

Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize 2020: An iconic beginning of the decade

Every year, September is the official month of the announcement of the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar (SSB) Prize for Science and Technology, the most prestigious award of the country instituted by

the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Government of India in recognition of scientific advances¹. Between 1958 and 2020, the SSB Prize has been awarded to 574 scientists in seven discip-

lines. According to the statute, the Advisory Committees for each year's award recommend one or maximum two names. The Prize in a specific discipline can be withheld if no sufficiently meritorious nomination is found suitable¹.

This year, with two awardees in each discipline, 14 scientists have been recommended for the SSB Prize². Table 1 lists the award recipients in successive years till 2020. The year 2010, the beginning of previous decade witnessed resurgence of women scientists with three in the SSB Prize list³. This year also three of the 14 SSB prize-winners are women researchers. Since the inception of the Prize, one each in physical and earth, atmosphere, ocean and planetary sciences; two in engineering; three in mathematics; four each in biological and chemical sciences and six in medical sciences are women recipients (Figure 1). Such young women researchers are role models for the further generation.

Table 1. Recipients of the SSB Prize in successive years (1958–2020)

SSB awardee(s)	Year
14 in the year	2020
13 each in the year(s)	2003, 2006 and 2018
12 each in the year(s)	1976, 1983, 1984, 1991, 1993, 1998, 2002 and 2019
11 each in the year(s)	1972, 1992, 1994, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2015 and 2016
10 each in the year(s)	1978, 1980, 1982, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2008, 2014 and 2017
9 each in the year(s)	1975, 1981, 1985, 1987, 1997, 1999 and 2010
8 each in the year(s)	1965, 1966, 1979 and 2013
7 each in the year(s)	1971 and 1974
6 each in the year(s)	1963, 1967, 1968, 1973 and 1977
5 –	–
4 each in the year(s)	1960, 1961, 1962, 1964 and 1969
3 in the year	1970
2 in the year	1959
1 in the year	1958

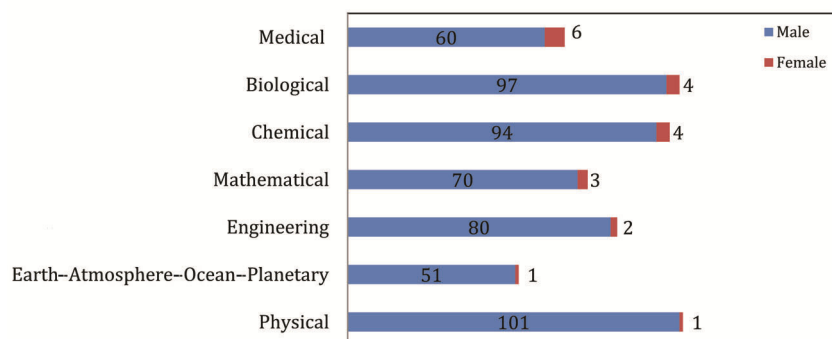


Figure 1. Gender-wise classification of the SSB Prize (1958–2020).

1. <http://www.ssbprize.gov.in>
2. Announcement of SSB Prizes 2020 by Director General, CSIR. Virtual celebration of CSIR Foundation Day (26 September 2020); <http://csir.res.in>
3. Singh, I. and Luthra, R., *Curr. Sci.*, 2010, **99**(10), 1306.

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