

PAK. TROOPS TO GET TRAINING AT RUSSIAN INSTITUTES

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Pakistan's Army chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa.

For the first time, Pakistani soldiers will undergo training at Russian military institutes after the two countries signed an agreement related to it, in a sign of further strengthening their defence ties.

The agreement was signed on Tuesday at the conclusion of the first meeting of Russia-Pakistan Joint Military Consultative Committee (JMCC), the highest forum of their defence collaboration, according to Pakistan's Defence Ministry.

"Both countries signed the contract on admission of service members of Pakistan in RF's (Russian Federation) Training Institutes," the Ministry said.

The Russian side was led by Deputy Defence Minister Col Gen. Alexander V. Fomin, who visited Pakistan on August 6-7 to attend the first session of the JMCC. Lt. Gen (retd.) Zamir ul Hassan Shah, Secretary Defence, led the Pakistani delegation during the meeting.

Prior to the inaugural meeting, held in Rawalpindi, the visiting dignitary called on the Secretary Defence and the Defence Minister. The two sides discussed the present status of their defence relations with the aim to further strengthen, expand and diversify mutual cooperation.

During the inaugural session of the JMCC, both sides exchanged views on bilateral and major international issues, including the situation in West Asia and Afghanistan, the Ministry said.

A comprehensive issue-based review was also carried out during which the two countries expressed satisfaction on the milestones achieved since the signing of the defence cooperation agreement in 2014.

An Army spokesman said that Col. Gen. Fomin met Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and discussed the regional security situation and matters of mutual interest, including enhancement of bilateral defence and security cooperation.

Gen. Fomin expressed his appreciation for Pakistan Army's achievements against terrorism and expressed requirement of greater cooperative and collaborative approach among global community to defeat extremism.

Pakistan's defence ties with Russia have moved past the bitter Cold War hostilities in recent years and the chill in the relations between Pakistan and the U.S. has further pushed the country towards Russia and China.

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