



### **Caution to public against Fraudulent / Manipulative activities on Social Media Platforms (SMPs) related to securities market**

SEBI has noticed an increase in frauds related to securities market on various Social Media Platforms (SMPs) such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, X (previously Twitter), WhatsApp, Telegram, Google Play Store, Apple Store etc.

With increasing adoption of digital communication platforms, it is observed that scamsters are enticing victims by giving trading calls in the name of providing education. They also provide misleading or deceptive testimonials, promise or guarantee of assured or risk free return etc. through various SMPs.

Common types of Frauds relating to securities market through SMPs are:

- Unregistered investment advisory services provided by entities that falsely claim to be registered intermediaries with SEBI or by showcasing fake certificates purportedly issued by SEBI.
- Impersonation of SEBI registered entities by fraudulent trading platforms, WhatsApp, Telegram channels which deceptively claim or suggest affiliation with SEBI-registered entity claiming to provide assured or risk free return.
- Misleading / manipulative contents designed by scamsters to entice investors to join private chat groups or channels on WhatsApp/Telegram e.g. **VIP group, Discounted trading group, Institutional Trading group, Official stock**

**Community, Investment Club** etc. through fraudulent ads / posts on various SMPs.

- Scamsters are enticing gullible investors by claiming that they provide exclusive services on their platform (Fake trading/ advisory apps) facilitating securities trading that allow the subscriber to enjoy preferential services with regard to trade and share price e.g. –
  - **Institutional trading account**
  - **IPOs at discounted price**
  - **Block Trade at discounted price**
  - **Sure shot allocation of IPO**

In view of the above, investors are advised to exercise caution and due diligence to verify the genuineness of social media handles of SEBI registered entities while accessing them.

Further, while investing in securities market, investors are advised to deal with only SEBI registered intermediaries and authentic trading apps. The details of the registration status and trading apps of the SEBI registered intermediaries can be verified on the following web links:

- Registered intermediaries: <https://www.sebi.gov.in/intermediaries.html>
- Trading Apps: <https://investor.sebi.gov.in/Investor-support.html>

It may also be noted that SEBI has advised all intermediaries to use the '1600' phone number series exclusively for service and transactional voice calls to their existing customers. Accordingly, Investors should note the new '1600' phone numbering series to easily identify and attend service and transactional calls from SEBI regulated/registered entities, thereby enhancing investor security and minimising the risk of fraud by unscrupulous entities using regular 10 digit numbers.

SEBI is issuing this caution, advising investors to not engage with or undertake investment or trading activities through un-registered intermediaries/ web applications/ platforms / apps. The investors may note that for any kind of disputes relating to such activity, none of the following recourses will be available to investors:

- Benefits of investor protection under SEBI/ Exchange(s) Jurisdiction including SCORES.
- Investor grievance redressal mechanism administered by Exchange(s) or the online dispute resolution mechanism administered by Exchanges/ Depositories (smartodr.in).

Public is invited to share details of any unregistered entities/ platforms offering advisory services on securities via the Market Intelligence (MI) portal of SEBI at: <https://mi.sebi.gov.in/>

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