

## **Barack Obama calls on Democrats to develop sense of urgency**

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**Miami:** Wooing Democratic donors Friday in South Florida, President Barack Obama said the coming election is taking place in a "fascinating media environment" in which "strange things can happen" because celebrity and fame drive so much of the news coverage.

### ***Barack Obama***

Obama said he generally just watches sports on television, but his staff told him presumptive GOP presidential nominee Donald Trump generated 70 percent of recent news coverage. He called on Democrats to develop a sense of urgency.

"I want us to run scared the whole time," Obama said at a fundraiser for the Democratic National Committee.

Obama's remarks come as party leaders expect Hillary Clinton, his former secretary of state, to clinch the Democratic presidential nomination in the coming days. Clinton has 2,313 of the 2,383 delegates needed to win the nomination, putting her ahead of Bernie Sanders. Contests in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico this weekend, and California, New Jersey and other states Tuesday, are expected to put her over the edge.

Obama has tried to avoid showing favoritism in the race, wary of turning off Sanders supporters while votes are still being cast. But that pose is certain to shift quickly once Clinton is declared the presumptive nominee.

White House officials say the president is ready to get off the sidelines and become an active player on the campaign trail. Enjoying an uptick in his approval rating, Obama is likely to be welcomed by Clinton and Senate candidates in traditional Democratic strongholds and key battleground states.

In addition to raising money for Democrats, Obama has road-tested early versions of his stump speech. He's shown himself ready to mock Trump, casting the race as a choice between continuing along the path he charted to economic recovery or veering into dangerous territory.

Obama said if the focus is on the economy, then "this election shouldn't be close."

He participated in two Florida fundraisers Friday. The first, closed to the press, raised money for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. The committee is spearheading efforts designed to help Democrats pick up the five seats needed to retake the majority in the Senate. With Republican Sen. Marco Rubio currently opting to not seek re-election, the Senate race in Florida is viewed as intensely competitive.

The committee said tickets for the fundraiser were \$19,400 a person and it was the ninth event Obama has held for the organization during the current election cycle. Rep. Patrick Murphy, one of the Democratic candidates for the Florida Senate seat, attended, as did Democratic Sens. Bill Nelson of Florida and Ron Wyden of Oregon.

Obama then attended the DNC fundraiser at the home of lawyer Robert Rubenstein. DNC officials said about 90 people attended and tickets ranged from \$10,000 to \$30,000.

Obama did not cite the latest jobs report in his remarks to donors before reporters were escorted away.

The report showed that the U.S. economy added only 38,000 jobs in May. The unemployment rate fell to 4.7 percent from 5 percent, but mainly because about half a million unemployed people stopped looking for work.

Deputy Press Secretary Jennifer Friedman said the number for the month was disappointing, but insisted a temporary strike at Verizon had an impact. She pointed to payrolls growing at an average of 150,000 workers a month this year and an hourly earnings increase of 3.2 percent for private employees as telling "a better story of where things stand."

- AP