

3 Nation Tour Under Shadow Of Paris Terror Attacks

Bernama

Nov 15, 2015

By Manik Mehta

NEW YORK, Nov 15 (Bernama) -- Before United States (US) President Barack Obama embarked on his three-nation tour to participate at the G-20 Summit Conference (Antalya, Turkey), followed by the APEC Summit (Manila, Philippines) and the East Asia Summit (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia) on Nov 14 - US officials were highlighting the objectives he would pursue at the three venues.

As late as Friday afternoon (New York time), three of his top officials were briefing foreign journalists at the State Department's Foreign Press Centres in Washington and New York on Obama's tour - unaware that French capital Paris had been hit by deadly terrorist attacks which left more than 100 civilians dead and over 200 injured.

"It now seems the original agenda for Antalya, Manila and Kuala Lumpur has been overshadowed by the horrible Paris attacks, raising the urgency of fighting terrorism by some fringe groups carrying out criminal acts in the name of religion," an American official, speaking on condition of anonymity told Bernama.

Indeed, the Paris terrorist attacks by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) - the Da'esh - have injected a new urgency in Obama's upcoming talks with world leaders.

The ongoing crisis in Syria, which for many has become synonymous with the rise of ISIS, was already high on the agenda at the Antalya meeting of 20 leading industrialised and emerging-market nations. But the deadly Paris attacks will dramatically change the dynamics of the talks, not only in Antalya, but also in Manila and Kuala Lumpur.

Obama's meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey is aimed at finding a common approach to resolving the Syrian crisis.

Arriving from Turkey in Manila on Nov 17, Obama will visit a Philippine naval ship, meet US and Philippine sailors and senior Philippine defence officials.

Obama will hold a bilateral meeting with Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, their first meeting, and will touch a wide range of issues

from counter-ISIS coalition to maritime security to Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

The US president will participate in a meeting on the TPP with counterparts from the other 11 TPP member-countries.

In KUALA LUMPUR on Nov 20, Obama will participate in a Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) to support the strong people-to-people ties in the region.

In the evening, Obama and Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak will hold bilateral talks, and the two leaders will discuss a number of areas of mutual interest, from maritime security cooperation to the successful conclusion of the TPP and Malaysia's successful year as ASEAN Chair.

The next day, Obama will visit a refugee centre in which a non-governmental organisation offers education and vocational training to some of the more than 150,000 refugees living in Malaysia.

On Nov 22, Obama will participate in the East Asia Summit meeting.

Subsequently, the US president will hold a bilateral meeting with Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.

Obama will hold a concluding press conference that day before returning home.

-- BERNAMA

Copyright © 2015 BERNAMA

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1189790>