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Bombyx mori homolog of tumor suppressor p53 is involved in apoptosis-mediated antiviral immunity of *B. mori* cells infected with nucleopolyhedrovirus

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Highlights

- *Bombyx mori* contains a homolog of tumor suppressor p53 (Bm-p53) protein.
- *B. mori* cells transiently expressing Bm-p53 protein undergo apoptosis.
- Bm-p53-mediated apoptosis is accompanied by caspase cascade activation.
- RNAi silencing of *bm-p53* prevents apoptosis of vBmΔp35-infected *B. mori* cells.
- RNAi silencing significantly diminishes Bm-p53 protein levels in *B. mori* cells.