

Bangladesh likely to get back the money borrowed by Sri Lanka: FM

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Online Desk: Bangladesh is expected to get back the money borrowed by Sri Lanka by September this year as the country's economic situation is improving. "Sri Lanka is gradually doing better. They are recovering slowly. We have given them time till September (to repay the loan)," Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen told reporters at state guesthouse Padma on Sunday afternoon, hoping for repayment by Sri Lanka within the timeframe.

The Foreign Minister, who returned home Sunday from Sri Lanka, said the new government in Sri Lanka is running the country "pretty well". The Sri Lankan government hopes that they will recover from the problem and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is coming up for support, Momen said. Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe has conveyed Sri Lanka's gratitude to the Bangladesh government and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for the timely assistance as the country battles to rebuild its economy.

"I must say they are very grateful to us," said Foreign Minister Momen. Foreign Minister Momen visited Sri Lanka as a guest for the country's 75th Independence Day celebrations, for which the guest list was filled up mostly by neighbouring countries at foreign minister-level. Sri Lanka and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently reached a staff-level agreement on a 48-month, \$2.9 billion Extended Fund Facility which will also help it secure short-term funds from other donors.

Bangladesh Bank earlier granted Sri Lanka six more months to repay the \$200 million loan after the Island nation requested to extend the repayment period due to its prolonged economic crisis. In a friendly gesture, Bangladesh had extended the loan to cash-strapped Sri Lanka under a currency swap arrangement in 2021. Sri Lanka and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently reached a staff-level agreement on a 48-month, \$2.9 billion Extended Fund Facility which will also help it secure short-term funds from other donors.

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