

“Kerala” to “Keralam” - Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026

Parliament on Wednesday, 12 August 2026, **passed the Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026**, paving the way for the State to be renamed “**Keralam**.” The Union Government had introduced the Bill in the Lok Sabha on 10 August 2026, with **Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai** moving the legislation. The Bill seeks to give constitutional and legal recognition to the name “Keralam,” reflecting the State’s Malayalam linguistic and cultural identity. After this it will

Constitutional Basis for Renaming a State -

The procedure for changing the name of an existing State is governed primarily by **Article 3** of the **Constitution of India**. Article 3 empowers **Parliament to form new States and alter the area, boundaries or names of existing States**. A Bill for this purpose can be introduced in Parliament only on the **recommendation of the President**. Before recommending the Bill, the President may refer it to the concerned State Legislature for expressing its views. However, the views of the State Legislature are not binding on Parliament.

First Schedule of The Constitution -

The **First Schedule** of the Constitution contains the **names and territorial extent of the States and Union Territories**. Therefore, once Parliament approves a change in the name of a State, the corresponding entry in the First Schedule has to be altered. Such an alteration is made through the legislative procedure under Article 3, and it **does not require a constitutional amendment under Article 368**.

Parliamentary Procedure

Under **Article 3**, a State-renaming Bill cannot be introduced in Parliament without the President’s recommendation. The **President refers** the Bill to the **concerned State Legislature** to obtain its views within a specified period. After this consultation, the Bill proceeds through the normal parliamentary process. Importantly, Parliament is **not constitutionally bound to accept the views expressed by the State Legislature**. If passed by both Houses of Parliament and receiving the President’s assent, the change becomes legally effective on the date of officially notified by the Union Government through a Gazette notification.

Kerala Assembly Resolution -

The demand to rename Kerala as Keralam has been supported by the Kerala Legislative Assembly. The Assembly had earlier passed a resolution in August 2023 seeking the change. Following technical advice from the Union Government, the resolution was revised. Subsequently, the **Kerala**

Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a fresh resolution on 24 June 2024, requesting the Union Government to change the State's name from Kerala to Keralam.

Why “Keralam”?

The proposed name “**Keralam**” reflects the name commonly used in **Malayalam**, the principal language of Kerala. The term is traditionally associated with the State's cultural and linguistic identity. It is also popularly explained as deriving from “**Kera**” (**coconut tree**) and “**alam**” (**land**), giving the expression the meaning “**land of coconuts.**” The proposed change is therefore presented as an effort to align the official constitutional name with the State's indigenous linguistic usage.

Renaming and Reorganisation of States and Union Territories -

Over the years, several States and Union Territories in India have undergone changes in their names, status, or territorial structure due to linguistic, cultural, administrative and political considerations. Examples include **Orissa**, which was renamed **Odisha in 2011**; **Uttaranchal**, renamed **Uttarakhand in 2007**. Similarly, **Pondicherry** was renamed **Puducherry in 2006**, while **Union Territory of Delhi** was renamed as the **National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCT of Delhi) in 1991**.

On 25 January 2020, the **Union Territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu** were merged into a **single Union Territory** named **Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu**.

There have also been proposals that were not approved; for example, the former Chief Minister Mamta Banerjee proposed to rename **West Bengal** as “**Bangla**” was not accepted.