

Pakistani, Afghan militaries establish hot line

31/12/2015 12:49 by admin

Islamabad: Pakistani and Afghan top military officials established a "Hot Line" and talked for the first time on Wednesday, amid renewed efforts to increase security cooperation, the Pakistani military said.

The direct line has been established between the Director Generals Military Operations of both the countries while "pursuing decision in the Army Chief General Raheel Sharif's visit to Kabul on December 27," the army spokesman, Lt. Gen Asim Bajwa said.

"Both DG Military Operations discussed military-to-military issues, modalities, dates of meetings between the Corps Commanders of the two sides, measures to enhance coordination along border," the spokesman said on his official Twitter.

The establishment of the hot line was seen as a major development as it would end to the mistrust between the two sides and will give a boost to security cooperation.

The visit of the Pakistani army chief was important as the two sides agreed on action against those Taliban who refuse to join the peace process.

Diplomatic efforts have been stepped up for an end to the deadlock in the peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban. The talks were cancelled after the death of the Taliban leader, Mullah Omar, was revealed.

A Quadrilateral meeting of Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the US is scheduled to be held in Kabul next week to explore options for the revival of the talks, official say.

The mechanism was established during the Fifth Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference held in Islamabad this month.

All four countries agreed to work together to create a conducive atmosphere that encourages Taliban groups to engage in meaningful and sustained negotiations.

They expressed full commitment to enabling an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned political process that promotes a dialogue between the Afghan Government and Taliban groups, including on reduction and renunciation of violence.

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