

1. Kerala As Keralam- Polity

Union Cabinet approves proposal to rename Kerala as 'Keralam'. The Union Cabinet's approval to rename Kerala as "Keralam" initiates a significant constitutional procedure aimed at aligning the State's official name with its linguistic and cultural identity. This move follows a unanimous resolution by the State Assembly and invokes the specific powers of Parliament under the Constitution of India.

1. Constitutional Provisions for Renaming

The process is governed by Articles 3 and 4 of the Constitution, which provide Parliament with the authority to alter state identities without the rigorous requirements of a typical constitutional amendment under Article 368.

Article	Provisions & Impact
Article 3	Empowers Parliament to form new States, increase/diminish areas, and alter the boundaries or names of existing States.
Article 4	Specifies that laws made under Article 3 are not deemed to be amendments under Article 368, meaning they can be passed by a simple majority.
The Bill Process	The President must refer the Bill to the concerned State Legislature for its "views" within a specified period, though Parliament is not bound by those views.

2. Procedure for Renaming a State

Renaming a State is a complex federal process involving multiple layers of government and security clearances-

Initiation- The proposal typically originates from the State Government (in this case, via a unanimous resolution passed on June 24, 2024).

MHA Examination- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) scrutinizes the request.

NOC Requirements- No Objection Certificates (NOCs) must be obtained from several agencies to ensure operational continuity-

1. Ministry of Railways and Department of Posts (for station/postal codes).
2. Survey of India (for mapping).
3. Intelligence Bureau and Registrar General of India.

Parliamentary Approval- Once cleared, a Bill is introduced. After passing both Houses and receiving Presidential assent, the First and Fourth Schedules of the Constitution are updated.

3. Rationale Behind Renaming in India

Linguistic and Cultural Identity- Aligning nomenclature with the native language. "Keralam" is the Malayalam name for the state, emphasizing the Linguistic Reorganisation principle of 1956.

Correction of Colonial Legacy- Many changes aim to rectify phonetic or spelling distortions introduced during British rule (e.g., Orissa to Odisha in 2011).

Commemoration- Honoring national icons (e.g., Mughalsarai to Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction).

Administrative Realities- Reflecting new urban planning or functional differentiation (e.g., the creation of Navi Mumbai).

Symbolic Reframing- Reshaping public memory to reflect specific historical or cultural narratives (e.g., Faizabad to Ayodhya).

4. Guidelines for Renaming (1953 Framework)

The Central Government follows specific guidelines to prevent administrative chaos or social friction-

No Radical Alteration- Changes should ideally be phonetic corrections or transliterations.

Non-Communal- Renaming should not be based on sectarian or communal considerations.

Service Clarity- Must not create confusion for essential services like the Railways or Postal Department.

Inter-State Harmony- The change should not adversely affect the interests of neighboring States or Union Territories.

5. Challenges and Implications

Challenge	Detail
Documentation Burden	Requires updating millions of official records, educational certificates, property deeds, and government databases.
Global Brand Confusion	Established names (e.g., Bombay) often persist in global finance (BSE) despite domestic changes to Mumbai.
Economic Costs	Huge expenditure on updating maps, signage, stationery, and digital infrastructure.
Social Polarization	Renaming can trigger debates over historical legacy, potentially leading to political or cultural friction.

6. Historical Context and Previous Examples

Kerala Piravi– Celebrated on November 1, marking the 1956 formation of the state on a linguistic basis.

Historical Transitions–

1. Madras State to Tamil Nadu (1969)– To reflect Tamil identity.
2. Mysore State to Karnataka (1973)– To represent the broader Kannada-speaking region.
3. Uttaranchal to Uttarakhand (2007)– To align with cultural and historical preferences.

7. Judicial Perspective

In 2023, the Supreme Court dismissed a PIL seeking a "Renaming Commission" to restore ancient names.

The Court observed–

The country "cannot remain a prisoner of the past."

Selective invocation of history is detrimental to national unity and secularism.

Governance should focus on the future rather than re-litigating historical grievances through nomenclature.

Source– <https://ddnews.gov.in/en/union-cabinet-approves-proposal-to-rename-kerala-as-keralam/>