

1. Tragedy in Ahmedabad: Air India Boeing 787 Crashes Minutes After Takeoff**Overview**

On the afternoon of June 12, 2025, an Air India Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner (Flight AI171) carrying 242 people crashed shortly after taking off from Ahmedabad's Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport en route to London Gatwick. The aircraft went down within 40 seconds of takeoff, crashing into a residential block of B.J. Medical College in Meghani Nagar, causing a massive explosion and widespread destruction.

Casualties and Survivor

All 230 passengers and 12 crew members on board perished in the crash — except for one: a British national, Viswashkumar Ramesh, who was seated in A11. He is recovering in hospital. On the ground, 24 people were also killed, bringing the total death toll to at least 265. Former Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani was among the deceased.

Sequence of Events

- Takeoff Time: 1:38 p.m. from Runway 23
- Crash Site: Meghani Nagar, ~5 km from airport
- Altitude Reached: Less than 625 feet
- Emergency Alert: A 'Mayday' was issued by pilots but they went silent before impact

Rescue and Relief Operations

Union Home Minister Amit Shah confirmed that rescue operations were nearly complete, with DNA matching underway to confirm identities. The aircraft's black boxes are being searched to help investigators understand what went wrong.

Air India, under Tata Group, has announced:

- ₹1 crore compensation for families of the deceased
- Full coverage of medical expenses for the injured
- Support for rebuilding the damaged B.J. Medical College hostel
- Relief flights from Delhi and Mumbai for victims' families

Aircraft Details: Boeing 787 Dreamliner

**UPDATES: Air India
Boeing 787 Crashes on
Takeoff**

The crashed aircraft, VT-ANB, was a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, introduced to Air India's fleet in 2014. Known for its fuel efficiency and passenger comfort, the Dreamliner is a wide-body, long-haul jet made from carbon fiber composites, offering:

- 20–25% fuel savings over older aircraft
- Capacity: Up to 248 passengers
- Range: 13,530 km
- Engines: GEnx-1B / Trent 1000

This is the first fatal crash involving any 787 Dreamliner variant.

Boeing 787: Past Safety Concerns

There have been quality and safety concerns about the Dreamliner in the past — but none of the planes had ever crashed before.

Federal regulators grounded the entire 787 fleet worldwide for more than three months after lithium ion batteries caught fire on two of the aircraft in 2013, leading to smoldering fires in the cargo hold. Boeing had to craft a workaround and created a metal box to surround the batteries to prevent fires from spreading.

There have also been concerns about the plane's carbon fiber fuselage. Last year, a whistleblower said he had observed problems with how parts of the plane were fastened together. The longtime Boeing engineer warned that production "shortcuts" could significantly shorten the lifespan of the plane, eventually causing the fuselage to fall apart in mid-flight.

But Boeing pushed back on those allegations. Engineering executives at the company defended the integrity of the 787's fuselage, saying they had conducted extensive testing with no findings of fatigue in the composite fuselage.

Importance of Black Boxes

Authorities are racing to retrieve the cockpit voice recorder (CVR) and flight data recorder (FDR), crucial for:

- Reconstructing the crash timeline
- Identifying mechanical or human failures
- Verifying pilot communication and flight controls

These devices are designed to survive extreme conditions and are typically located at the tail end of aircraft to improve their chances of recovery.

Why Crashes Often Happen During Takeoff or Landing

Aviation experts note that aircraft are most vulnerable during takeoff and landing — when the aircraft is close to the ground, speed and altitude are rapidly changing, and engine performance is critical. A sudden power loss or structural failure during this window can be catastrophic.

Government Response

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Civil Aviation Minister Rammohan Naidu have closely monitored the situation. Investigative teams from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the Aircraft Accidents Investigation Bureau (AAIB) are leading the probe.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Internal Security
Source: Indian Express

2. SEBI's New Verified UPI IDs: A Step to Protect Investors from Fraud

What Is SEBI Changing?

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is introducing a verified UPI payment system and a tool called 'SEBI Check' to protect investors from fraud by unregistered and fake intermediaries.

These systems will be live from October 1, 2025.

Why the Change Was Needed

Many unregistered entities have been tricking investors into transferring funds, posing as SEBI-approved intermediaries. To stop such impersonation, SEBI aims to make it easier for investors to identify genuine, registered market players.

What Is the New Verified UPI Mechanism?

- SEBI-registered intermediaries will get unique UPI IDs.
- These IDs will end with "@valid" and the name of the intermediary's bank.
- Example: A stockbroker named ABC Ltd using XYZ bank will have the UPI ID: abc.brk@validXYZ.
- These UPI handles will include:
 - A custom name (e.g., abc)
 - A category suffix like .brk for brokers or .mf for mutual funds
- A "thumbs-up inside a green triangle" icon will appear for users during genuine transactions to help verify authenticity.

What Are the Benefits for Investors?

- Secure Payments: Easier to confirm if you're paying a genuine SEBI-registered intermediary.
- Fraud Prevention: Reduces chances of sending money to fake or unregistered firms.
- Transparency: Verified UPI IDs make fund collection by intermediaries more trustworthy.

What Is the 'SEBI Check' Tool?

A new feature called 'SEBI Check' will help investors:

- Verify UPI IDs by scanning a QR code or entering the ID manually.
- Confirm bank details, such as account number and IFSC, of intermediaries before making payments.

When Will This Be Available?

Both the verified UPI IDs and 'SEBI Check' tool will be available to the public from October 1, 2025.

SAFER D-STREET

➤ UPI payment mechanism for Sebi-registered intermediaries that collect funds from investors will have a **verified sign**

➤ This mechanism, which will go live from **Oct 1**, will use a **new UPI address structure**



➤ The new mechanism will be able to weed out fraudulent entities that often **pose as genuine Sebi-registered entities**

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Economics

Source: Indian Express

3. India Drops in Global Gender Equality Rankings

India Ranked 131 in Gender Parity



According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2025, India ranks 131 out of 148 countries, with a gender parity score of 64.1%. This marks a decline from last year, when India ranked 129 out of 146 countries.

Global Overview

- Global average parity: 68.8%
- Full gender equality is still 123 years

away at the current pace

- Top performers:
 - Iceland (1st for 16th year in a row)
 - Finland, Norway, the U.K., and New Zealand follow

South Asia: Mixed Progress

- Best in the region: Bangladesh (ranked 24) – major gains in political and economic participation
- Other South Asian rankings:
 - Nepal: 125
 - Bhutan: 119
 - Sri Lanka: 130
 - Maldives: 138
 - Pakistan: 148 (last)

What the Index Measures

The Gender Gap Index tracks progress in four key areas:

1. Economic Participation and Opportunity
2. Educational Attainment
3. Health and Survival
4. Political Empowerment

India's Performance by Category

Economic Participation:

- Improved score: +0.9%, now at 40.7%
- Estimated earned income parity rose from 28.6% to 29.9%
- Labour force participation rate stayed at 45.9%

Education:

- Scored 97.1% parity
- Better female literacy and college enrolment helped improve the score

Health and Survival:

- Slight improvement due to better sex ratio at birth and healthy life expectancy

Political Empowerment:

- Dropped for second year in a row
- Female representation in Parliament fell from 14.7% to 13.8%

Conclusion

India continues to show modest improvements in areas like education and economic opportunity, but faces challenges in political representation. Despite some gains, it remains among the lowest-ranked in South Asia for gender equality.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Organisations

Source: The Hindu

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