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Title: Regarding sex-based discrimination in Sports .

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Madam Speaker, I have been trying to raise this matter since last one week, but I thank you for allowing me to express my appreciation for what this Government has done for Dutee Chand. Though the Sports Minister is not here, I personally would have liked to congratulate him.

The Athletics Federation of India had disqualified Dutee Chand, a rising star in the track and field world, last year due to violation of hyperandrogenism policy of the International Association of Athletics Federations. This policy debarred female sportspersons from competing in women's category if the naturally produced testosterone, the primary male hormone, was found beyond permissible or acceptable limit in them. Who could have imagined in the past, during last ten years and even in today's world, an Indian woman athlete - who comes from a very humble background of a village and had tried to run on the sands of the riverbank - taking it to the International Association of Athletics Federations and challenging this decision? This could only happen because the Government of India's Sports Ministry stood by her side. The dispute was raised in the Court of Arbitration for Sports in Lausanne, Switzerland. There, normally disputes are raised relating to commercial or disciplinary nature, but the case of Dutee Chand was extraordinary. It questioned a controversial regulation pertaining to hyperandrogenism which prevented her from competing. The CAS has given an interim award.

Earlier, athletes, especially the women, with hyperandrogenism were asked to undergo corrective surgery which she was also asked to undergo - a hormone treatment. Both have medical and psychological consequences. This is what Dutee Chand refused to do. This matter was raised in our State Assembly. I also had the opportunity to raise it, after your permission, in this House. So, we drew the attention of the Government and the Sports Minister had assured in the House. Subsequently, he told me that the Government would take it up at the highest level.

Actually, the Sports Minister, Government of India himself came to her rescue. The Government also fought the case on her behalf. An army of gender studies researchers and lawyers from several corners of the world also stood by her side. Now, the question here is that the recent judgement of Apex Court of Arbitration of Sport, which suspended the said policy of IAAF for two years, has highlighted and opened the issue of sex-based discrimination for debate. How will the Government monitor the dividing line between male and female competitors giving due respect to the said judgement on sex-based discrimination? This is an issue, and I hope that the Government will come out with adequate precautions so that this type of discrimination does not happen in future.

SHRIMATI V. SATHYABAMA (TIRUPPUR): Thank you, Madam Speaker, and with your permission, I speak from this place.

HON. SPEAKER: Okay.