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).*

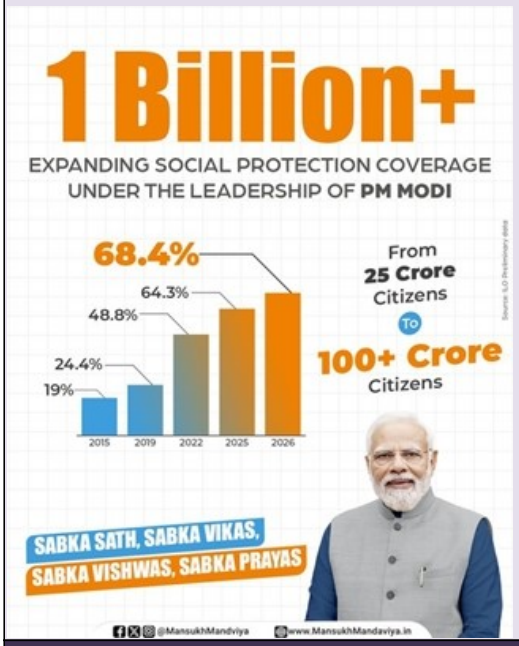
Social Security Coverage in India - 100 Crore

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.

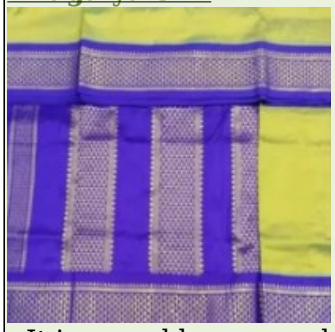
• **Launched by** – Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

• **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

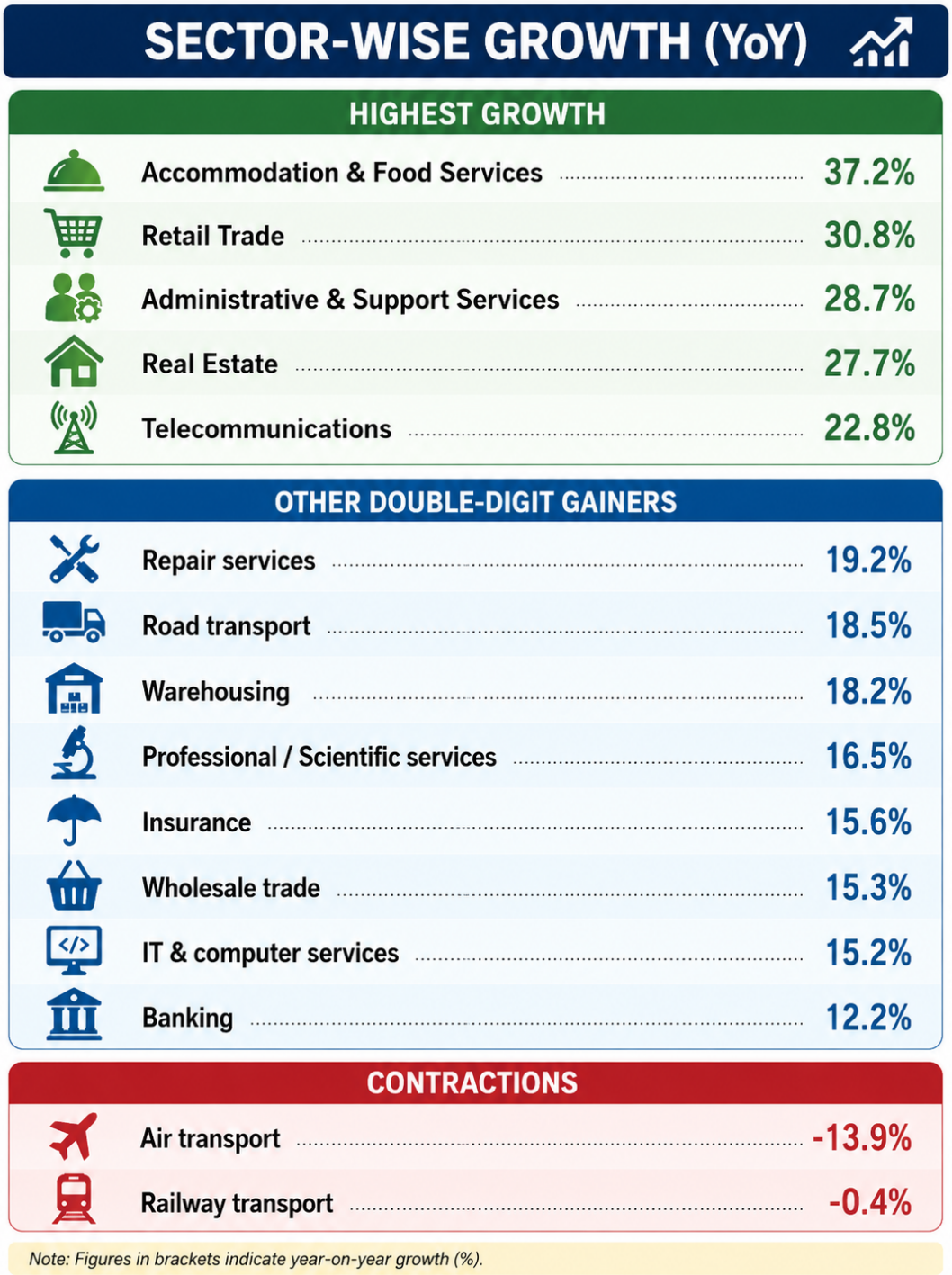
• **Scientific name** – Pandanus odorifer
• **Commonly known as** – Screw Pine
• It is a palm-like tropical evergreen shrub *renowned for its intensely fragrant male flowers*.
• It is *native to the coastal regions of India and Southeast Asia*.
• **Usage** –
  - Indian perfumery and cosmetics.
  - Cooking – 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** –



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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