

US losing ground to India and China in maths, science: Barack Obama

PTI | Aug 18, 2011, 09.08AM IST

WASHINGTON: The US is fast losing ground to countries like India and China in the field of science and mathematics, [US President Barack Obama](#) has said.

Obama expressed his worry about the lack emphasis to encourage students in maths, science and engineering at a town hall meeting at Atkinson, wrapping up his three-day bus tour to rural America yesterday.

"One of the things I'm worried about and we're trying to put a lot of emphasis on in the [Department of Education](#) is, can we do more to encourage math, science, engineering, technology learning... if you are a skilled engineer, if you are a skilled computer scientist, if you've got strong math and technical skills, you are going to be very employable in today's economy," Obama said.

"That has to start even before young people get to college. So we're trying to institute a whole - what's called a [STEM program](#) - science, technology, engineering and math - in the lower schools so that kids start getting oriented towards those fields," he said.

The US president said that's where America traditionally have had a comparative advantage, but "we're losing ground to China and India" and places like that where those kids are just focused on those subjects.

"I will tell you, though, just in case there are any French teachers here or foreign language teachers, having a foreign language, that's important, too.

"That makes you so much more employable because if you go to a company and they're doing business in France or Belgium or Switzerland or Europe somewhere, and they find out you've got that language skill, that's going to be important as well," he said.