

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 600
ANSWERED ON 07.12.2023

Change of name of High Court in Tamil Nadu

600. SHRI C.Ve. SHANMUGAM:

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

- (a) whether Government has plans to change the names of some High Courts of States in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the State Government of Tamil Nadu has sent a proposal to change the name of its High Court to High Court of Tamil Nadu;
- (d) if so the details thereof and the action taken by the Government on this proposal; and
- (e) the time by which the Government is likely to bring forward such a Bill for passage for changing the name of High Court in the State?

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 (e): 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.
