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## Young scientists award List no more a secret

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THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Breaking the ritual of secrecy practised with religious fervour by the National Science Congress, this year, the list of Young Scientists Award winners is in the public domain long before the Prime Minister tears open the sealed envelope. Usually it is the Prime Minister who announces the names during the course of the Indian Science Congress.

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The young research scholars who bagged the National Young Scientists' Awards at the contests held on the KU Kariavattom campus are all from outside the State. There are 14 awards in 14 different categories.

The award in Anthropological Sciences has gone to Priyanka Singh from Dr Hari Singh Gour University, who presented an interesting study on the features of the external ear of the central Indian population. This will probably have a unique application as these features can act as soft biometric traits in personal identification.

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M.P.Raghavendra from the University of Mysore, who described the potential use of weed as a biological fungicide, has bagged the award in the Agriculture and Forestry Sciences category.

He identified a compound julifloravivazole from *Prosopis juliflora* that can act as a fungicide against many fungi, including fusarium and drechslera species. A similar study which isolated and characterised a phytotoxin against Parthenium weed has won Divya Bajpai from R.D University, Jabalpur, the Young Scientist Award in the category of Environmental Sciences.

The award in the category of Earth System Sciences has gone to Chandrani Singh of the National Geophysical Research Institute, Hyderabad, for presenting a research work that will help in the understanding of different phenomena that might trigger earthquakes in dam sites.

The study area was the Koyna-Warna region where reservoir-triggered earthquake s are known to occur.

M.G Choudhury from the North-Eastern Hill University in Shillong, has won the award in the Animal, Veterinary and Fishery Sciences category. He had presented a paper on the adaptation in air-breathing cat fish to high levels of environmental ammonia. The paper had gone into the molecular level changes of the biochemical adaptation, especially the production of nitric oxide.

Developing a methodology for detection and fixing of physical devices for security and forensic applications has won Gaurav Gupta of the Directorate of Forensic Science in New Delhi the award in the Information Technology category.

The award in the category of Chemical Sciences has been bagged by I.Ravikumar from Kolkata who presented a paper on the 'Recognition, selectivity and sensing studies of tetrahedral and linear anions'.

The award in Engineering Sciences has gone to Subimal Ghosh of IIT Mumbai, for a prediction tool for rainfall, incorporating impacts of climate change.

The methodology was demonstrated with the prediction of monsoon rainfall in Assam and Meghalaya meteorological subdivision.

The award in the Material Sciences category has been bagged by Kantesh Balani of IIT Kanpur for his studies on biocompatibility of hydroxyapatite that has a chemical composition similar to that of bone and teeth, while the award in the Mathematical Sciences category has gone to his colleague, Arabin Kumar Dey, also from IIT Kanpur.

Suneel Kateriya of the University of Delhi has won the award in the category of New Biology for developing lightsensitive protein tools for clinical applications while Debasis Pore from the National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases, Kolkata, has won the award in the category of Medical Sciences and Sunil Kumar Singh of Benares Hindu University has won the award in the Physical Sciences category.

In the Plant Sciences category there were two winners. Siddarth Tiwari from the National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow, and Sangram Keshari Lenka from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi.

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