

'HC appointments an ongoing process'

45 of the 80 names recommended by collegium appointed, says Law Minister

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The Supreme Court Collegium, in the past one year, has recommended 80 names to be appointed judges of various High Courts, out of which 45 were appointed as judges and the remaining are under various stages of processing, the Law Ministry informed the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

Law Minister Kiren Rijiju, in a written reply, said between July 1, 2020 and July 15, 2021, the collegium made 80 recommendations for appointment of judges.

He said while 45 "recommendees" had been appointed to various High Court judges, the "remaining proposals were under various stages of processing with the



Kiren Rijiju

government and the SC Collegium".

Filling of vacancies

The Minister pointed out that filling of vacancies in the higher judiciary was a continuous, integrated and collaborative process between the Executive and the Judici-

ary, requiring consultation and approval from Constitutional authorities at the State as well as Central levels.

"Hence, the time needed for filling up of vacancies of the judges in the higher judiciary cannot be indicated. While every effort is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies of judges in High Courts do keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of judges and also due to increase in the strength of judges," Mr. Rijiju said.

The total sanctioned strength of judges across the 25 High Courts is 1,098 but the working strength was only 645, a shortfall of 453 judges.

According to a chart

shared by the Law Ministry along with Mr. Rijiju's written reply, of the 10 recommendations made by the collegium for the Madras High Court in the past one year, all were notified by the government.

Eight names

On the other hand, eight names were recommended by the collegium for the Calcutta High Court but no appointment was notified in that one-year period.

For the Allahabad High Court, the collegium recommended 11 names out of which seven appointments were notified.

In Delhi High Court too, of the six recommendations, so far only two appointments have been notified.