

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1704

ANSWERED ON THURSDAY, THE 03.08.2023

Change in name of Madras High Court

1704. SHRI C.VE. SHANMUGAM:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to change the name of Madras High Court;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government has received any proposal from the State Government of Tamil Nadu about the proposed change of name of Madras High Court;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the time by when a fresh Bill will be brought by Government to change the name of the Madras High Court; and
- (f) steps taken by Government in regard to change of name of other High Courts?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; AND MINISTER OF
STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE**

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)

(a) to (f): With the enactment of the city of Madras (Alteration of Name) Act, 1996, the city of Madras was renamed as Chennai, following which the Tamil Nadu Government sent a proposal for changing the name of Madras High Court as High Court of Chennai, in 1997. Since the names of the cities of Bombay and Calcutta were also changed as Mumbai and Kolkata, and the respective High Courts of States are located in these cities, it was considered appropriate to change names of these two High Courts as well. The Government brought a legislation titled “The High Courts (Alteration of Names) Bill, 2016” regarding changing the names of High Courts of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras as High Courts of Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai respectively, and the same was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 19th July, 2016.

Meanwhile the name of Orissa state was changed to Odisha and city of Gauhati as Guwahati. In view of above, it was decided to propose the change in name of High Courts of Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Orissa & Gauhati as Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Odisha & Guwahati, respectively.

To give effect to the above changes, consultations were carried out with the concerned State Governments and the High Courts. The Government of Tamil Nadu conveyed that the name of the Madras High Court be rechristened as “High Court of Tamil Nadu”. The Madras High Court, however, did not agree to the proposal to change the name of the High Court. The State Government of Maharashtra and Goa and Bombay High Court agreed to the proposal to change the name of Bombay High Court as Mumbai High Court. The Orissa High Court & State Government of Odisha as well as Gauhati High Court and State Government of Assam also conveyed no objection to the proposal to change the name of the respective High Courts. Both, the Calcutta High Court and the State Government of West Bengal, however, did not agree to the proposed change in name of Calcutta High Court.

The High Courts (Alteration of Names) Bill, 2016 could not be taken further and lapsed due to dissolution of the 16th Lok Sabha.

A Writ Petition (Civil) No. 401/2020 was filed by Shri V.P. Patil in the Supreme Court for renaming the Bombay High Court as High Court of Maharashtra and similarly changing names of other High Courts as per names of the State in which they are located. The Supreme Court vide its order dated 03.11.2022 has dismissed the said petition. At present there is no proposal to bring legislation on this subject.
