

UPSC Daily Current Affairs| One Liners 17-07-2026

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Geography

Marine cloud brightening (MCB) could weaken El Niño extremes

- MCB is a theoretical climate intervention that involves spraying microscopic sea salt particles into the lower atmosphere over the ocean.
- The sea salt acts as cloud condensation nuclei. When the salt interacts with low-level marine clouds, it creates numerous tiny water droplets.
- These densely packed, smaller droplets make the cloud tops brighter and thicker, allowing them to *effectively bounce sunlight back into space before it can warm the Earth's surface*.
- *MCB weakens the El Niño climate phenomenon by **cooling key ocean temperatures and disrupting the atmospheric feedback loops** that fuel its intensification.*

Polity & Governance

5th BRICS National Standardization Bodies (NSBs) Meeting

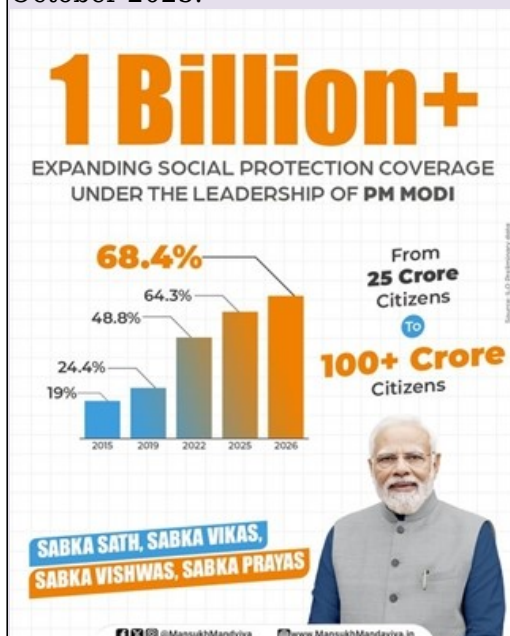
Under India's 2026 [BRICS](#) Chairship, 5th Meeting of Heads of BRICS National Standardization Bodies (NSBs) recently held.

- **Held in** - Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- **Host** - [Bureau of Indian Standards \(BIS\)](#).
- **Theme** - "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."
- **Focus** - To establish a harmonised framework for global standardisation, quality infrastructure, and trade facilitation.
- The meeting will also host, a *Thematic Workshop on Standardization in Artificial Intelligence (AI)*.

Social Security Coverage in India - 100 Crore

India has crossed a landmark milestone in social protection, with over 100 crore (1 billion) citizens now covered under at least one social security scheme.

- It was validated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).
- Social security coverage has surged from 25 crore citizens (19% of the population) in 2015 to more than 68% in 2026.
- India was conferred with the International Social Security Association (ISSA) Award 2025 for 'Outstanding Achievement in Social Security' in Malaysia in October 2025.



International Relations and Issues

Seafarer-First Maritime Safety Plan

- It is a comprehensive crisis response initiative launched by the Government of India in 2026.
- **Launched by** - Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- **Objective** - To protect and track Indian merchant navy crew members operating in conflict-hit West Asian waters.
- **Geographic coverage** -
 - The Strait of Hormuz
 - The Persian Gulf
 - The Gulf of Oman

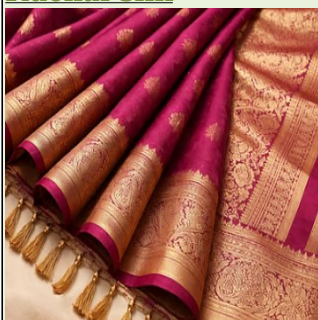
Economy

Bhagaiya Silk



- It is a world-renowned handwoven textile heritage from the village of Bhagaiya (known as Resham Nagar or "Silk City")
 - **From - Jharkhand.**
 - The fabric officially received Geographical Indication (GI) tag in June 2026.
 - **Characteristics**
 - Crafted using premium *Tussar-Ghicha silk, Eri silk, cotton*, mulberry, and katan yarns.
 - Features a natural, slightly coarse, rustic texture that remains lightweight and *remarkably breathable*.
- India is the only country in the world that produces all five major commercial varieties of natural silk: Mulberry, Tasar, Oak Tasar, Eri, and Muga.*

Kuchai silk



- **From** - Jharkhand.
- It has been granted Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2026.
- **Characteristic** - It is a wild Tussar silk known for its unique texture and natural golden sheen.
- **Features** - The silk is produced using indigenous hand-reeling techniques, with silkworms reared on Asan and Arjun trees

Agriculture

National Investment Policy for Urea-2026 for Atmanirbhar Bharat

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs headed by Prime Minister recently approved the National Investment Policy (NIP) for Urea-2026.

- **Aim** - To boost domestic fertilizer production, bridge supply deficits, and reduce import dependency.
- **Objectives** -
 - To establish 8 to 9 new natural gas-based fertilizer plants.
 - To add 10 million tonnes of fresh, indigenous urea production capacity to the country's current footprint (33 operational units with 269.42 LMT capacity).

Environment

Kevda plant - Older than Human Civilization & Predates Himalaya formation

- Fossil evidence confirms that the Kevda (Pandanus) plant is an ancient survivor, in the Indian subcontinent ***dating back to 24 million years.***
- Scientists from Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP) in Lucknow recovered exceptionally *well-preserved fossil leaves in the Makum Coalfield of Assam.*
- These fossils reveal that Kevda is deeply native to India.
- The plant family's older fossil records (85-66 million years ago) were found in Europe and North America,

Kevda plant

- **Scientific name** - Pandanus odorifer
- **Commonly known as** - Screw Pine
- It is a palm-like tropical evergreen shrub *renowned for its intensely fragrant male flowers.*
- It is *native to the coastal regions of India and Southeast Asia.*
- **Usage** -
 - Indian perfumery and cosmetics.
 - Cooking - Sweets, dishes etc.
- The *Ganjam Kewda Flower from Odisha* has been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag due to its superior aromatic quality and extensive local cultivation.

Index

Index of Services Production (ISP)

India has launched its first trial sub-sectoral Index of Services Production (ISP) recently.

- **Released by** – Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
- **Base year** – 2024-25.
- **Frequency of release** – Monthly basis.
- The index was created under the direction of the *Technical Advisory Committee on Index of Services Production (TAC-ISP)*.
- The ISP was created using a variety of data sources, such as
 - Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises (ASISSE).
 - Administrative records.
 - GST data.
- **Highlight** – It shows that 14 out of 19 tracked sub-sectors registered double-digit growth (As of April 2026).
- **Performance highlights** –

SECTOR-WISE GROWTH (YoY)

HIGHEST GROWTH

	Accommodation & Food Services	37.2%
	Retail Trade	30.8%
	Administrative & Support Services	28.7%
	Real Estate	27.7%
	Telecommunications	22.8%

OTHER DOUBLE-DIGIT GAINERS

	Repair services	19.2%
	Road transport	18.5%
	Warehousing	18.2%
	Professional / Scientific services	16.5%
	Insurance	15.6%
	Wholesale trade	15.3%
	IT & computer services	15.2%
	Banking	12.2%

CONTRACTIONS

	Air transport	-13.9%
	Railway transport	-0.4%

Note: Figures in brackets indicate year-on-year growth (%).

Miscellaneous

World Day for International Justice 2026

- **Observed on** – July 17, 2026.
- **Also referred as** – International Criminal Justice Day.
- The date marks the anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute on July 17, 1998.
- Rome statute laid the legal groundwork to establish the [*International Criminal Court \(ICC\)*](#).
- This annual event unites global efforts to
 - Advocate for victims' rights.
 - Promote international criminal justice.
 - Combat impunity for grave violations of human rights.



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