

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA
BEFORE SHRI AMARJEET SINGH, WHOLE TIME MEMBER

SETTLEMENT ORDER NO. SO/PSD/2024-25/7758

In respect of:

Sr. No.	Name of the Applicant	PAN	Settlement Application No.
1.	Nirmal Kumar Soni	BCHPS4866G	7758/2024
2.	Nitin Chhalani	CDLPC3829F	7724/2024
3.	Rupesh Kumar Matoliya	AFRPM8024J	7754/2024
4.	Ajaykumar Ramakant Sharma	AZJPS8694Q	7755/2024
5.	SAAR Securities India Private Limited	AAKCS2154C	7725/2024
6.	Ramawatar Lalchand Chotia	ADIPC7123K	7753/2024
7.	Kiran Jadhav	ACBPJ4456A	7723/2024
8.	Ashish Kelkar	ACAPK0708P	7717/2024
9.	Mudit Goyal	AMLPG9294K	7721/2024
10.	Simi Bhaumik	AHPPB7419L	7756/2024

(The above-mentioned entities are hereinafter referred individually by their respective names / numbers and collectively as “Applicants”)

In the matter of trading based on the stock recommendations given by Guest Experts appearing on Zee Business Channel

Background

1. The present proceedings emanate from an Interim Order cum Show Cause Notice (hereinafter referred to as “**SCN**”) dated February 08, 2024, which was passed pursuant to an investigation carried out by Securities and Exchange Board of India (hereinafter referred to as “**SEBI**”). The SCN was issued against 15 entities which were divided into 3 categories as per the details given below:

First category- Profit Makers:

- 1.1. It was alleged that five entities including Nirmal Kumar Soni(Applicant No. 1), were the entities that made profit by executing trades which were allegedly executed based on advance information of stock recommendations given by guest experts and thus, these entities were referred to as “Profit Makers”.

Second category- Enablers:

- 1.2. It was alleged that five entities, namely, Nitin Chhalani, Rupesh Kumar Matoliya, Ajaykumar Ramakant Sharma, SAAR Securities India Private Limited, Ramawatar Lalchand Chotia (also the applicants herein) aided/assisted Profit Makers in making profit based on advance information of stock recommendations of guest experts. This category of entities allegedly provided necessary support/credentials viz. trading accounts/ trading terminals, login IDs and passwords, etc., for aiding and abetting Nirmal Kumar Soni to execute trades in his account and in the accounts of SAAR Commodities Private Limited, Manan Sharecom Private Limited and Kanhya Trading Company.

Third category- Guest Experts:

- 1.3. It was alleged that five entities including four of the applicants herein (Kiran Jadhav, Ashish Kelkar, Mudit Goyal and Simi Bhaumik) were the guest experts who appeared on different shows on the Zee Business Channel and provided/issued stock recommendations to viewers of this Channel. It was alleged that these Guest Experts have allegedly provided non-public information to certain entities (Profit Makers) prior to broadcasting of their recommendations. The guest experts not only gave stock recommendations on shows broadcasted on Zee Business but they also had significant social media presence.
2. Thus, based on the investigation carried out by SEBI, the said SCN was issued against 15 entities under the provisions of Sections 11(1), 11(4), 11(4A),11B(1)

and 11B(2) of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992 (hereinafter referred to as “**SEBI Act**”), with regard to the high correlation between the trading done by the profit makers with the help of the enablers and the stock recommendations given by the guest experts, during the investigation period (February 01, 2022 to December 31, 2022).

Settlement Proceedings

3. Pursuant to the issuance of the said SCN, the Applicants filed their respective settlement application(s) in terms of the SEBI (Settlement Proceedings) Regulations, 2018, (“the Settlement Regulations”) proposing to settle the instant proceedings through a settlement order without admitting or denying the allegations.
4. Pursuant to the above, meeting of Internal Committee (‘IC’) of SEBI was held on August 30, 2024, wherein the Authorised Representatives (ARs) of the Applicants appeared on their behalf. The IC recommended following indicative amounts w.r.t the Applicants as computed in terms of Schedule II read with Regulation 9 and Regulation 10 of the Settlement Regulations.:

Table No. 1

Sr. No.	Name of the Applicant	Indicative amount (in ₹)
1.	Nirmal Kumar Soni	62,40,000
2.	Nitin Chhalani	57,20,000
3.	Rupesh Kumar Matoliya	57,20,000
4.	Ajaykumar Ramakant Sharma	57,20,000
5.	SAAR Securities India Private Limited	31,85,000
6.	Ramawatar Lalchand Chotia	57,20,000
7.	Kiran Jadhav	62,40,000
8.	Ashish Kelkar	62,40,000
9.	Mudit Goyal	62,40,000
10.	Simi Bhaumik	46,80,000

5. In addition to the aforesaid indicative amounts, the IC also recommended voluntary debarment of 6 months from the Securities Market and Joint and Several disgorgement of the ill-gotten gains amounting to ₹ 7,41,29,648 from the Applicants. In this regard, the Applicants submitted that the payment of ₹ 7,41,29,648 has already been made to SEBI pursuant to the SCN and the same may be considered. Accordingly, IC accepted the submission that the amount already paid by the Applicants may be considered as part of the settlement terms.
6. Further, the ARs of the Applicants were informed to submit the revised settlement terms ("RST") within 15 days from the date of the IC meeting in terms of Regulation 13(2)(c) of the Settlement Regulations. The Applicants vide their respective letters submitted the RST offering to pay the amount (mentioned in Table No. 1 above) and also confirmed that the disgorgement amount amounting to ₹ 7,41,29,648 has already been deposited in an interest bearing escrow account with a lien marked in favour of SEBI, prior to filing of the settlement application(s). The Applicants also proposed the voluntary restraint of 6 months from dealing in securities market.
7. The IC on consideration of the facts and circumstances of the case agreed with the settlement terms and recommended the matter for settlement. In terms of the Settlement Regulations, the settlement applications were placed before High Powered Advisory Committee ('HPAC') in its meeting held on September 30, 2024. HPAC agreed with the recommendation of the IC and recommended that the settlement application(s) of the Applicants may be accepted.
8. The recommendation of the HPAC was approved by panel of Whole Time Members of SEBI on November 12, 2024. Thereafter, SEBI, vide email dated November 14, 2024 informed the Applicants about the in-principle approval of the RST and advised them to comply with the settlement terms and remit the settlement amounts. Further, vide email dated November 18, 2024, Notice of demand was issued to the Applicants and it was informed that in terms of Regulation 15(2)(a) of the Settlement Regulations, the settlement amount shall be remitted within 30 calendar days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. It was

also informed that the period of voluntary debarment of 6 months shall be applicable from the date of passing of the settlement order.

9. The remittances of the respective settlement amounts by Applicants on different dates mentioned below have been confirmed by the concerned department of SEBI.

Table No. 2

Name of the Applicant	Date of remittance
Nirmal Kumar Soni	November 27, 2024
Nitin Chhalani	November 28, 2024
Rupesh Kumar Matoliya	December 11, 2024
Ajaykumar Ramakant Sharma	December 11, 2024
SAAR Securities India Private Limited	December 11, 2024
Ramawatar Lalchand Chotia	December 11, 2024
Kiran Jadhav	November 26, 2024
Ashish Kelkar	November 26, 2024
Mudit Goyal	December 13, 2024
Simi Bhaumik	December 04, 2024

10. On the basis of the aforesaid, I, in exercise of the powers conferred upon me under Section 15JB read with Section 19 of the SEBI Act, 1992 and in terms of Regulations 23 read with Regulation 28 of the Settlement Regulations, direct that the proceedings initiated against the Applicants, vide the SCN dated February 08, 2024 are disposed of as per the following terms:

- 10.1. The Applicants shall undergo voluntary debarment from buying, selling or dealing in securities, either directly or indirectly, in any manner for a period of six months in terms of the Revised Settlement Terms submitted by them.
- 10.2. SEBI shall not initiate any other enforcement action against the Applicants for the violations as alleged in the SCN;
- 10.3. This Order is without prejudice to the right of SEBI to initiate any action under Regulation 28 of the Settlement Regulations, including restoring or initiating

the proceedings in respect of which this Order has been passed against any or all of the Applicants, if:

10.3.1. Any representations made by the Applicants in the settlement proceedings are subsequently found to be untrue; or

10.3.2. The Applicants breach any of the clauses / conditions of undertakings / waivers filed during the current settlement proceedings; or

10.3.3. There was a discrepancy while arriving at the settlement terms.

11. This settlement order shall come into force with immediate effect.

12. In terms of Regulation 25 of the Settlement Regulations, a copy of this order shall be sent to each of the Applicants, and also to SEBI.

Date: JANUARY 16, 2025

Place: MUMBAI

**Sd/-
AMARJEET SINGH**

WHOLE TIME MEMBER

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA