

## **Obama Attends ASEAN-US Summit, PM Najib Leading Malaysian Delegation**

**Bernama**

**Sept 8, 2016**

**From Mohd Shukri Ishak**

VIENTIANE, Sept 8 (Bernama) - United States President Barack Obama today joined ASEAN leaders at the ASEAN-related Summit - ASEAN-US - here, with the Malaysian delegation led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

According to Malaysia's director-general to the ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat, Jojie Samuel, for the 4th ASEAN-US Summit, Malaysia was given responsibilities as a country coordinator for ASEAN-US Dialogue Relations.

"Our focus will be on the significant progress made therein, particularly with the elevation of ASEAN-US relations to strategic partnership in November last year," he told Malaysian reporters, here.

Samuel said the leaders would also discuss regional and international issues of common concern with the US, including the steps needed to be taken to lower tensions in the South China Sea, including a halt to further reclamation, road construction and militarisation of disputed areas.

Besides Najib, the discussion is also attended by the other ASEAN leaders, including two new heads of state - Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi.

For the first time, Laos decided to hold the 28th and 29th ASEAN Summits back to back this year, unlike previous years such as in Malaysia last year, where they were held in April and November.

This is the first Asean Summit held after the establishment of the Asean Community on Dec 31, 2015 and after the adoption of ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together (ASEAN Vision 2025), which were both concluded during Malaysia's chairmanship.

In addition to the ASEAN Summits, Najib together with the other ASEAN leaders will also attend the ASEAN Plus Three, East Asia Summit and ASEAN+1 Summits with dialogue partners, which include China, Japan, India, Australia, South Korea and the United Nations.

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