

## Chidambaram hopes to push reform bills soon

Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram Friday hoped to push the reform bills in the remaining tenure of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government to make up for the lost time over the last four years.

"I hope in the remaining nine months we make up for the lost time and push through some legislature and some non-legislature measures. If we don't, that will be tragic. We lost time because of the Left parties, which said without their consent, we could not move forward," Chidambaram said here at a book function.

Seeking the support of all political parties, including the Left, for the passage of the pending bills, Chidambaram said it would be tragic if the opposition members, who support the bills in the committees, do not on the floor of the house.

"I sincerely hope those political parties, which support the legislature measures in the committees, will also do so on the floor of the house. If they don't, that will be tragic. Those members who point out that we are losing time and recommend passage of bills in the committees, should help in pushing the reforms agenda," Chidambaram told a select audience at a reading from his recent book on 'A view from the Outside: Why Good Economics Works for Everyone'.

The finance minister said if all sections of the lower house cooperated, the reform process could move forward. In a parliamentary democracy, the treasury benches must reach out to every section of the house. There is no enemy line divided by line of control.

"I have nothing against the Left (parties). We only disagreed in spite of depending on their support from outside. Though we were able to work together on various programmes in the social sector such as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, the Right to Information Act, etc., we could not work together in some other areas," he recalled.

Lamenting that Indian polity was fractured and the electorate was more so (fractured), Chidambaram said it was imperative that people vote for a party to ensure it a working majority.

"Because of the fractured polity, there is very little we can do in a coalition government. We can only lay out an agenda and try to implement as much as possible in five years. There is no great by-partisanship in this country as we have so many political parties," Chidambaram observed.

'Hence, my appeal to the people is vote for your idea of India and to a political party which comes closest to that idea. My pitch is for democracy in which people deserve a government that delivers. The only way a government can deliver is to vote for a party that gets a working majority. Then you see things happen," he added.

Among the noted citizens of [Bangalore](#) who made a beeline to Crossword bookstore in downtown for the book function and participated in the panel discussion on Chidambaram's book were Infosys Technologies co-chairman Nandan N. Nilekani, Biocon chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and Rajya Sabha member and industrialist Rajeev Chandrashekar.

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