of the poor." "Throughout his public life, he strove hard with rare dedication to secure to labour their legitimate right to a decent life." Paying tributes to the departed leader, Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan said that the news of AKG's death had come as a shock to him. "The nation had lost in Mr. Gopalan a fighter for the people and a champion of the downtrodden. To me, Mr. Gopalan was a personal friend and a valued colleague in the Congress Socialist Party. I deeply mourn his loss and send my heartfelt condolences to his family and his numerous friends and admirers", he added.

Appreciating AKG's qualities, Acharya J.B. Kripalani said: "It is sad that at this moment of the people's victory, such a front-rank freedom fighter as Mr. Gopalan should have passed away. Had he been alive, he would have been a source of great strength to those on whom rests the responsibility for re-establishing

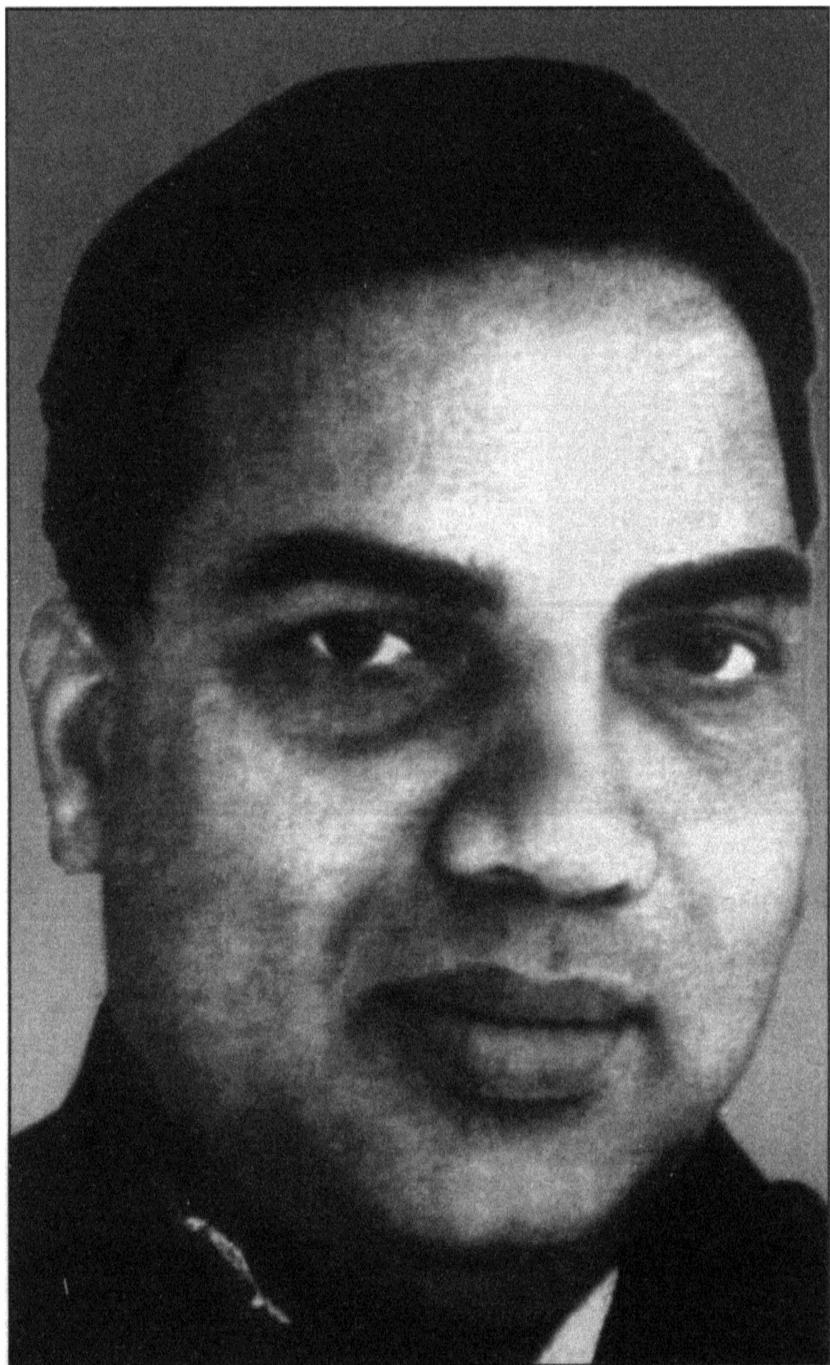
democracy in our country." Paying his tributes, Shri Jagjivan Ram said: "The country has lost a great freedom fighter in the death of Mr. Gopalan.... (He) played a very important role not only in Kerala but in the whole country in bringing about socio-economic changes."

Shri H.N. Bahuguna paid his tributes in the following words: "Mr. Gopalan lived a glorious life. His life is an example of dedication to the toiling masses and a continuous struggle against inequality and injustice. Health never stood in his way. He will always be remembered as one of the foremost and greatest friends of the working class." Paying tributes to AKG, Sheikh Abdullah said: "Mr. Gopalan was the embodiment of all that is noble in mind. In his death, we all have lost a best parliamentarian and a man of progressive outlook."

The Politburo of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), in a resolution said: "AKG... was among the leaders who worked tirelessly to recognise the Communist Party on the basis of Marxism-Leninism. The Politburo pledged to resolutely carry on the struggle in the cause of the working people to accomplish the tasks which he left unfulfilled." The Communist Party of India said: "Shri Gopalan dedicated his entire life to the ideals he held dear to his heart. He was respected by one and all for his forthrightness, sincerity and fearlessness."

COMRADE A.K. GOPALAN

- A Pictorial Profile -



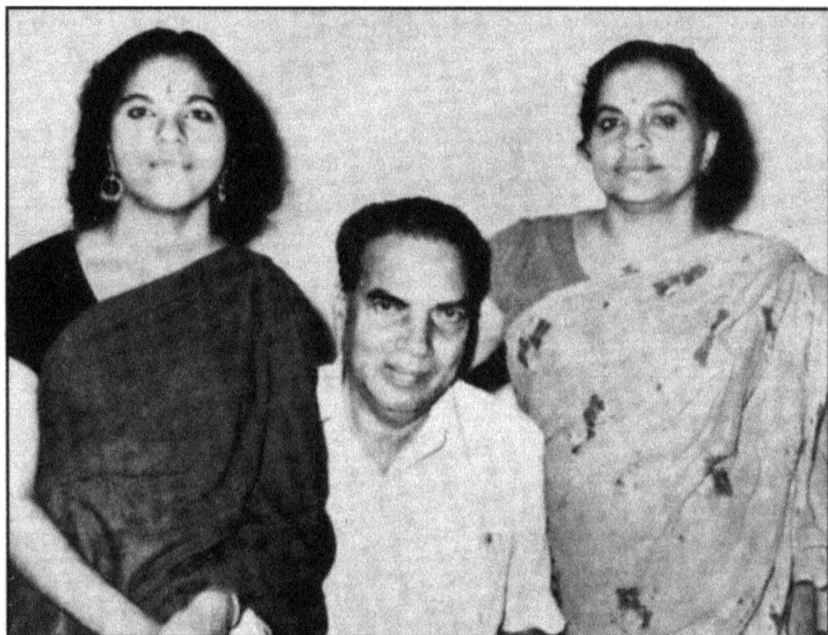
An early photograph of AKG



AKG's house at Peralasseri in Kerala



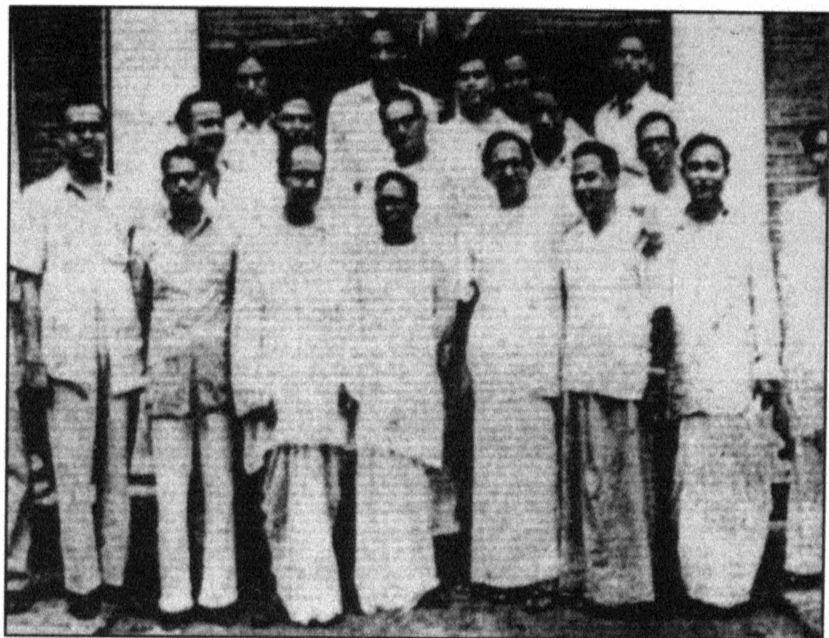
AKG with his mother and sister



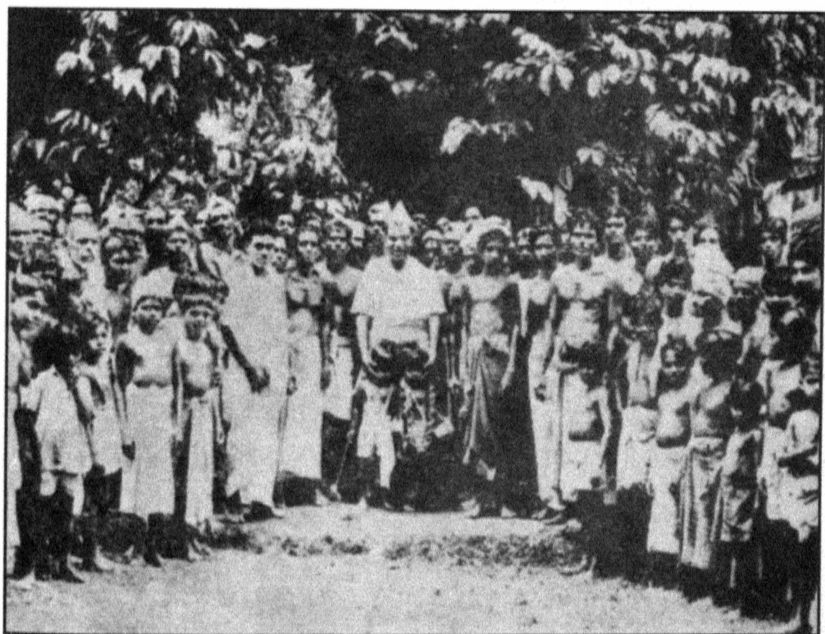
AKG with his wife Susheela and daughter Laila



Campaigning in the 1952 General Elections



AKG with the members of the Communist Group
in the First Lok Sabha



Leading the *Karshaka Jatha*—(Agricultural labourers' March)
from Kasaragode to Trivandrum



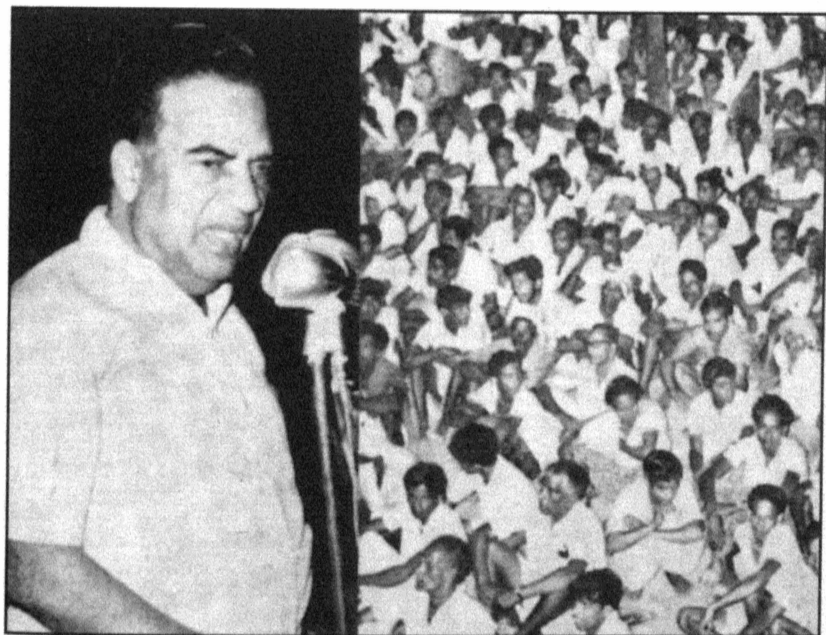
Leading a rally of agricultural labourers



AKG with agricultural labourers



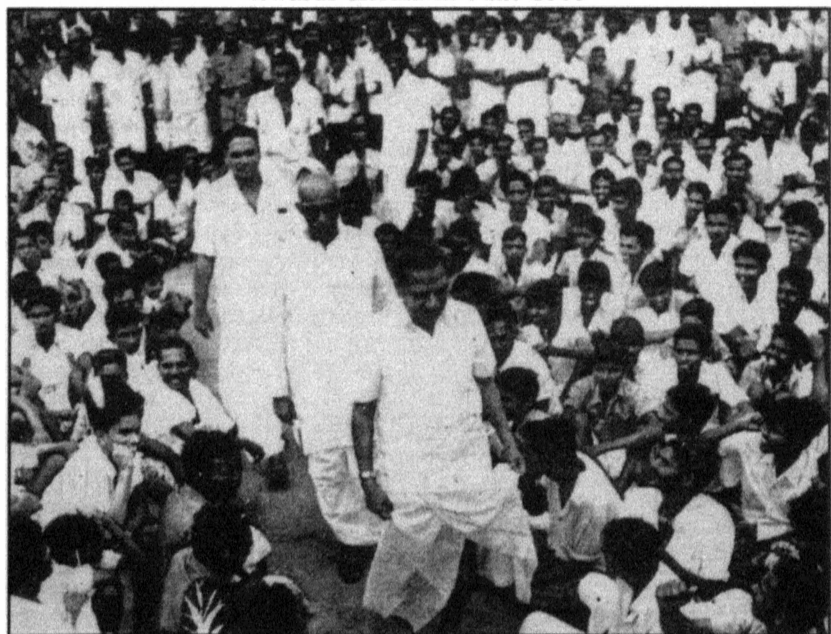
With party workers



Comrade AKG addressing a meeting



AKG on a *dharna* outside the Prime Minister's residence to protest against the food policy of the Central Government towards Kerala in June 1968



Coming to address party workers at a function



AKG at the Railway colony in Kollam, Kerala



AKG with Comrades E.M.S. Namboodiripad and P. Sundarayya



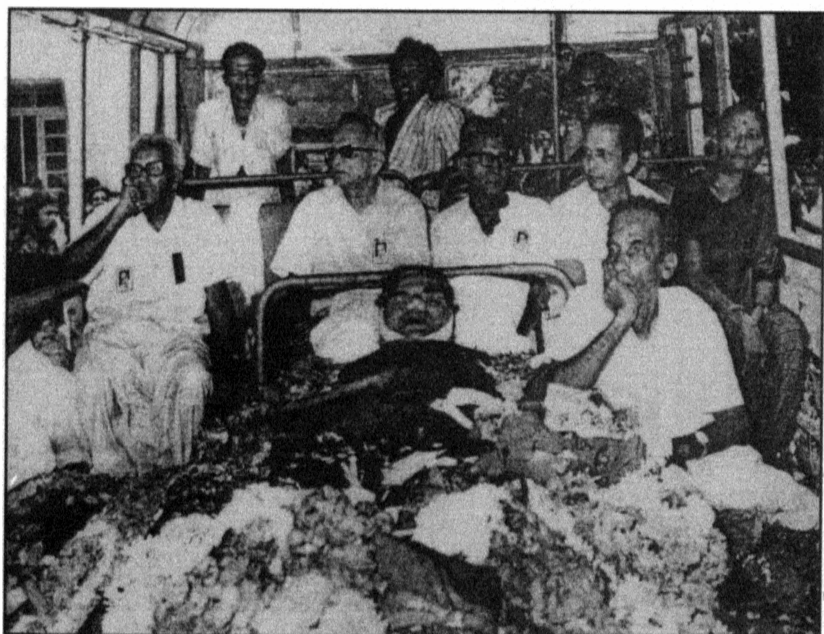
AKG with Comrades Harkishan Singh Surjeet and S.Y. Kolhatkar



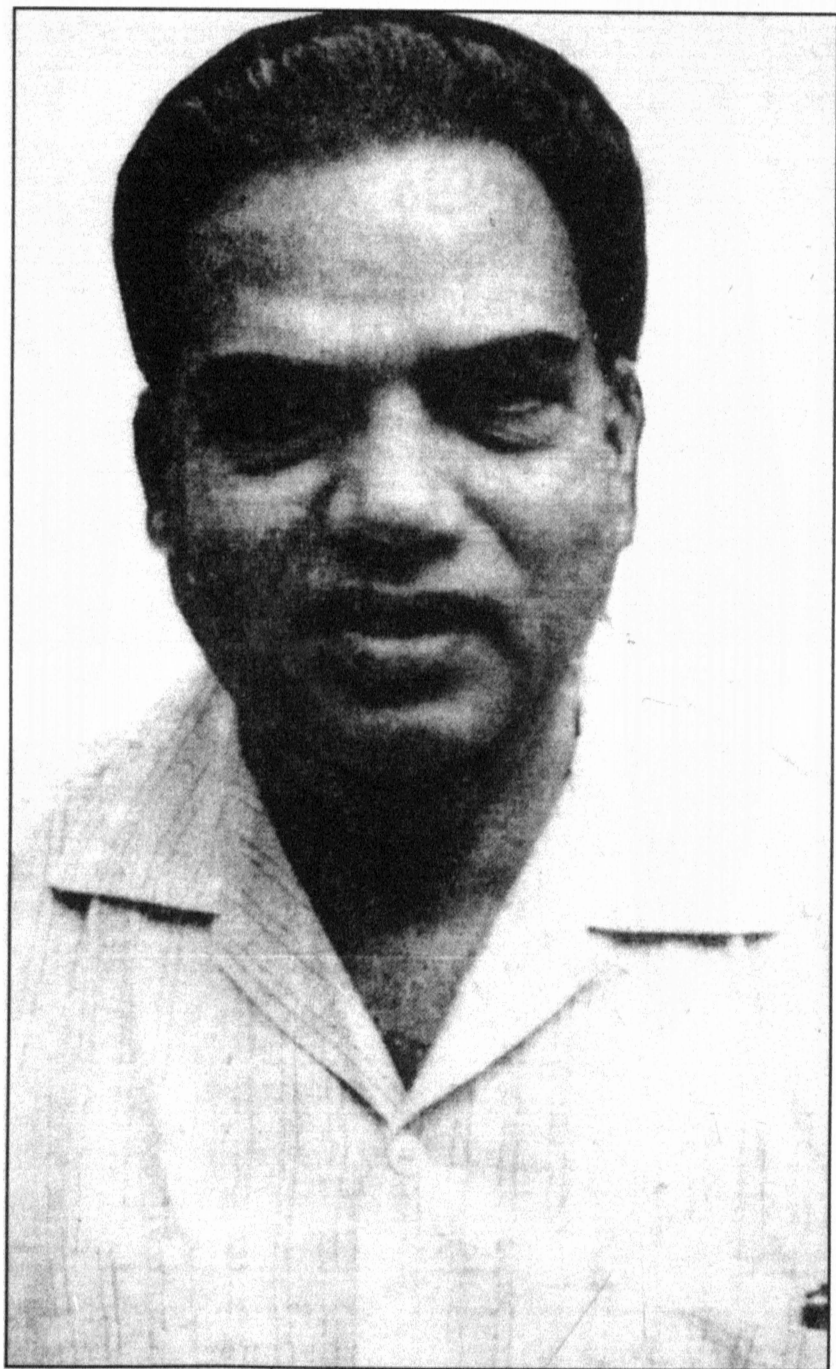
AKG with members of the State Secretariat of the
CPI (M) in Kerala in 1968



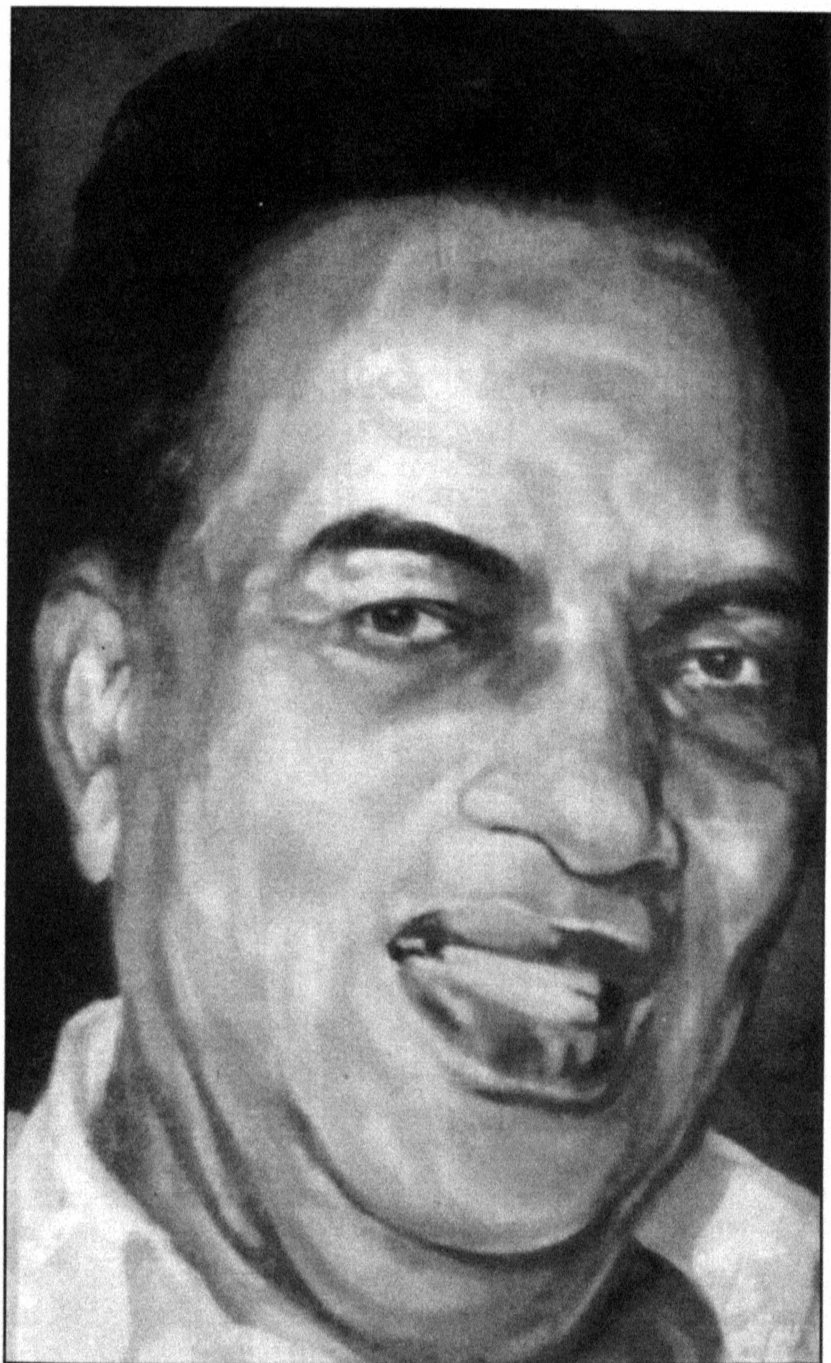
AKG with the legendary Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh



The funeral procession of A.K. Gopalan



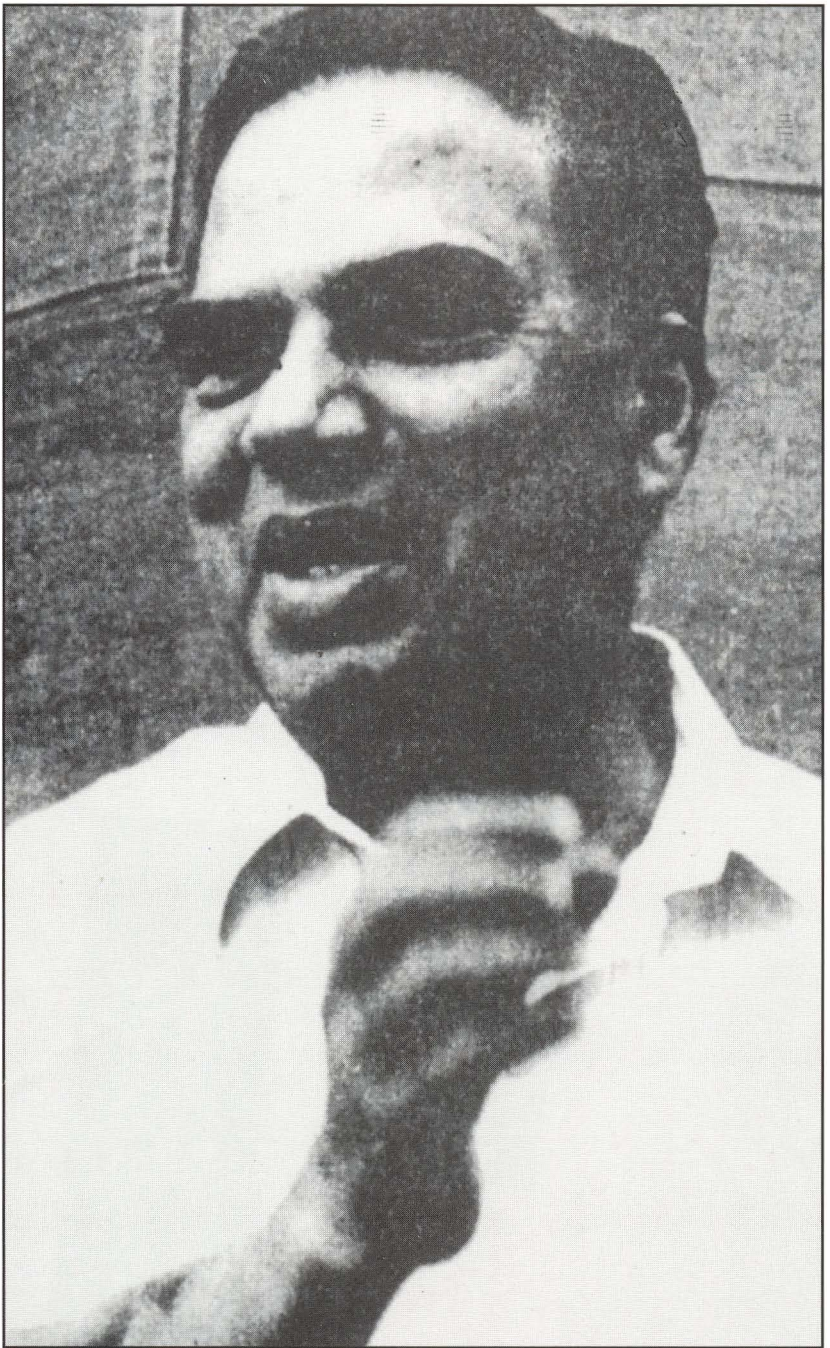
AKG



AKG



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