

May 12th news:

International:

Mallya assets can be seized in Britain

Major Success to Indian banks in the case against the fugitive businessman Vijay Mallya; London High Court declared that an Indian Court's judgement against him can be legally enforced in Britain.

The high court judge, who upheld a worldwide freeze order and ruled in favour of 13 Indian state-owned banks to recover funds amounting to nearly 1.145 billion pounds in a judgment, took note of the fact that the 62-year-old businessman is contesting his extradition to India relating to "alleged financial misconduct".

The High Court remained unconvinced by Mallya's claim that he has been a non-resident Indian since 1988 and has lived in England since 1992, a country where he has indefinite leave to remain.

Vijay Mallya, who remains on bail since his arrest on an extradition warrant in April last year, will return for the last leg of his ongoing extradition trial at Westminster Magistrates' Court in London on July 11, after which the court is expected to set a timeline for judgment in that case.

Pakistan imposes 'reciprocal' restrictions on movement of US diplomats

Pakistan on 11th May imposed "reciprocal" restrictions on the movement of US diplomats after Washington took similar measures, a tit-for-tat move that is likely to further strain ties between the two countries. Earlier, the restriction was to come into effect from May 1, but was deferred as the two sides decided to resolve the issue.

According to the US decision, Pakistani diplomats, at the embassy in Washington and four consulates in New York, Los Angeles, Texas and Chicago, will need to stay within 25 miles (40-kms) of the city of their posting. They would be required to take formal permission at least five days before moving beyond the prescribed limit. The US has conveyed to Pakistan through a letter that the restrictions will be implemented

The curbs are likely to further strain the ties already under stress due to multiple reasons, including the issue of immunity to US military attache Col Joseph Emanuel Hall who was involved in last month's fatal accident in which a motorcyclist had died after being hit by the US diplomat's vehicle in Pakistan.

Pakistan has stopped Hall from leaving the country and demanded the US to withdraw his diplomatic immunity, so that legal action could be initiated against him.

US imposes sanctions on six Iranian people and three companies

The United States has imposed sanctions on six Iranian people and three companies, for having ties with Iran's elite military force. The penalties targeted those who had funnelled millions of dollars to Iran's military.

The Iranian regime and its Central Bank have abused access to entities in the UAE to acquire US dollars to fund Iran's elite military force, the Revolutionary Guard Corps. The Treasury Department said US individuals and entities will be barred from doing business with them.

National;

SC nod for compensation scheme for sexual assault victims

A victim of gangrape in any part of the country would now get a minimum compensation of Rs five lakh up to a maximum of Rs 10 lakh. Supreme Court pm 11th May approved the scheme proposed by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) on compensating the victims of sexual assaults and acid attacks.

As per the 'Compensation Scheme for Women Victims, Survivors of Sexual Assault, Other Crimes-2018', in case of rape and unnatural sexual assault, the victim will get a minimum of four lakh rupees and a maximum of seven lakh rupees as compensation. Similarly, the scheme also provides for compensation amount in cases of acid attacks.

While approving the scheme, a bench comprising Justices Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta said it will be applicable across the country and the states and Union Territories will be free to give compensation over and above what is stipulated in the scheme.

Bilateral:

PM Modi reiterates India's commitment to stronger ties with Nepal

Religious and cultural ties bind India and Nepal. India remains committed to realizing Nepal's aim of prosperity and happiness. The Arun three hydro-project's foundation stone was jointly laid by Prime Minister Modi and his Nepalese counterpart K P Sharma Oli.

Prime Minister Narenra Modi and his Nepalese counterpart KP Sharma Oli jointly laid the foundation stone for the 900 megawatt Arun-3 hydropower plant. The project is a win win situation for both India and Nepal.

Arun-3 is the largest capacity project in the history of Nepal. The venture will transform the Nepalese economy by generating 900 MW of power as it aims to provide billions of dollars to the Nepal Government in the form of free electricity, royalty and tax.

Nepal will get free energy in the concession period of 25 years. India, too, would benefit through the supply of the electricity generated by the project.

Expected to be completed in the next five years, the Arun-3 hydropower project will feature a 70m tall concrete gravity dam and an underground cavern as its powerhouse where 4 production units of 225 megawatt will function.

The project will also provide 21.9 per cent or 197 megawatts of the generated energy free of cost to Nepal.

Investment Board Nepal had granted the licence to Satluj Jala Vodyut Nigam Power Development Company, a subsidiary of Indian government-owned Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Ltd, to generate power from the Arun-3 Hydropower Project.

The project will generate direct employment to about 3000 and indirectly to many more for years to come. Nepal has a net power deficit.

The project will go a long way to subside the rising demand of electricity in Nepal. Arun 3 is all set to become a rising star in the diplomatic ties between the two nations.

India & Peru signs an agreement in field of Renewable Energy at Lima

India and Peru signed an agreement in the field of Renewable Energy at Lima. The pact was signed in the presence of Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu and the Prime Minister Cesar Villanueva Arevalo. Vice President's visit comes at a time when India is celebrating the 55th anniversary of establishment of Diplomatic Relations with Peru.

The discussions were held in the field of pharmaceuticals, space, defence, supply of LPG, clean energy, agriculture and science & technology.

Vice President's visit to Guatemala, Panama and Peru is very important as this will enhance and strengthen the bilateral relations and will increase trade, investments and cooperation among these countries

Economy:

Industrial production slips to 5-month low of 4.4% in March

The country's industrial output grew by 4.4 per cent in March, the slowest in five months, as manufacturing production growth halved from the month before and the capital goods segment saw contraction.

The manufacturing segment, which constitutes the bulk of the index at 77.6 per cent, rose 4.4 per cent in March, almost half the 8.5 per cent rise in February. As many as 12 of the sub-sectors of manufacturing, with a weight of 30.6 per cent in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), recorded a year-on-year contraction in March.

However, mining and electricity recorded modest improvements, driven by coal and thermal generation, respectively. While mining output rose by 2.8 per cent, reversing the 0.3 per cent contraction seen in the earlier month, electricity generation registered a higher growth rate of 5.9 per cent, up from February's 4.5 per cent.

While March saw a slowdown among all use-based classification groups, a sudden contraction in capital goods output may have dragged IIP growth down.

The capital goods segment within the IIP, which connotes investment, contracted by 1.8 per cent, its worst performance in nine months. The segment had seen a healthy rise of 19.5 per cent in February and had been on a growth run for seven months, fuelling growth

A sharp contraction in gold jewellery output, a possible fallout of the multi-billion-dollar Nirav Modi scam, might have contributed to the slowing growth of the consumer durables sector, experts said.

Also, the largest segment, primary goods, continued to be plagued by low growth, registering a 2.9 per cent rise in March. Robust growth in aggregate auto production and a sharp uptick in coal production would help the prospects of IIP growth in April, said Aditi Nayar, principal economist at ICRA.

Industrial production growth for the entire 2017-18 stands at 4.3 per cent, down from the 4.6 per cent seen in the year before. This is the macroeconomic data to be released before the government brings out the GDP figures for 2017-18 by the end of this month.