

# IMF holds unusual talks with Pakistan over \$7 bln bailout

Reuters – The International Monetary Fund’s Pakistan mission chief Nathan Porter on Tuesday opened unusual talks with Pakistan over a [\\$7 billion](#) bailout approved by its board in September, the finance ministry and sources said.

The unscheduled visit of the IMF mission and talks beginning with meeting the country’s finance team are too early for first review of the IMF’s Extended Fund Facility (EFF), which is due in the first quarter of 2025.



A man walks with sacks of supplies on his shoulder to deliver to a nearby shop at a market in Karachi, Pakistan June 11, 2024. REUTERS

The chiefs of Pakistan’s central bank and federal board of revenue also attended the meeting besides other officials from

both the sides, the statement said.

The ministry and the IMF have not officially released details of the visit.

Sources in the finance ministry said the Nov 11-15 visit will discuss recent developments and program performance to date, adding the mission was not part of the first review.

The sources declined to be identified as they were not authorised to speak with the media.

Pakistan has been struggling with boom-and-bust economic cycles for decades, leading to 23 IMF bailouts since 1958.

The sources said the main agenda of the visit was to take a stock of the country's fiscal deficit, which included a nearly 190 billion rupees (\$685 million) shortfall in the revenue collection in first quarter of the current fiscal year.

They said external financing gap of \$2.5 billion which the South Asian nation needs for the current fiscal year, which runs to June 30, 2025, will also be discussed by the mission.

A failed attempt by Pakistan to sell its national airline, a major setback to plans to privatise all loss-making state-owned enterprises, will also be discussed along with power and gas sectors losses, they said.

At a staff level agreement in July, Islamabad had given sureties to arrange for external financing through bilateral and multilateral funding lenders, on top of roll overs of loans from friendly countries including China, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

In response to a query about a fresh Pakistani request for Chinese loan extensions, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said in a WhatsApp text that, "All roll overs have been assured."

(\$1 = 277.7500 Pakistani rupees)

Reports: REUTERS