

## **Pakistan Army chief to visit US, discuss Afghanistan**

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**Islamabad:** Pakistan's army chief General Raheel Sharif will pay a five-day official visit to the US next week where he will discuss the stalled Afghan peace process and security issues, the military said.

Army spokesperson Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa said that the army chief, during his second visit to the US in less than a year, will hold meetings with the political and military leadership of the US on different issues.

"The COAS (chief of army staff) will visit USA from November 15 to November 20. Will hold meetings with military and political leadership on wide ranging security issues," Bajwa tweeted.

According to defence sources, the army chief will brief the US officials about efforts to create peace in Afghanistan by arranging talks between Taliban and Afghan government.

"He will brief the US officials about efforts to for peace in Afghanistan," a security official said.

Pakistan had arranged the first meeting between the Taliban and Kabul in July and a second round was scheduled when news of death of ex-Taliban chief Mullah Omar derailed the peace talks.

Relations between Islamabad and Kabul have tumbled since then amid accusations and allegations.

Sharif's trip is taking place after Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited Washington last month.

The army chief also visited the US last November which was his first trip to the country after taking over the powerful army of Pakistan.

General Sharif is credited for taking stern actions against Taliban and depriving them of sanctuaries in tribal region.

- PTI