

## INVESTOR ALERT

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## INVESTOR ALERT FRAUDULENT SOCIAL MEDIA INVESTMENT GROUPS ON THE RISE

Pakistan Stock Exchange Limited (PSX) is issuing this investor alert as a reminder regarding the fraudulent activities promoted through various social media platforms under the guise of investment advices and/ or training courses. The scammers falsely associate themselves with the senior corporate executives or claim to be affiliated with a legitimate company or its representatives to lure the investing public to participate in unauthorized investment schemes. Scammers' correspondence often looks authentic; they use the official names, logos and images, impersonating senior executives or legitimate entities to give a false impression of credibility.

These fraudulent groups and media pages demand fees from individuals to grant them membership, promise exclusive access to insider tips and provide training on investments. The major suspicions include requests to transfer money to a private or third-party account, promises of exorbitant profits, claims of no or minimal risk and promises of providing valuable investment tips.

To avoid becoming a victim of such scams, the investing public are warned to be wary and alert of unsolicited investment advices received through messages/e-mails and other social media channels.

To stay safe from possible scams, the following precautions must be taken:

**Background check and verification:** Make sure that you are dealing with licensed professionals and entities by conducting research from the PSX and SECP websites. Do not blindly trust the information received from social media platforms and/ or individual(s) impersonating to be investment professionals.

**Do not share information**: Do not share personal or financial information such as username, password, or bank account information with unknown persons. Be extra cautious if you are asked to share information to a personal email address or mobile number, or to send money directly to the individual or a third party.

**Be alert to red flags of fraud**: Be particularly wary if someone promises a guaranteed fixed return or exorbitant returns with minimal or no risk. If someone persuades you for investment that is neither being looked for nor suits the investor profile or compels you to transfer money or invest quickly, it can be a critical indicator of fraudulent activity.

**Do not fall for unsolicited investment advice**: Be cautious about urgently responding/reacting to any unsolicited messages or engaging in activities offering unsolicited advice on investments without confirming their authenticity. Engaging with unverified entities/ groups may lead to significant financial losses.

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**Check URLs and e-mail addresses**: Scammers often use e-mail addresses or URLs similar to registered firms. Poor spelling and grammar in messages, account names, or URLs can be a sign of a scam. Always watch out for spelling mistakes in URLs and emails before opening any attachment or clicking on any links received through social media platforms.

**Research before investing**: Conduct your own research, go through the relevant company's financials and perform proper due diligence before opting for such investment opportunities.

Investors are advised to regularly visit the official websites of SECP, PSX, CDC and NCCPL in order to keep themselves updated and make well-informed and prudent investment decisions.

On behalf of the Regulatory Affairs Division of Pakistan Stock Exchange Limited.