

P.N. Panicker

December 27, 2021

In news- Recently, the President of India unveiled a statue of the late P.N. Panicker at Poojappura in Thiruvananthapuram.

About P.N. Panicker-

- Puthuvayil Narayana Panicker was **born in a Nair family on 1909 March 1** to Govinda Pillai and Janaky Amma at Neelamperoor, Kerala.
- He is the **father of the Library and Literacy Movement in Kerala** and is an eminent personality.
- In 1926 he **started the Sanadanadharmam Library** as a teacher in his hometown.
- Panicker led the **formation of Thiruvithaamkoor Granthasala Sangham** (Travancore Library Association) in 1945 with 47 rural libraries.
- **The slogan of the organization was 'Read and Grow'.**
- Later on, with the formation of Kerala State in 1956, it became Kerala Granthasala Sangham (KGS).
- Libraries created by the movement of Panicker later became a nerve centre of all social and cultural activities of which the literary movement of Kerala is an impressive example.
- Grandhasala Sangham won the 'Krupsakaya Award' from UNESCO in 1975.
- After his organization was taken over by the State, Panicker became subject to political interference and in 1977 he responded by founding the Kerala Association for Non-formal Education and Development (KANFED).
- KANFED was instrumental in starting the Kerala State Literacy Mission, which led Kerala to its universal literacy movement.
- Thus, Kerala became the first state which achieved universal literacy.
- Panicker died on 19 June 1995, at age 86.
- The Government of Kerala acknowledged his contributions

and ordered that 19 June be observed, annually, as *Vaayanadinam* (READING DAY).

- **In 2017, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared June 19, Kerala's Reading Day, as National Reading Day in India.**