

From VOA Learning English, welcome to As It Is! I'm Jonathan Evans in Washington.

On our program today, we have two reports about technology companies. Two large Internet companies recently bought two technology businesses based in India. We will tell you about the deals later in the show. But first, our technology reporter, June Simms, tells about some American efforts to develop new businesses.

## **New York Invests Heavily in Biotech Development**

New York City and the State of New York are investing hundreds of millions of dollars to become a major player in the development of high tech industries. They have developed 40 workspaces, known as incubators, to assist start-up businesses.

Harlem Biospace is an incubator for biomedical engineering. It gives young entrepreneurs a low-cost way to develop their ideas and businesses. For a low monthly payment, they are given desk space and use of a laboratory. The young people pay for their own raw materials.

"This is great. The reason is because it is so cheap and it has the wet lab that we need. So I order chemicals that I need, and I'm given the facilities here to do my experiments."

Tyler Poore and his partner are developing a product that will kill bacteria. It can be put on household goods, like a sponge for cleaning. He and the 17 others at Biospace share a common goal: to find solutions to biomedical problems.

Edwin Vazquez is investigating the mystery of diseases, such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. He says suggestions from others in the building make the work environment at Biospace a real plus.

"There's nothing better than sitting down in a room like this when there is a lot more people around and you got something that is exciting and you go to a lunchroom and you start talking to your other colleagues. All of a sudden, somebody knows a researcher that is doing something similar to you or that can complement your research. You get in contact and things happen."

Leading hospitals and science centers are supporting inventors like Kate Rochlin, founder of a company called Immunovent. She has developed a brush to test for allergic reactions. The device is placed in the nose or mouth. The test results are correct more often than skin or blood tests.

"And from one single sample from the nose or mouth we can test for a whole panel of 72 allergens. We found that the blood test identified peanut allergies only 50 percent of the time, and we could find it 99 percent of the time. So we are far more accurate for peanut diagnosis and that's really important because that one in particular is really life-threatening."

Matthew Owens is the executive director of Harlem Biospace. He says there have been real signs of success since the company was launched last November.

“We do have companies who are already shipping, getting revenue and getting products out to customers. So, I think that is absolutely a success.”

I'm June Simms.

And I'm Jonathan Evans. You are listening to As It Is from VOA Learning English.

India is home to tens of thousands of computer software engineers and a growing Information Technology industry. The Internet companies Facebook and Google recently purchased two India-based technology start-up companies. The business deals are expected to influence others to launch start-up companies in the country. June Simms has more.

## **Interest Increases in Indian Start-up Companies**

Facebook closed its deal to buy Little Eye Labs in early January. Four engineers in Bangalore launched Little Eye Labs about a year and a half ago. The company builds mobile application software tools. The deal is said to be

worth between \$10 and 15 million. It is the first time Facebook has purchased an Indian start-up company.

Google bought the cyber security company, Imperium. Imperium has offices in Bangalore and California. Media reports set the value of the deal at about \$9 million.

The two deals are considered small, but important. Experts say they will help increase interest in Indian start-ups among foreign technology companies. Such businesses often buy small companies either for the technology they develop or the ability of their creators.

Rutvik Doshi is with Inventus Capital Partners, an investment company in Bangalore.

“Till date none of these large U.S. companies had ever acquired anything in India, nothing to write home about. If they both turn out to be successful for these respective companies, they will then now start looking at India more seriously, in terms of there is more talent, there is more technology, and entrepreneurship happening here. So from that point of view I think even though these acquisitions may not be very large. But I think from the symbolic point of view, I think it is the beginning of a new era.”

Indian software engineers have gained recognition around the world. Most of the engineers work for big Indian technology companies. But the number

of Indian technology start-up companies is on the rise. Raising money for these start-ups is not always easy.

Rajesh Sawhney helped to create a company called GSF Accelerator. It provided financial support for Little Eye Labs.

Mr. Sawhney says most of the start-ups in India have worked on developing products for the home market. But he says the recent deals with Facebook and Google will lead investors and business people to widen their efforts.

“The time now is to encourage these start-ups to start thinking global and that is what Internet allows today. We need to encourage our bright, young talent in India to now start building products for world markets like Israelis have done or like U.S. start-ups do.”

Bangalore’s successful technology services and outsourcing industry mostly does back office work for Western companies. But this work has put India on the technology map. The success that the industry has created will help open the door to future growth.

I’m June Simms.

And that’s our program for today. Be sure to join us again tomorrow for another As It Is. I’m Jonathan Evans. Thanks for listening!