

NEWS ALERT

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Growth picks pace for the first time in six quarters to 6.1%, signaling economy may have put the worst of the downturn behind it.

The good work by the services and manufacturing sectors points to robust growth this fiscal, beating the pessimism triggered by truant rains.

Construction major Infrastructure Leasing & Finance Ltd (IL&FS) has been handed control of rival Maytas Infra amid cancelled contracts and deep financial distress at a company once overseen by the son of the disgraced founder of the erstwhile Satyam Computer Services.

The government will wind down its role in Maytas Infra after having run it for about six months, a period during which it failed to arrest the cancellation of contracts the company had won before the Satyam financial scam erupted in January.

India's fiscal deficit, or government spending over and above its receipts, reached 40% of the estimate set for the fiscal year in the first four months as the government doled out a number of incentives to stimulate the economy.

Nearly a year after the federal rescue of the US' biggest banks, taxpayers have begun seeing profits from the hundreds of billions of dollars in aid that many critics thought might never be seen again.

The profits, collected from eight of the biggest banks that have fully repaid their obligations to the government, come to about \$4 billion.

The ministerial is being held at India's behest, a year after talks broke down in Geneva, a large share of the blame for that was laid in India's doors by the developed world. The informal meet, therefore, should be seen as an opportunity to reiterate India's position on issues and try to revive the stalled talks. Since host India will chair the meeting, it cannot openly take a hard stand on any issue. India should stick to its plan of steering clear from any negotiations and instead help participating members prioritise issues and fix a road map to take the talks forward.

DELHI MEET TO SHAPE GENEVA TALKS

A two day ministerial of key World Trade Organization member countries will be on in Delhi on September 3-4. Ministers from about 40 countries will try to put 'back on track' the ongoing Doha round of multilateral trade talks, which seek to liberalize trade in goods & services.

