

Highlights of 02 September 2026 Current Affairs

- **World Coconut Day** is observed annually on September 2 to highlight the immense agricultural, economic, and nutritional value of the coconut palm, often revered as the "Tree of Life". The date marks the foundation of the International Coconut Community (ICC)—formerly the Asian and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC)—which aims to promote sustainable coconut cultivation and support farming communities worldwide. The official theme for World Coconut Day 2026, *“Coconuts in Times of Uncertainty: Securing Food, Energy, and Livelihoods,”* emphasizes the crop's crucial role in driving rural economies, climate resilience, and sustainable development. Across major producing nations like Indonesia, the Philippines, and India—where states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu lead in output—every part of the palm is utilized, from coconut water and oil to coir fiber and shells.
- According to data released by the Reserve Bank of India, India's Current Account Deficit (CAD) widened to **\$4.2 billion**, or **0.5% of GDP**, during the first quarter of fiscal year 2026-27, compared to \$3.4 billion (0.4% of GDP) in the same period last year. This expansion was primarily driven by a sharp increase in the **merchandise trade deficit to \$86.1 billion**, up from \$68.9 billion in Q1 FY26. However, the overall impact on the external sector remained well within manageable limits due to strong cushioning from other accounts. Net services exports rose to **\$51.6 billion**, personal remittances surged to **\$42.9 billion**, and net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows improved to **\$6.1 billion**, helping stabilize India's broader balance of payments position.
- According to data released by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions reached an all-time high of **24.51 billion** in August 2026, marking a **22% year-on-year growth**. The total value of these transactions stood at a robust **₹29.82 trillion**, representing a 20% increase compared to August 2025. The surge was further highlighted by an increase in daily average transactions to **791 million**, driven by the rising adoption of digital payments for everyday commerce and festive spending. Meanwhile, other payment rails displayed mixed movements, with FASTag transactions rising to 351 million and IMPS volumes recording 360 million.
- According to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Suman Ray has been appointed as an Executive Director (ED) effective **September 1, 2026**. Prior to this elevation, he served as the Regional Director for the RBI in Maharashtra, bringing over **three decades of extensive central banking experience** spanning currency management, financial inclusion, payments and systems, and human resources. In his new role, Ray will oversee critical administrative and financial arms, specifically the **Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC)** and the **Premises Department**. This appointment reinforces the central bank's senior leadership structure, which operates under the overall guidance of the RBI's 21-member Central Board of Directors appointed by the Government of India.
- Türkiye has officially become the **71st signatory** to NASA's Artemis Accords, joining the international cooperative framework for the peaceful exploration of the Moon, Mars, and beyond. The agreement was signed by Türkiye's Minister of Industry and Technology, **Mehmet Fatih Kacır**, at NASA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. This move aligns with Türkiye's expanding space capabilities, following astronaut missions to

the International Space Station (including Alper Gezeravcı and Tuva Atasever) and ongoing preparations for its upcoming **AYAP-1 lunar mission**.

- Air Vice Marshal (AVM) Shakti Sharma has become the **first woman officer from a non-medical cadre** in the Indian Defence Forces to be promoted to the two-star rank of Air Vice Marshal (or equivalent). She assumed office as the **Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Education)** at Air Headquarters on **September 1, 2026**. Commissioned into the IAF's Education Branch on **June 18, 1994**, she boasts over three decades of service, previously making history as the **first woman to command a Tri-Services Sainik School** (Principal of Sainik School, Kapurthala) and spearheading academic-defense collaborations like the IAF Chair of Excellence at IIT Kanpur and Pune University.