



Press Release
26/02/2026

ED places prosecution sanction order received from the Competent Authority against Shri. P. Chidambaram, the then Union Finance Minister in respect of the offence of money laundering in the Aircel Maxis Deal, before the Ld. Special Court

The Directorate of Enforcement had initiated investigation under PMLA, 2002 in ECIR/05/DZ/2012 based on the FIR bearing Number RC-DAI-2011-A-0022 on 09.10.2011, registered by CBI in Aircel Maxis Case against for offences punishable under Section 120-B read with Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and Sections 8, 13(2) & 13(1)(d) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

In the instant case, investigation has revealed that the then Finance Minister Sh. P Chidambaram has granted FIPB approval to Aircel Maxis in lieu of the quid pro quo. In the Aircel Maxis Deal, the foreign investor (Maxis) applied for approval of the Government for FDI of USD 800 Million (Rs. 3565.91 crore), for which, the competent authority for approval was Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA). However, as part of larger conspiracy, approval was fraudulently and dishonestly granted by the then Finance Ministry Shri P. Chidambaram on 20.03.2006 who was competent to consider and approve FDI proposals involving total investment of Rs. 600 crore or less.

Investigation has revealed that illegal gratification of Rs. 1.16 crores was received by Karti P. Chidambaram in his companies M/s Advantage Strategic Consulting Pvt. Ltd. (ASCPL) and M/s Chess Management

Services Pvt. Ltd. (CMSPL). Investigation has revealed financial transactions between P. Chidambaram and his son Karti P. Chidambaram. Investigation has also revealed that funds of ASCPL have also been spent for and on behalf of P. Chidambaram.

Proceeds of crime amounting to Rs. 1.16 crores have been provisionally attached vide PAO no. 04/2017 dated 23.09.2017 and the same has been confirmed by the Ld. Adjudicating Authority vide order dated 12.03.2018.

Subsequently, Prosecution Complaint under Sections 44 and 45 read with Sections 3 and 4 of PMLA dated 13.06.2018 and Supplementary Prosecution Complaint dated 25.10.2018 was filed before the Hon'ble Special Court (PMLA), Rouse Avenue Court, New Delhi wherein Sri P. Chidambaram was arraigned as accused A-6. The Ld. Special Court vide its order dated 27.11.2021 took cognizance of the commission of an offence of money laundering. The Enforcement Directorate has been making all efforts to fast track the trial in the case.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court delivered a judgement on 06.11.2024 in the case "Directorate of Enforcement vs Bibhu Prasad Acharya, etc. Criminal Appeal Nos 4314-4316 of 2024" and held that the requirement of the prosecution sanction under section 197(1) of the CrPC is applicable to a complaint filed under section 44(1)(b) of the PMLA, 2002 also. Subsequent to this judgement, many accused persons charged under PMLA, 2002 have challenged the trial proceedings in multiple legal forums, leading to delay in the trial. To counter such delay and to comply with the judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, ED has swiftly initiated remedial actions by seeking prosecution sanctions in all such prosecution complaints involving public servants.

Therefore, in light of the said order of Hon'ble Supreme Court, the sanction of Shri P. Chidambaram was sought from the competent authority in this case and the sanction was obtained on 10.02.2026 in

respect of Sh. P. Chidambaram along with the Order under section 197 of code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (Section 218 of Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, dated 10.02.2026 for prosecuting Shri. P. Chidambaram, the then Union Finance Minister in respect of the offence of money laundering.

The Prosecution Sanction Order has been placed before the Hon'ble Special Court, Rouse Avenue by ED to expedite the trial in the case.