## Boeing shares fall 8% after Air India plane crashes

REUTERS

Shares of planemaker Boeing fell 8 percent in premarket US trading on Thursday after an Air India aircraft with 242 people crashed minutes after taking off from India's western city of Ahmedabad.

Aviation tracking site Flightradar24 said the plane was a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, one of the most modern passenger aircraft in service.

The plane was headed to Gatwick Airport in the UK, Air India said, while police officers said it crashed in a civilian area near the airport, without specifying whether there were any fatalities.

It was not immediately clear what caused the crash. Boeing said in a statement it was aware of initial reports and was working to gather more information.

The news comes as the planemaker tries to rebuild trust related to safety in its jets and ramp up production under new Chief Executive Officer Kelly Orthberg.

Boeing's shares were down about 8 percent at $196.52 in premarket trading.

"It's a knee jerk reaction (to the incident) and there's revised fears of the problems that plagued Boeing aircraft and Boeing itself in recent years," said Chris Beauchamp, analyst at IG Group.

## Myanmar to lose 2.5% of GDP to March quake: WB

AFP, *Yangaon*

Myanmar's economy is set to shrink 2.5 percent in the 2025/26 financial year, largely as a result of March's devastating magnitude-7.7 earthquake, the World Bank said on Thursday.

The country's economy had already been battered by four years of brutal civil war when the March 28 tremor hit, killing nearly 3,800 people and destroying swathes of homeS and businesses.

A World Bank report predicted GDP will contract 2.5 percent in the financial year ending in March 2026 "mostly due to earthquake impacts", with output $2 billion lower than it would have been without the disaster.

"Production across all sectors has been disrupted by factory closures, supply chain constraints, labour shortages, and damage to infrastructure," said a World Bank statement.

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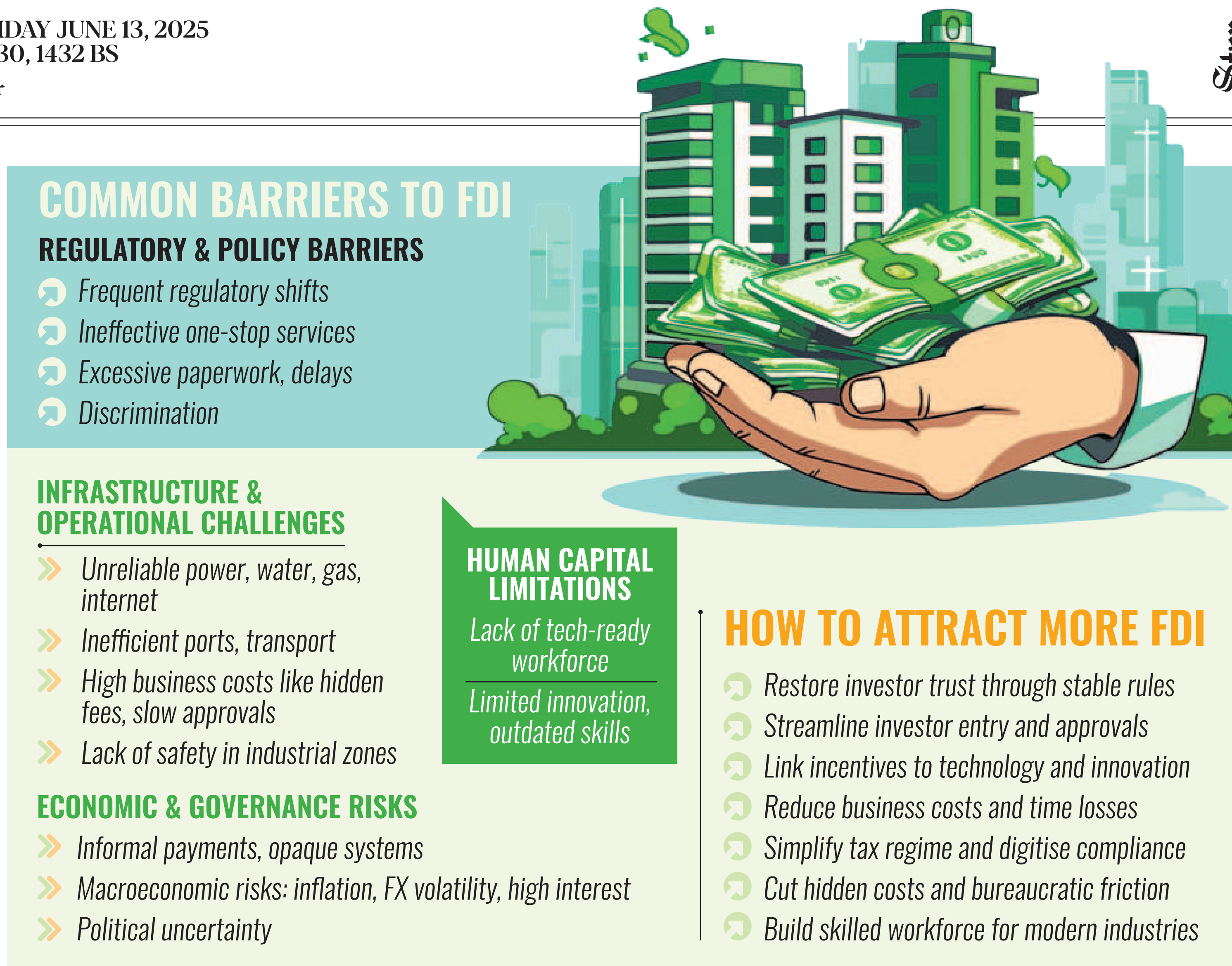


# FDI falling—experts call for urgent policy overhaul

JAGARAN CHAKMA

Bangladesh must urgently adopt a strategic, reform-driven foreign direct investment (FDI) policy by removing existing barriers to attract and retain investment to remain competitive in the region, experts suggest.

Despite recent high-level government initiatives, investor confidence continues to falter due to policy inconsistencies, weak infrastructure, and inadequate institutional capacity, they pointed out.

In a promising move, however, the government has formed a five-member high-level committee, led by Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed, tasked with crafting incentive frameworks to attract quality investments, according to a May 29 gazette from the Chief Adviser's Office.

Net FDI in Bangladesh plunged to a five-year low in 2024, according to provisional figures released by Bangladesh Bank, raising concerns over investor confidence amid growing economic headwinds and policy uncertainties.

The country received $1,270.39 million in net FDI in 2024, a 13.25 percent drop from $1,464.13 million in 2023.

Bangladesh needs a more strategic and goal-oriented approach to attracting FDI, said Syed Akhtar Mahmood, former global lead for regulatory reforms at the World Bank Group.

"We must be clear on why we want FDI—whether to access export markets, join global value chains, or promote innovation and sustainability," he said.

He said not all investors would meet every objective, so aligning investor capabilities with national development priorities was key.

Instead of offering blanket tax holidays, Mahmood advocated performance-linked incentives tied to outcomes like technology transfer, local supplier development, and research and development (R&D).

"South Korea is a prime example of how incentives, when linked to clear expectations, can drive long-term gains," he said.

Mahmood emphasised that foreign investors could catalyse innovation in Bangladesh, encouraging local firms to adopt R&D practices and global standards.

He cited a World Bank study in Turkey showing that firms receiving R&D-linked incentives grew faster in patent and design filings.

However, he cautioned that performance-based schemes must be carefully designed to avoid deterring investment.

"Done right, they can attract quality FDI while delivering on national goals," he added.

Finally, Mahmood urged a thorough review of Bangladesh's existing incentive packages, asking, "What returns have we earned from the incentives already granted?"

He stressed the need for evidence-based policy reform to ensure incentives support productivity, innovation, and sustainable growth.

Zaved Akhtar, chairman and managing director of Unilever Bangladesh and president of the Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), stressed that Bangladesh

> **Despite recent high-level government initiatives, investor confidence continues to falter due to policy inconsistencies and weak infrastructure, experts say.**

must urgently address policy inconsistency and institutional inefficiency and ensure credibility to sustainably attract FDI.

"Investors return to countries that deliver—not just promise," Akhtar said, citing delays in profit repatriation, weak intellectual property (IP) protection, and a complex regulatory regime as key deterrents.

He emphasised the need for a forward-looking, simplified tax system, digitalised compliance processes, and a unified investment window empowered to coordinate across agencies such as the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (Bida), the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority, and the National Board of Revenue.

Akhtar also called for formal investor onboarding and aftercare services, stronger financial sector governance, and the removal of sectoral restrictions that deter foreign capital.

"There's enough global FDI—Bangladesh must learn how to fish by fixing its investor journey," he noted, urging the formation of a National Economic Reform Committee to fast-track reforms.

"Credibility, clarity, and capacity must be our investment brand," he said.

Asif Ibrahim, founder and former chairperson of Business Initiative Leading Development, said Bangladesh must adopt a multi-pronged strategy to boost FDI.

This includes streamlining regulations, ensuring policy consistency, and strengthening investor protections through bilateral treaties and efficient dispute resolution, he said.

He emphasised the need for infrastructure upgrades—modern ports, stable power, and strong digital connectivity—to lower operational costs.

Special economic zones offering tax holidays, duty-free imports, and simplified profit repatriation can serve as major incentives, he said.

Promoting sectors like garments, pharmaceuticals, ICT, and renewable energy via global roadshows is vital, he said.

With LDC graduation approaching, strategies to sustain export competitiveness and develop a skilled workforce through vocational training are also essential to attract long-term, export-oriented FDI, he added.

Fahmida Khatun, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, welcomed the government's move to form a high-powered committee to boost FDI but deemed it insufficient.

Despite global roadshows, actual FDI remains low due to political uncertainty and structural issues, she said.

Khatun noted that foreign investors remain cautious, citing deterrents such as policy unpredictability, poor infrastructure, weak consumer demand, bureaucratic delays, and corruption.

The One-Stop Service portal introduced by Bida for investors is still ineffective, plagued by procedural hurdles, she said.

Additional challenges include security concerns, macroeconomic instability—such

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## Audit gaps, national traps

MAHTAB UDDIN AHMED

One reason we remain stuck in the slow lane of progress is painfully simple: in Bangladesh, the individual trumps the institution, and the institution trumps the nation. Self-interest isn't just tolerated—it's celebrated. We've perfected the art of spotting others' flaws while remaining blind to our own. Admitting shortcomings? That's social suicide. Sharing credit or professional space? Practically taboo. So, when the moment comes to prioritise, the nation quietly slips behind ego, entitlement, and institutional turf wars. In such a culture, even well-intended reforms get buried under layers of insecurity and resistance.

Take the audit ecosystem, for example. It mirrors the same dysfunction we see across public institutions, banking, and capital markets. With an estimated $17 billion siphoned from banks and FDI inflows stagnating at just $1.6 billion, according to the Financial Times and UNCTAD, investor confidence is visibly shaken. Substandard audits, inadequate enforcement, and monopolistic practices are part of the problem. The establishment of the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) in 2015 was a welcome reform, although it met fierce resistance from vested quarters.

Bangladesh has just 2,005 chartered accountants, compared to 375,000 in India, 10,096 in Pakistan, 7,000 in Sri Lanka, and 9,052 in Nepal. The FRC records only 209 registered firms. ICAB lists just 450 practising members, a startling mismatch against over 300,000 registered companies.

Ironically, Bangladesh actually has two professional accounting bodies: ICAB and ICMAB, both recognised under the Financial Reporting Act 2015. It defines their auditors as "Auditors", their members as "Professional Accountants", and their institutions as "Professional Accounting Organisations". Both ICAB and ICMAB are founding members of IFAC, both adhere to global standards, and both are part of SAFA and CAPA.

Still, only one enjoys the lion's share of statutory recognition. A popular excuse? Practical experience. IFAC clearly states that professional candidates must complete three years of relevant experience, not necessarily through articleship. ICMAB requires three years of managerial experience for associate membership and eight for fellowship. CMA members have held over 100 CEO and 300 CFO positions, reflecting leadership capacity and deep financial insight. Yet, their presence in audit and taxation remains low due mainly to a lack of opportunity.

That needs to change. CMAs should be authorised to conduct audits not covered under the Companies Act. Statutory audits for listed or Public Interest Entities (PIEs) can remain with chartered accountants. But for non-PIE companies, sole proprietorships, partnerships, trusts, and NGOs -- entities outside the Companies Act -- CMAs offer an untapped pool of expertise.

In Pakistan, CMAs can audit Associations of Persons (AOPs) and individuals and conduct statutory audits of companies with paid-up capital under PKR 3 million. The United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and Nigeria recognise multiple professional bodies for audit -- avoiding monopolies and promoting quality through competition.

In Bangladesh, audit fees have surged under monopoly control, while the availability of competent auditors has declined. The current system serves a privileged few while failing to serve the broader economy.

Yet, reforms remain stalled. Despite a reform-minded interim government, change is kept at bay, perhaps for fear of backlash from a loud but narrow segment.

With over 300,000 companies and fewer than 500 practising auditors, Bangladesh is navigating a compliance crisis with a skeleton crew. To address this, audit rights must be broadened. CMA members should be permitted to audit non-PIE and non-registered entities under the oversight of the FRC. This would expand the talent pool, reduce costs, enhance coverage, and ultimately restore trust in governance.

*The author is president of the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Bangladesh and founder of BuildCon Consultancies Ltd.*

## Dollar keeps losing market share

### ECB study finds euro slow to benefit

REUTERS, *Frankfurt*

The dollar continued to lose market share as the world's dominant currency last year but mostly smaller rivals and gold benefited rather than the euro, an ECB report showed on Wednesday.

However, an acceleration in the selling of dollar assets since April because of erratic US economic policy provides an opportunity for the single currency, ECB President Christine Lagarde has said, provided the 20-nation bloc finally pushes ahead with key integration steps including joint borrowing.

In 2024 alone, the dollar lost 2 percentage points from its share of global foreign exchange holdings and while the euro made small gains, the Japanese yen and the Canadian dollar were the big winners, the ECB said on Wednesday.

Although the dollar still had a 58 percent market share of global foreign exchange reserves by end-2024, this is down by 10 percentage points in the past decade. Meanwhile, the euro's share has hovered at just below a fifth.

Another big winner last year was gold, with central banks increasing their stock by more than 1,000 metric tons, a record pace and double the average annual level seen in the previous decade, the ECB said.

"Survey data suggest that two-thirds of central banks invested in gold for purposes of diversification, while two-fifths did so as protection against geopolitical risk," it said.

When all foreign reserves are added together, gold accounted for 20 percent, and the euro 16 percent, the ECB added.

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# Vietnam ready to further open market for US exports: minister

ANN/VIETNAM NEWS

Vietnam is ready to further open its market and offer additional incentives for US exports, and hopes for corresponding steps from the US side, Minister of Industry and Trade Nguyễn Hồng Diên told Senator Roger Marshall at their meeting in Washington DC on June 11 (local time).

Diên conveyed the message from Party General Secretary Tô Lâm and Prime Minister Phạm Minh Chính to the senator, affirming Vietnam 's determination to enhance its Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with the US, as well as its desire to promote bilateral economic and trade cooperation for the mutual benefit of their people and businesses.

Regarding the ongoing negotiations on a Reciprocal Trade Agreement between the two countries, he emphasised that Vietnam remains consistent in its approach to the talks with the US, aiming for a bilateral agreement based on respect for sovereignty, independence, political system, harmonisation and balance of interests, as well as in line with international commitments and the development level of each country.

The minister expressed his hope

Vietnamese garment workers stitch apparel at a factory in Ho Chi Minh City. Vietnam said it remains consistent regarding the ongoing negotiations on a trade agreement with the US.

PHOTO: AFP/FILE

that Marshall, with his strong political influence within the Republican Party and deep expertise in trade, agriculture, and innovation, will voice his support for Vietnam during the negotiation process, and act as a bridge to promote cooperation between Vietnam and the US in general, and with Kansas state in particular, especially in areas where Kansas has strengths such as agriculture, aerospace, and biotechnology.

Marshall appreciated Vietnam 's seriousness, proactive approach, and goodwill in the negotiations with the US. The Senator stated that he will soon raise the matter with the President and relevant Cabinet members involved in the negotiation process and expressed his hope for positive outcomes from both sides.

Additionally, the Senator spoke highly of the minister's working visit, noting that it will open up many opportunities for bilateral collaboration across various fields.

On the same day, the Vietnamese minister held meetings with leaders of Nike and Walmart that have maintained large-scale investment and business operations in Vietnam .

At the meeting with leaders of Nike, Diên praised the corporation's long-standing and responsible presence in Vietnam , which currently accounts for around 50 per cent of Nike's global footwear production and provides jobs for over 450,000 workers.

He also shared concerns about the latent impact of current tariff policies on Nike's global supply chain and on US

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