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**SEBI Chairman launches Securities Market Trainers (SMARTs) Program – a new SEBI initiative for enhancing Investor Education activities**

Shri Ajay Tyagi, Chairman, SEBI launched the Securities Market Trainers (SMARTs) programme in Mumbai today. The SMARTs programme is a new initiative of SEBI for enhancing the Investor Education activities. Shri G. Mahalingam, Whole Time Member, Executive Directors and other officials of SEBI attended the launch function. The individuals who have been empanelled under the SMARTs program attended the launch via web conferencing.

Complimenting the trainers who have been empanelled as SMARTs, Shri Tyagi highlighted the need of hand holding the retail investors since there has been a surge of new investors in the securities markets in the last few months. He recounted SEBI's efforts towards financial education through SEBI empanelled Resource Persons and investor education in association with Exchanges, Depositories and SEBI recognized Investors Associations.

“In the present scenario of uncertainty in economic growth and extra ordinarily buoyant market, there is a dire need to further ramp up the investor education and awareness efforts. In that sense there couldn't have been any better time to launch SMARTs – an initiative of SEBI to strengthen the existing investor education framework”, Shri Tyagi said.

Chairman also raised the concern relating to convoluted distribution of active investors throughout the country and said that SMARTs program would aim to address this concern by increasing investor outreach in far flung areas. He exhorted SMARTs to keep abreast of developments in the securities market and also expressed his confidence that SMARTs would take investor education to all parts of the country. “It is noteworthy that SMARTs programme has been launched when World Investor Week is being celebrated across the country”, he added.

SMARTs is a new initiative of SEBI to enhance its investor education and awareness activities. The First batch of SMARTs empaneled by SEBI includes 40 individuals across 16 States and Union Territories covering 31 Districts on a Pan-India basis, who have also undergone four days training in National Institute of Securities Market (NISM). The SMARTs will conduct investor education programmes in their respective geographical

areas. Though SEBI has been conducting investor awareness programme in association with stock exchanges, depositories, etc. the SMARTs program is unique.

Under the SMARTs program, the trainers are empanelled for the district they belong to, subject to fulfilling the required eligibility criteria. In addition to individuals, organizations engaged in similar activity can also get enrolled as SMARTs. They undergo training in NISM and then they are eligible to conduct programmes. The programmes are conducted under the aegis of SEBI and are monitored by SEBI directly. These programmes will also be conducted in the local language. SMARTs programme is, therefore, likely to be a game changer as investor education programmes are taken directly to the investors. The education programs to be conducted by SMARTs will be free of cost to investors, while the cost of conducting the programme would be met from SEBI's Investor Protection and Education Fund.

SEBI will be empanelling more trainers pan India level under the SMARTs programme.

**Mumbai**

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