



Number of women scientists supported by government schemes since 2014 doubled during over 11 years after Sh Narendra Modi took over as PM, says Minister Dr Jitendra Singh;

Women's Participation in National R&D Ecosystem Surges Under Modi Government; DST Schemes Show Transformative Growth

Women constitute 18.6 % work force STEM, and progressively rising.

Modi Government's "Nari Shakti" Vision Drives Unprecedented Inclusion of Women in Science and Technology: Dr. Jitendra Singh

Policy Push Since 2014 Expands Opportunities for Women Scientists from Research Training to Leadership Roles

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Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Dr. Jitendra Singh today highlighted that the number of women scientists supported by government schemes doubled since 2014, during over eleven years after Sh Narendra Modi took over as Prime Minister.

Elaborating the details of different women-centric schemes run by the Department of Science & Technology, the Minister cited figures to substantiate the point, as follows.

Inspire Manak before 2014 - Nil, 2014 to 2025 - 176743. Inspire scholarship for higher education before 2014 -23530, 2014 to 2025 - 50642. Inspire Fellowship before 2014 - 2106, 2014 to 2025 - 5035. Inspire Faculty before 2014 - 175, 2014 to 2025 - 439. WISE (Women Scientist Scheme) before 2014 - 2713, 2014 to 2025 -4419. WISE Vigyan Jyoti before 2014- NIL, 2014 to 2025- 112386.

The Minister said that prior to 2014, women beneficiaries across key DST programmes were limited, but between May 2014 and October 2025, the number has grown exponentially across schemes such as INSPIRE, WISE-KIRAN and Vigyan Jyoti, reflecting the Government's strong push toward women-led development and inclusive scientific growth.

Citing data from DST's Research and Development Statistics 2025, Dr. Jitendra Singh pointed out that women today constitute about 18.6 per cent of the workforce employed in STEM-related fields in the Government and private sector combined, a share that is steadily growing as more women move into research, innovation, and high-technology roles. He further highlighted that women's participation in extramural R&D projects – a critical indicator of their role as principal investigators and research leaders – has almost doubled over the last two decades, rising to 25 per cent in 2019–20 from 13 per cent in 2000–2001. He said this progress is directly linked to the sustained efforts made by the Government in the S&T sector to enable women to enter, sustain and excel in research careers.

The Minister noted that DST's women-centric schemes such as WISE and KIRAN, together with its flagship INSPIRE-based fellowships and other capacity-building programmes, have played a pivotal role in expanding the pool of trained, employable, and research-active women scientists across the country. He said that prior to 2014, women-specific support mechanisms were limited in scale, fragmented across schemes and often unable to address the full lifecycle of a woman's scientific career, from early-stage research training to re-entry after career breaks and onward progression into leadership roles. In contrast, the period since May 2014 has witnessed a systematic consolidation and expansion of these initiatives, allowing a much larger number of women scientists to receive fellowships, research grants, project leadership opportunities, and institutional recognition.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that this sharp rise in women's participation is not incidental but the result of a conscious policy thrust under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, who has consistently championed the cause of "Nari Shakti" and women-led empowerment in every sphere of national life. He said that when the present Government assumed office in 2014, women scientists were still significantly under-represented in major R&D programmes and institutional ecosystems, despite their presence in universities and academic pipelines. Over the past decade, however, targeted interventions, dedicated women-centric schemes and a strong push for inclusion have ensured that Indian laboratories, universities, start-ups and innovation hubs increasingly reflect the aspirations and leadership of women scientists and technologists.

Dr. Jitendra Singh underlined that the Government's approach has been to view women not merely as beneficiaries of science and technology, but as principal architects and decision-makers in the knowledge economy. He pointed out that the rise in women scientists since 2014 is accompanied by a parallel increase in women occupying positions on expert committees, review panels, national missions and advisory bodies under DST and other S&T departments. This ensures that policy frameworks, funding priorities and programme designs incorporate the perspectives and experiences of women scientists, thereby creating a more responsive and equitable ecosystem.





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