

Honeywell chief executive bats for jobs in Bangalore

In a direct reference to US President Barack Obama's tax reform measures to check American firms shipping jobs to other countries, including India, Honeywell chief executive David Cote said his firm would not have achieved today's growth if it had not established its facilities here and similar ones elsewhere.

'We would not have been able to increase our sales outside the US to 50 percent currently from 40 percent six-seven years ago if we had not established the kind of capability we have here (in Bangalore),' Cote told reporters Thursday after unveiling Honeywell's \$50-million new research facility here.

'And there is no place I think we would have done it to get the same result,' he added.

Lauding the exceptional talent in the sub-continent, Cote said his \$37-billion firm had grown its India headcount to 11,000 in 2008 from about 500 engineers in 2002 and sales to \$600 million from \$50 million in the same period.

Opposing Obama's proposal to offer tax incentives to those US firms that create more jobs in Buffalo (in New York state) than in Bangalore, Cote said he was in favour of creating jobs everywhere to help the GDP (gross domestic product) grow.

'It's extremely worrisome when I hear about protectionism. It's the worst possible thing that can be done,' he said.

Asked how soon Obama's tax reform proposal would become a law, Cote said it remained to be seen what shape it would take as a bill in the US Congress and how it would come out in the end.

'I don't know in what shape it (tax bill) will be presented and its outcome in the end. But I do know that anything that creates any kind of protectionism and stops globalisation activity will be harmful, not just for other countries but to the US itself,' he asserted.

Expressing reservation on the Obama tax proposal getting support from American businesses, Cote said predominantly a great majority of them would be looking at it as a protectionist measure.

'Such a proposal is bad even for those advocating and endorsing. But I am hopeful within Congress, people would look at it and say ok, we understand the need for tax revenues but we have to make sure we do it in a way it does not inhibit business growth around the world,' the CEO said.

Cote also recalled an old saying of Democrats: 'You can't love jobs and you can't hate the people who create jobs.'

'The saying gives an insight into why you have to support business and not be antagonistic towards it if you are really going to improve the standard of living across the world,' he added.

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