

Pakistan army chief Gen Raheel Sharif hold talks with top Chinese officials

17/05/2016 21:38 by admin

Beijing: Pakistan's powerful Army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif met top Chinese leaders and military officials here and discussed ways to enhance bilateral economic and security ties.

Gen Sharif, who is in China on a two-day official visit, yesterday met Premier Li Keqiang and Vice President of the Central Military Commission Fan Changlong, the highest military official of the People's Liberation Army which is headed by President Xi Jinping.

Li met Sharif yesterday to enhance bilateral economic and security ties, state-run Xinhua news agency reported today.

Military-to-military relations have reinforced China-Pakistan ties, especially economic cooperation, Li said, calling on both sides to strengthen high-level contact and deepen exchanges in various fields.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CEPC), estimated to cost about \$46 billion, is not only a flagship project between the two sides, but also conducive to development and prosperity of the whole region, Li said.

On his part, Sharif appreciated Pakistan's profound friendship with China and stressed that the Pakistani side expects achievements from the CEPC and is ready to provide security for cooperation.

Â Â Â **Pakistan military spokesman Lt Gen Asim Bajwa said Gen Sharif discussed with Chinese officials the measures to improve military cooperation, exponentially enhance training exchanges, defence technology and intelligence sharing and security of the CEPC.**

Sharif's visit to Beijing comes in the backdrop of assertions by Pakistan that it will raise its concerns at the international level over India's successful test of supersonic interceptor missile.

His trip followed last month's visit of Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar who held extensive talks with top Chinese leaders and military officials.

Expressing concern over India's interceptor missile test, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz said it will disturb the balance of power in the region.

He added that Pakistan will continue to upgrade its defensive capabilities by acquiring advanced technology.

India is enjoying the cooperation of the US, as Washington thinks a strong New Delhi is vital to contain China, he was quoted as saying by the Dawn.

Pakistan would raise its voice at the international level against these developments, Aziz said.

Pakistan is also peeved over the US refusal to finance eight F-16s fighter jets.

Also, the India-China ties too faced problems over Beijing blocking New Delhi's move in the UN to ban Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Muhammad chief Masood Azhar, who is accused of masterminding the Pathankot terrorist attack.

- PTI