



## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 16-08-2025**

### **GS-2**

1. Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages (SPPEL)

### **GS-3**

2. India's Sovereign Credit Rating
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4. Jute ("Golden Fibre")
5. Bioactive Peptides (BAPs)

## **Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages (SPPEL)**

**Syllabus: GS-2; Government policies and Interventions, GS-4: Ethics- Case Study**

### **Context**

- Preserving India's Endangered Languages: The Toda Tribe & SPPEL Initiative

### **Introduction**

- India is home to **over 1,300 languages**, many of which are at risk of extinction. To combat this, the **Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages (SPPEL)** was launched in **2013** by the **Ministry of Education, Government of India**.
- One of the key communities benefiting from this initiative is the **Toda tribe** of the **Nilgiri Hills, Tamil Nadu**, whose language is being systematically documented and revived.

### **About the Toda Tribe & Their Language**

#### **Who Are the Toda People?**

- A **pastoral indigenous tribe** known for their **buffalo herding, unique barrel-shaped huts, and rich oral traditions**.
- Population: **Around 1,600 speakers**, making their language critically endangered.

#### **The Toda Language**

- A **Proto-South Dravidian language** with **no native script**.
- Primarily **oral**, passed down through songs, folklore, and rituals.
- Now being documented using the **Tamil script** for literacy and preservation.

### **The SPPEL Initiative: Safeguarding Endangered Languages**

#### **Objective**

- To **document, preserve, and promote** India's endangered languages, particularly those with:

- **Fewer than 10,000 speakers**
- **No prior linguistic study**

### Key Goals

1. **Create permanent records** (grammar books, dictionaries, ethno-linguistic profiles).
2. **Digitize and archive** languages for future generations.
3. **Integrate endangered languages into education** (e.g., primers for children).

### Implementation

- **Nodal Agency: Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysuru.**
- **Digital Repository: Sanchika portal** (publicly accessible linguistic database).
- **Current Progress: 117 languages documented**, with a target of **500+** in the coming years.

### How SPPEL is Helping the Toda Language

#### 1. Documentation & Digitization

- High-quality **audio/video recordings** of Toda songs, stories, and conversations.
- Development of a **Toda-Tamil-English dictionary**.

#### 2. Educational Tools

- **Primers for children** to promote literacy.
- **Multilingual learning materials** in schools.

#### 3. Cultural Preservation

- Linking language with **traditional ecological knowledge** (e.g., buffalo-rearing practices).
- Archiving **oral histories** to protect intangible heritage.

### Why This Matters

- **Prevents Language Extinction** – Without intervention, languages like Toda could disappear within decades.

- **Protects Cultural Identity** – Language is tied to rituals, folklore, and indigenous knowledge.
- **Boosts Linguistic Research** – Helps linguists study rare Dravidian language structures.
- **Global Significance** – Aligns with UNESCO's mission to safeguard endangered languages.

## **India's Sovereign Credit Rating**

### **Syllabus: GS-3; Economy**

#### **Context**

- **S&P Global Ratings** has upgraded India's long-term sovereign credit rating from **BBB minus to BBB** after **18 years** (last upgrade in **January 2007**).
- **Short-term rating** increased from **A-3 to A-2**.
- **Transfer and Convertibility assessment** raised from **BBB plus to A minus**.

#### **Reasons for the Upgrade**

##### **S&P highlighted:**

- **Strong economic growth** (India's GDP remains resilient).
- **Fiscal improvements** (better government spending and deficit control).
- **Stable policies** (effective monetary measures keeping inflation stable).

#### **Implications for India**

- **Boosts investor confidence** in India's economy.
- **Reduces borrowing costs** for the government and businesses.
- **Attracts more foreign investments**, especially in bonds and stocks.
- **Opens door for future upgrades** if fiscal discipline continues.

#### **About S&P Global Ratings**

- **One of the world's top credit rating agencies** (Headquarters: New York).

- **Evaluates credit risk** for governments and corporations.
- **Promotes financial market transparency.**

### Conclusion

- This upgrade **reinforces India's position as a leading emerging market**, encouraging global investments and economic growth.

## Kargil Apricots

**Syllabus: GS-3; Agriculture- Export, GS-2; Government policies and Intervention**

### Context

- Fresh apricots from **Kargil, Ladakh**, were exported to **Saudi Arabia** for the first time during India's **79th Independence Day** celebrations in Riyadh. **Initiative:** Part of the "**One District One Product**" (ODOP) scheme, promoting regional specialties for global trade.



### About Apricots

#### 1. What Are Apricots?

- **Scientific Name:** *Prunus armeniaca* (Rosaceae family).
- **Features:**

- Small, yellow-orange drupes with a large kernel.
- Drought-resistant trees (lifespan up to 100 years).
- Rich in **vitamin A, iron, and antioxidants** (dried variants have concentrated nutrients).

## 2. Cultivation in India

- **Primary Regions:**
  - **Ladakh** (Kargil's apricots are renowned for flavor).
  - Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Uttarakhand.
- **Varieties:** Wild *Zardalu* and cultivated *Khubani*.

## 3. Uses & Economic Significance

- **Consumption:** Fresh, dried, or as **jams, juices, and oils** (from roasted kernels).
- **Exports:** Dried apricots are a key export; Gulf nations are emerging markets.
- **Livelihoods:** Critical cash crop for **Ladakhi farmers**, boosting rural incomes.

## 4. Why This Export Matters?

- **Trade Expansion:** Strengthens India's **agri-exports** to the Middle East.
- **Cultural Link:** Apricots are integral to Himalayan cuisine and traditions.
- **Nutritional Value:** Promotes healthy diets globally.

# Jute ("Golden Fibre")

Syllabus: GS-3; Agriculture, GS-2; International Relations

## Context

- India has banned imports of certain jute products and ropes from Bangladesh.

### India's Ban on Jute Imports from Bangladesh

- **Restriction:** India has immediately banned imports of certain jute products and ropes from Bangladesh via land routes.
- **New Rule:** These items can now only enter through **Nhava Sheva Seaport (Maharashtra)** for stricter quality checks.
- **Purpose:** To protect India's domestic jute industry and ensure quality control.



### About Jute ("Golden Fibre")

- **What it is:** A natural, biodegradable vegetable fiber (genus *Corchorus*) used for coarse, durable threads.
- **Key Features:**
  - Eco-friendly, renewable, and strong.
  - Used in packaging (sacks, ropes), handicrafts, geotextiles, and home décor.
- **Production:**
  - **India** is the top global producer (~70% share), led by **West Bengal** (Ganga-Brahmaputra delta ideal for cultivation).

- Other states: Bihar, Assam, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh.
- **Historical Role:**
  - Cultivated since the Indus Valley Civilization; commercialized under British rule.
  - Post-independence, it became vital for rural employment and exports.
- **Export Markets:** USA, UK, Germany, France, etc.

### Why the Ban?

- To curb substandard imports and support local jute farmers/industries under India's **Jute Packaging Materials Act** (mandates jute use in food/agri packaging).

## **Bioactive Peptides (BAPs)**

### Syllabus: GS-3; Science & Technology

#### Context

- A study by the **Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology (IASST), Guwahati**, reveals that **bioactive peptides (BAPs)** in fermented foods offer **population-specific health benefits**, opening doors for **personalised nutrition** in India.

### What are Bioactive Peptides (BAPs)?

- **Definition:** Short protein fragments (2–20 amino acids) produced during **fermentation** of foods like yogurt, idli, miso, kimchi, natto, and fermented fish.
- **Properties:** Exhibit **antimicrobial, antihypertensive, antioxidant, and immune-modulatory** effects.

### Research Objectives

- Assess BAPs' role in regulating **blood pressure, blood sugar, immunity, and inflammation**.



- Develop **precision nutrition solutions** tailored to India's **genetic and cultural diversity**.

### Key Features of Bioactive Peptides

#### 1. Mechanism of Action:

- a. Interact with biomolecules via **electrostatic forces, hydrogen bonds, and hydrophobic interactions**.

#### 2. Health Benefits:

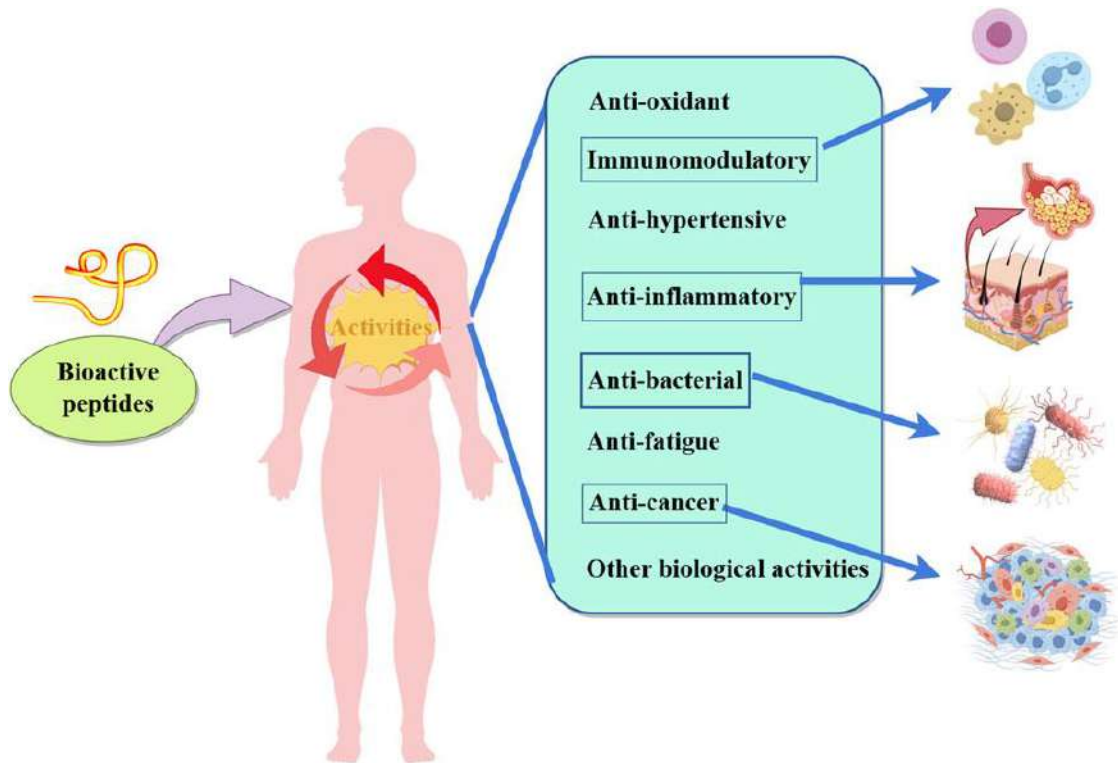
- a. Improve **cardiac function, metabolic health, and immune response**.

#### 3. Personalised Response:

- a. Effectiveness varies due to:
  - i. **Genetic differences** (e.g., ACE, IL-6 gene polymorphisms).
  - ii. **Gut microbiota composition**.
  - iii. **Dietary habits**.

#### 4. Research Tools:

- a. **Omics-based approaches** (genomics, proteomics, metabolomics) for deeper analysis.



### Significance of the Study

#### Public Health Impact:

- Can be integrated into **dietary guidelines** to combat **hypertension, diabetes, and immune disorders**.

#### Cultural Relevance:

- Promotes **India's traditional fermented foods** (e.g., idli, dosa, dhokla) in **global nutrition science**.
- **Future Potential:** Paves the way for **customised diets** based on genetic and microbial profiles.

## Conclusion

The IASST study highlights how **bioactive peptides in fermented foods** can offer **tailored health benefits**, supporting **personalised nutrition strategies** for India's diverse population. This research aligns with global trends in **functional foods** and **precision health**.