

# 'Money Power is Poll Panel Business'

*It has nothing to do with the state's security, says Chidambaram in exclusive interview*

Union Home Minister P Chidambaram speaks about the ongoing Assembly elections in an exclusive interview with Editorial Director **Prabhu Chawla**. Excerpts:

**Wooing voters with money power is a law and order issue, which was rampant in Tamil Nadu elections.**

That is the Election Commission's business, not mine. Money power has nothing to do with security of the state.

**But (UP chief minister) Mayawati has accused your party all the time about various other things...don't you think Tamil Nadu...**

Let's talk about security and law and order. Don't mix up other issues.

**Politics matters...**

How does that concern security or law and order? Those are political issues which will be answered by the political party.

**The Lt Governor of Puducherry came to you. What did you advise him—to resign, not to resign—or are you leaving it to agencies?**

The agency wanted to question him, so we asked him. He said yes, I am ready



to be questioned. So we went through the required constitutional arrangements and the agency has questioned him. Now we will have to wait for the agency's report.

**But he met you twice ...**

I am not going into the subject matter of the issue. That is not my business. The agency wanted to question him. He has made himself available for questioning, the questioning has taken place... let us wait.

**You did not advise him**

**either way.**

Let the agency report come. What is there to advise without knowing what the agency has found?

**Congress has always been quick enough in taking action against people against whom charges have been levelled.**

No charge has been framed. The agency wanted to question him, he has been questioned. You will have to wait for the agency's report.

**Are you not disturbed with what has happened to the image of the government during last few months?**

This is your perception of the image. Wait for May 13 and we will know what the people think.

**Wait for May 13! You are talking of winning election, obviously.**

You have a perception of the image of the government, which I respect. But let us see what peoples' perception is on the 13th of May.

**Let us use it as hypothetically again because you have challenged that May 13 is coming...**

I want to know what the people think...

**If they reject you then will you admit ...**

Obviously, if the people vote against us then we would have to conclude that in the peoples' esteem we have failed...in people's estimate we've failed, we have to admit that with humility. But I am confident that on May 13th, results will show that the people do not share the perceptions which are run on the media most of the time. Media's perception and the people's perception are not necessarily the same.

**May 13, you think, will explode that myth.**

You are putting words in my mouth. What I am saying is media's perception and people's perceptions are not always the same.

**But you always follow the media closely.**

We do not follow, we watch the media.

**Whether it is the arrest of Kalmadi or chargesheeting of Kanimozhi...**

Media is a pillar of our social structure...you cannot deny that.

**Are you saying that media is telling lies?**

I am not saying that media is telling lies. Media has a perception...

**Which you think is not correct?**

I didn't say that. I said you would have to wait and see whether media's and people's perception is the same. I am not passing any judgement. I am saying media has a perception. Let us see what the people's perception is. Ultimately what matters is not anyone's perception but the people's perception.

**If the people reject you?**

If the people vote against us, obviously, in the esteem of the people we will have failed.