

## **Obama's Absence A Missed Opportunity For Him To Share America's Thoughts On New Policies, Says Najib**

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**By Ahmad Fuad Yahya**

NUSA DUA (BALI), Oct 7 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak said the absence of US President Barack Obama at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) Leaders Summit 2013 and the postponement of his visit to Malaysia, is a missed opportunity for the president to share his thoughts about America's new policy towards Asia.

"I was having this daunting prospect of having to receive two super powers within a week. I and all Malaysians were looking forward to President Obama's visit to Malaysia because he has a lot of fans in Malaysia and of course he grew up in Indonesia so he is very familiar with this part of the world.

"But beyond that, we see the strategic importance he has made. The announcement of a new policy driven towards Asia, and this would have been a golden opportunity for America and for President Obama himself to show leadership in that context of the new emphasis towards Asia," he said during the Apec CEO Summit Monday.

Najib was participating in a session on "Investing For Economic Resilience - A Conversation with Malaysian Prime Minister and Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto" moderated by Senior Editor, Bloomberg Businessweek, Diane Brady.

Last week, prior to attending the Apec Leaders Summit here, China's President Xi Jinping visited Malaysia.

Describing Obama's absence in Apec as a missed opportunity, Najib said he also believed the government of Indonesia and its people also felt the same way.

"Although his spirit is here, its not quite the same," Najib said.

"When he called me, I told President Obama that I understood (the internal problems in the United States) and emphasised that I would have probably done the same if I was in his shoes.

"The bigger threat would be Oct 17, the debt ceiling has to be reviewed otherwise the consequences would be quite severe," Najib added.

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