US engages with tech companies to track terrorists: US President

19/12/2015 15:56 by admin

Washington: US President Barack Obama said the federal government would work with high-tech companies to find better ways to track terrorists.

"One of the things we'll be doing is engaging with the high-tech community to find out how we can, in an appropriate way, do a better job, if we have a lead, to be able to track a suspected terrorists," Xinhua quoted Obama as saying on Friday at the annual year-end press conference.

Two shooting suspects, Syed Rizwan Farook and his wife Tashfeen Malik, gunned down 14 people and injured 21 others at a holiday party early this month in San Bernardino, California. Both killers were believed to have been radicalised before the massacre.

After the carnage, the US have been gripped by a growing fear that the federal government was unable to track self-radicalised individuals who were inspired by groups like the Islamic State (IS) to launch attacks from within the US.

Drawing a parallel between the challenges of preventing mass shootings and thwarting lone-wolf attacks at home, Obama acknowledged that it was difficult to detect lone-wolf attacking plots.

"We're going to have to recognise that no government is going to have the capacity to read every single person's texts or e-mails or social media," said Obama.

"If it's not posted publicly, then there are going to be feasibility issues that are probably insurmountable at some level."

Earlier this year, the Obama administration went to great length to make sure that tech companies would consent to decrypting data.

The White House, however, backed away in October and decided that it would not seek any legislation to require companies to give law enforcement agencies access to encrypted data.

"We're going to have to really review what we can do, both technically as well as consistent with our laws and values, in order to discern more rapidly some of the potential threats that may be out there," said Obama.

- IANS