

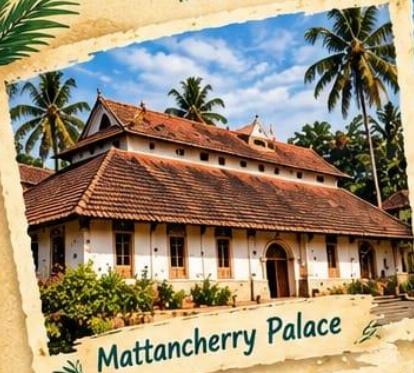


SREE KRISHNA COLLEGE GURUVAYOOR

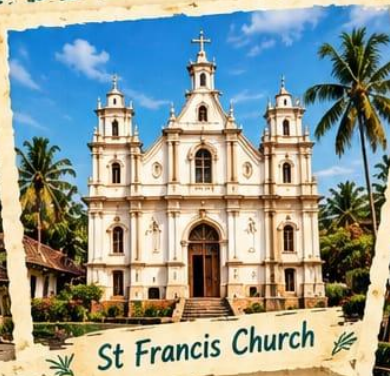
Department of History

Field Walk to MATTANCHERRY

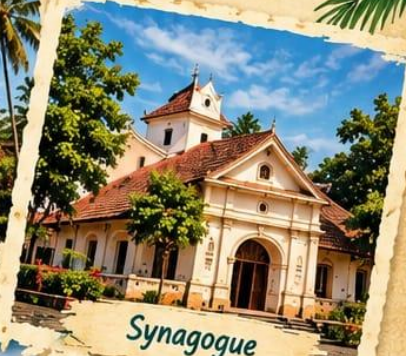
Explore
Learn
Create
Memories...



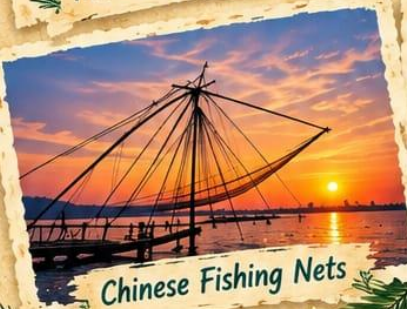
Mattancherry Palace



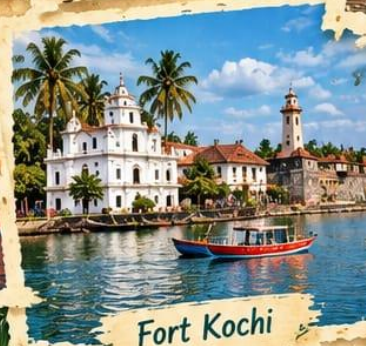
St Francis Church



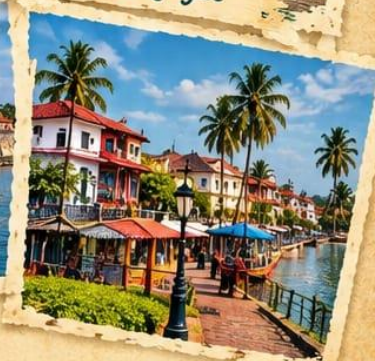
Synagogue



Chinese Fishing Nets



Fort Kochi



18 September 2026



A field visit to Mattancherry and Fort Kochi was organised for final-year students on 18 September 2026 as part of their academic learning experience. The visit aimed to familiarise students with the historical, cultural, architectural, and maritime heritage of Kerala. Mattancherry and Fort Kochi are important heritage destinations that reflect the influence of Portuguese, Dutch, British, Jewish, and other trading communities that contributed to the region's development. The visit provided students with an opportunity to explore historically significant monuments, understand traditional occupations, and appreciate the importance of preserving cultural heritage.

The main objective of the field visit was to connect classroom learning with practical experiences by studying important historical sites and their cultural significance. It also aimed to help students understand the influence of foreign traders and colonial powers on Kerala, appreciate the region's religious and cultural diversity, and develop awareness of heritage conservation and responsible tourism.

The first place visited was the Dutch Palace, also known as Mattancherry Palace. It was originally built by the Portuguese around 1555 and presented to the Raja of Kochi. The Dutch renovated the palace in the seventeenth century, which led to its popular name. The palace is famous for its traditional Kerala architectural style, wooden ceilings, courtyards, and beautiful murals depicting scenes from the Ramayana and Mahabharata. It also houses portraits and exhibits associated with the Cochin royal family. Historically, the palace represents the political and cultural relationships between local rulers and European powers. The visit helped students understand Kerala's royal history, traditional architecture, mural painting, and the importance of preserving historical monuments and artistic heritage.

The next destination was St. Francis Church at Fort Kochi, one of the oldest European-built churches in India. Originally constructed by the Portuguese around 1503, the church later came under Dutch and British control. It is historically associated with the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama, who died in Kochi in 1524 and was initially buried in the church before his remains were transferred to Portugal. The church reflects the successive periods of European colonial influence in Fort Kochi and provides evidence of early European contact with the Malabar Coast. The visit enabled students to understand the history of European exploration, colonial expansion, Christianity in India, and Kochi's role as an important centre of international trade.

The students also visited the Paradesi Synagogue in Mattancherry, popularly known as the Jewish Synagogue. Established in 1568 by the Paradesi Jewish community, it is an important landmark of Jewish heritage in Kerala. The synagogue is renowned for its hand-painted Chinese porcelain floor tiles, Belgian glass chandeliers, decorative interiors, and historic clock tower. It reflects the long-standing presence of Jewish communities in Kerala and their involvement in trade and cultural exchange. The synagogue also demonstrates the religious diversity and multicultural character of historic Kochi. The visit helped students learn about Jewish history in Kerala, appreciate the contributions of different communities to the region's development, and understand the importance of religious tolerance and cultural preservation.

Another important attraction visited was the Chinese Fishing Nets at Fort Kochi. These large shore-operated fishing structures are among the most recognisable landmarks of the region. They are traditionally associated with Chinese maritime contacts, although the exact date and circumstances of their introduction remain uncertain. The nets operate using wooden structures, ropes, counterweights, and large horizontal nets that are lowered into the water and raised to catch fish. They represent the maritime heritage of the Malabar Coast and the historical

connections between Kerala and overseas trading communities. The visit helped students understand traditional fishing techniques, coastal livelihoods, local technology, and the importance of marine resources. It also created awareness of sustainable fishing practices and the economic activities of coastal communities.

The field visit provided several educational benefits to the final-year students. It enabled them to relate theoretical knowledge to actual historical monuments and cultural landscapes. By observing the architecture, murals, religious structures, and traditional fishing nets, students gained a better understanding of Kerala's history and its connections with international trade and colonialism. The visit also encouraged critical thinking, observation, teamwork, communication, and active participation in learning. Furthermore, it helped students appreciate cultural diversity, respect different religious traditions, and recognise the importance of protecting historical monuments and traditional livelihoods for future generations.

Overall, the field visit to Mattancherry and Fort Kochi on 18 September 2026 was an informative and enriching educational experience. The Dutch Palace, St. Francis Church, Jewish Synagogue, and Chinese Fishing Nets each represented a different aspect of Kerala's historical, cultural, architectural, religious, and maritime heritage. The visit deepened students' understanding of the region's rich past and highlighted the importance of heritage conservation and sustainable traditional practices. It successfully complemented classroom learning and encouraged students to develop a greater appreciation of the historical and cultural significance of Mattancherry and Fort Kochi.