



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on June 13, 2025

Boeing Crash in India Comes Weeks After DOJ Dropped Criminal Case

A Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner crashed in India on Thursday, killing nearly all 242 on board. The tragic incident came just weeks after the Trump administration's Department of Justice (DOJ) let Boeing dodge criminal charges over its deadly 737 MAX failures, reigniting alarm over corporate accountability and public safety.

The Deadly Crash

The flight took off from Ahmedabad headed for London Gatwick around 1:38 p.m. local time. It climbed to about 625 feet before suddenly descending and crashing onto a medical-college hostel in Meghani Nagar, a densely populated residential area.



AP Images
Remains of Boeing crash in India, June 12, 2025

The impact sparked an explosion. Authorities confirmed 242 souls were aboard — 230 passengers and 12 crew members. One British national, Vishwash Kumar Ramesh, survived the crash; everyone else on board perished.

Debris and fire [killed dozens](#) of people on the ground, as well.

Rescue teams rushed in. A mayday alert came in seconds before contact was lost. The aircraft, built for safety, stunned experts by failing so quickly under clear weather.

Investigators from India, the U.K., the U.S., and Boeing itself are examining flight data, cockpit voice recorders, engine performance, and black box evidence. Experts have noted a bird strike as a possibility, but structural issues can't be ruled out.

Boeing's stock plunged nearly eight percent, wiping out over \$7 billion in market value in a single day.

The Lawsuit Boeing Was About to Face

Before the crash in India, Boeing was already under fire. The company had been preparing to face a criminal trial on June 23, a case that had been building for years and threatened to expose Boeing's darkest chapter: the deadly failures of its 737 MAX program.

The Department of Justice [first charged](#) the company in 2021, accusing it of conspiracy to defraud the United States. The case focused on the MCAS system — the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System — installed on the 737 MAX. Prosecutors alleged that Boeing had knowingly misled federal regulators about how the system worked. Internal documents, emails, and whistleblower testimony revealed that Boeing employees concealed critical safety information from the FAA and from airline customers. As a result, pilots flying the MAX were unaware that MCAS could take over control of the aircraft and push its nose downward without warning.



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This software flaw led to two nearly identical tragedies. In October 2018, Lion Air Flight 610 crashed into the Java Sea, killing all 189 people on board. Five months later, Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 went down near Addis Ababa, killing 157. In both cases, MCAS activated repeatedly, leaving flight crews powerless. Combined, the crashes took 346 lives and shattered global confidence in Boeing's safety standards.

The DOJ case was built on years of evidence: technical reviews, insider accounts, and documented cover-ups. Prosecutors argued that Boeing's actions were not isolated errors, but part of a broader culture of fraud and recklessness. The upcoming trial promised to pull back the curtain on how one of the world's largest aerospace companies prioritized profit and production schedules over human lives.

Boeing's Guilty Plea

In June 2024, federal prosecutors [recommended](#) that Boeing be charged criminally, citing its breach of the agreement following an investigation of two fatal crashes.

In July, [Boeing pleaded guilty](#) to a single felony count of conspiracy to defraud the U.S. government. The company admitted it had deceived regulators during the 737 MAX certification process. The plea was historic — one of the few times a major defense contractor had accepted criminal responsibility.

But the plea came with strings attached. No Boeing executives would be held personally accountable. No one would serve prison time. And the company would avoid the label of "corporate felon," preserving its eligibility for lucrative federal contracts.

That leniency did not sit well with the victims' families — or with the court. In December 2024, U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor [rejected the plea deal](#), calling it inadequate and inconsistent with the "paramount interest of justice."

The court's rejection meant the case was back on track, with the trial set to begin on June 23. But just before proceedings could begin, Boeing caught another break.

DOJ Lets Boeing Walk

In a quiet move just weeks before the trial, the DOJ [struck a non-prosecution agreement with Boeing](#). Under the terms of the deal, the company would avoid trial, avoid any admission of guilt, and escape criminal convictions entirely.

Instead, Boeing would pay \$1.1 billion. That included \$445 million to create a fund for victims' families and another \$445 million to finance safety and compliance reforms. The remainder covered civil penalties and legal costs.

Critics called it a "[sweetheart deal](#)." Sanjiv Singh, an attorney representing 16 families of the crash victims, [called](#) DOJ's move "morally repugnant," allowing the corporation to "sidestep true criminal accountability."

William McGee, a senior fellow at the American Economic Liberties Project, [said](#) the Trump DOJ is once again siding with a politically connected giant at the expense of public safety. "Six years after two deadly MAX crashes, Boeing is being allowed to buy its way out of accountability," he said. Despite new whistleblower evidence and another serious MAX incident last year, "even the most egregious corporate misconduct will be tolerated — if the company is powerful enough and backs the right administration."



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Too Big to Prosecute?

The Boeing agreement is not an isolated incident. Under the Trump administration, corporate prosecutions dropped sharply — a trend that continued [from the Biden years](#). Internal DOJ memos and watchdog groups reveal a deliberate shift toward leniency for large firms accused of fraud, environmental violations, and consumer abuse.

As of March, Trump's DOJ had halted or dismissed investigations into [89 companies](#) that had been under federal scrutiny, effectively closing a quarter of all pending corporate cases. Additionally, nearly half of all Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) investigations were [paused or quietly abandoned](#).

But in a constitutional republic, the law must bind everyone — regardless of status, wealth, or political connection. Justice cannot be reserved for the weak while the strong negotiate their way out. Because when criminal accountability becomes optional for the powerful, plutocracy replaces the rule of law.

Boeing's case should have been a turning point, a moment to show that even the most powerful corporations are subject to the full force of the law. Instead, it exposed how deep the exception has become. If the law cannot reach Boeing, then who, exactly, is it written for?

This article was updated on Saturday, June 14. — Editors



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