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Title: Regarding reservation in sports bodies in India.

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR (ARAMBAG): Thank you hon. Speaker Madam for allowing me to speak on this important issue during 'zero hour'.

Sports occupy a prominent place in the life of a nation as it keeps one healthy and fit. Sport shapes the character of a person significantly, brings out leadership skills and creates job opportunities. Sport is a field where only talent has to be considered not caste.

Recently, BCCI has announced reservation in Indian cricket. This system is followed in various countries like South Africa which has given a new hope for them in sports. In the recent T-20 Cricket World Cup, West Indies won both Men and Women World Cups.

Article 38(1) and (2) of the Constitution provides introduction of reservation in sports bodies. Out of 15-man squad, BCCI has proposed that 7 players will be from the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes or OBCs.

The Sports Minister should come with a proposal to give importance to SCs and STs in sports in our country. It is sad that many talented youths are denied opportunities due to casteism. My Parliamentary Constituency Arambag needs grants for providing better infrastructure facilities like training camps, sport kits to encourage SC, ST. It will pave the way for them to get themselves involved in sports activities as they do not get any exposure.

Madam, we have to give credit to West Bengal for producing various eminent sports personalities like Sourav Ganguly, Leander Paes, etc.