

Barack Obama to address nation to lay out strategy to defeat ISIS: White House

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Washington: US President Barack Obama will tonight address the nation to reiterate his commitment and action to defeat ISIS - a terrorist organisation which claims to be behind the San Bernardino shooting in California this week that left 14 people dead.

"On Sunday, December 6th at 8:00 pm EST (6-30 am IST Monday December 7), President Obama will address the nation from the Oval Office about the steps our government is taking to fulfil his highest priority: keeping the American people safe," White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest said.

In statement issued last night, Earnest said the President will provide an update on the ongoing investigation into the tragic attack in San Bernardino. The attack carried by a radicalised couple -- Tashfeen Malik and Syed Rizwan Farook.

While Farook was a US citizen of Pakistani origin, Tashfeen was a Pakistani national. Both were later killed by the police in an exchange of fire hours after they shot dead 14 people and injured 17 on Wednesday.

In a rare address from the Oval Office, the US president, besides focussing on the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or ISIS, will also discuss the broader threat of terrorism, including the nature of the threat, its evolution, and US strategy to defeat it, Earnest said.

"He will reiterate his firm conviction that ISIS will be destroyed and that the United States must draw upon our values - our unwavering commitment to justice, equality and freedom - to prevail over terrorist groups that use violence to advance a destructive ideology," Earnest said.

Earlier in the day, Obama held a situation room meeting with his national security team. During the meeting he received an update from FBI Director, Attorney General, Secretary of Homeland Security and his intelligence community leadership on the ongoing investigation into the horrific shootings in San Bernardino, California.

The officials highlighted several pieces of information that point to the perpetrators being radicalised to violence to commit these heinous attacks. "The President's team also affirmed that they had as of yet uncovered no indication the killers were part of an organised group or formed part of a broader terrorist cell," the White House said.

Obama also spoke by phone with the French President Francois Hollande about the horrific shootings in San Bernardino. "The President briefed President Hollande on what we know about the attack and steps our intelligence and law enforcement agencies are taking to investigate," the White House said.

"The two leaders pledged continued cooperation between our two governments and with those of our allies and friends to fight terrorism, both abroad and at home," said a readout of the phone call.

The two leaders also discussed progress being made at the COP21 climate conference in Paris and agreed to continue to stay in close touch as the conference continues.

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