

Barack Obama to host ASEAN leaders next year

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Washington: US President Barack Obama will host ASEAN leaders at a Southern California retreat next year as part of his pivot to Asia policy, officials have said.

The leaders from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will meet in Rancho Mirage, California.

"President Obama invited the ASEAN leaders to the United States during his recent trip to Asia and he is pleased the leaders accepted his invitation," Myles Caggins, spokesman of the National Security Council, White House said yesterday.

Caggins, however, declined to specify the dates.

In 2013, Obama hosted Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Sunnylands retreat in California.

'Pivot to Asia' is one of the Obama Administration's central foreign policy initiatives to "re-balancing" US interests from Europe and the Middle East towards East Asia.

The ASEAN, established in 1967 in Thailand, is a political and economic organisation of 10 Southeast Asian countries which include Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.

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