PRESS RELEASE

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SEBI Chairman Shri Tuhin Kanta Pandey underscores the importance of investor awareness, informed investing and stronger investor protection at NSE's Regional Investor Seminar for Awareness in Kolkata

Reinforcing the importance of building a financially aware, informed and empowered investor community, SEBI, under whose aegis the NSE organised a Regional Investor Seminar for Awareness (RISA) in Kolkata on 31 October 2026. The seminar was held under the overarching theme "Samajh Se Investing Simple", with a focus on empowering investors through greater awareness of the securities market, informed investment decisions and investor protection.

Welcoming the Chief Guest and participants, **Shri Sanjay Shorey, Executive Director, NSE**, expressed his gratitude to **Shri Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Chairman, SEBI**, for graciously accepting the invitation and being part of the Regional Investor Seminar for Awareness in Kolkata. He acknowledged SEBI's continued leadership and guidance in strengthening investor awareness and protection across the country. He also welcomed the investors, market participants, representatives from various institutions and other stakeholders attending the seminar and highlighted the importance of such platforms in fostering financial awareness.

The seminar was graced by **Shri Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Chairman, SEBI**, as the Chief Guest, whose keynote address provided an important perspective on the evolving Indian securities market, the significance of investor education and the measures being undertaken by SEBI to strengthen investor protection.

A key highlight of the address was the growing investor participation in West Bengal. SEBI Chairman noted that the number of investors had increased nearly eightfold, from approximately 12 lakhs in 2015 to around 90 lakhs. West Bengal also had approximately 43 lakh unique mutual fund investors, with mutual fund assets of nearly ₹3.65 lakh crore at the end of FY 2025–26. These developments reflect the growing interest in financial markets and underline the need to complement wider market access with financial understanding and investor education.

SEBI Chairman drew attention to findings from SEBI's Investor Survey. While 63% of households were aware of at least one securities-market product, only around 9.5% participated in the securities market, and only 36% of investors demonstrated moderate or high levels of market knowledge.

Strengthening investor protection through regulatory and technology-led initiatives

The SEBI Chairman outlined several investor-centric measures introduced to make investing simpler, safer and more accessible. These include Aadhaar-based e-KYC, Basic Services Demat Accounts for eligible investors, and Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs), which enable individuals to participate in mutual funds through regular investments of relatively small amounts.

He also highlighted the measures aimed at increasing transparency and giving investors greater control over their investments. These include the introduction of mutual fund folio locking and the facility to block trading accounts to prevent unauthorised transactions. Safeguards such as the pledge and re-pledge mechanism, direct payout of securities into demat accounts, periodic settlement of client funds by stockbrokers, simplified nomination and transmission processes.

In a significant development for mutual fund investors, he also highlighted that, with effect from 1 November 2026, direct plans would appear as the default option on the digital platforms of all asset management companies, while investors opting for regular plans would be informed about the higher costs involved.

SEBI Chairman cautioned against fraudulent trading applications, cloned websites, misleading social media groups, deepfakes and impersonation of SEBI, stock exchanges and registered market intermediaries. He stressed the importance of verifying the authenticity of payment channels and intermediaries before undertaking transactions. Important investor protection initiatives such as SEBI Check, which enables investors to verify payment details, and validated UPI handles carrying the @valid identifier. He also highlighted the verified labels available for authorised stockbroker trading applications on Google Play.

Project Jagrook: Taking investor awareness to every corner of the country

Project Jagrook, SEBI's investor awareness initiative launched on 5 October 2026, which brings together stock exchanges, depositories, AMFI and NISM under the common message "Samajh Se Investing Simple."

The Chairman highlighted the need to take investor education to people rather than waiting for people to approach financial institutions for information. Project Jagrook adopts a multi-channel approach through television, radio, print, digital platforms and physical outreach, with communication in familiar regional languages, including Bengali. WhatsApp outreach and the SEBI Saa₹thi App are also being used to provide investors with access to verified information.

He also referred to the MUST initiative for colleges, which aims to equip teachers, staff and senior students with investor education knowledge so that they can further disseminate financial awareness. In rural areas, the initiative seeks to strengthen outreach through Panchayati Raj institutions, state governments and local partners.

Highlighting the encouraging response to the campaign, particularly in West Bengal, the Chairman noted that Bengali-language content had recorded nearly 22 lakh views across India, while more than 3.7 crore WhatsApp messages in Bengali had been delivered across India during the first two campaigns. He emphasised the importance of building on this momentum to extend investor awareness beyond Kolkata to towns and villages across West Bengal.

Regional panel discussion explores the evolving corporate bond market

The seminar also featured a **panel discussion on the theme "The Bond Blueprint: Regulatory Reforms and Market Dynamics**", which brought together experts from the financial and securities markets to deliberate on the changing landscape of India's debt markets and the opportunities for greater investor participation.

The discussion was moderated by Shri K. Saravanan, Chief General Manager, SEBI, and featured the following panellists - Shri Vinod Kothari, Fellow Member, ICSI and Associate Member, ICAI; Shri Vineet Nahata, Founder Director, M/s Power Guilt Treasuries Inc; Shri Priyashish Das, Founder CEO, Northern Arc Securities.

The discussion covered a wide range of issues concerning the development of India's corporate bond market, including the regulatory framework governing bonds, India's position in the global debt market landscape, and the measures required to make bonds a more accessible retail investment product.
The panellists deliberated on the challenges involved in deepening the Indian debt market at both institutional and retail levels, the role of debenture trustees in strengthening investor protection, and the need to improve market confidence and participation. The discussion also explored emerging developments such as tokenisation of bonds and the evolving role of Online Bond Platform Providers (OBPPs) in facilitating wider retail access to the bond market.

Interactive investor awareness initiatives and engagement

The seminar featured an engaging Nukkad Natak focusing on safe investing practices, different investment products and awareness about financial scams. Through an interactive and relatable format, the performance highlighted the importance of recognising fraudulent investment schemes, avoiding unrealistic return promises and adopting responsible investing practices.

An Investor Awareness Engagement Zone was also established at the venue, offering visitors an interactive platform to learn about financial products, investment-related concepts and safe investing practices. **The engagement zone** complemented the seminar's objective of making financial awareness accessible and engaging for participants.

The Kolkata seminar was another step towards strengthening this shared commitment and taking investor awareness to a wider cross-section of society.

Samajh Se Investing Simple!

About National Stock Exchange of India Limited (NSE):

National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) began its operations in 1994 and was the first exchange in India to implement electronic or screen-based trading. NSE has a fully integrated business model comprising exchange listings, trading services, clearing and settlement services, indices and market data feeds. NSE also oversees compliance by trading, clearing members and listed companies with the rules and regulations of SEBI and the exchange. NSE is a pioneer in technology and ensures the reliability and performance of its systems through a culture of innovation and investment in technology. NSE is the world's largest derivatives exchange by trading volume (contracts) for calendar year 2025 as per the statistics maintained by Futures Industry Association (FIA). NSE is ranked third in the world in equity segment by number of trades (electronic order book) in 2025, as per the statistics maintained by World Federation of Exchanges (WFE).

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