

# Start-up Village begins 2nd innings with new targets

**VISHNU VARMA**  
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FOUR YEARS ago, an idea took root in Kerala's business capital of Kochi in the hope of attracting the best entrepreneurial minds among youngsters and creating successful start-ups. Start-up Village (SV), as it was called, was a nascent idea then that drew not much attention. But today Start-up Village in Kochi sits pretty with a list of grand accomplishments and a grander vision.

In April 2012, Start-up Village commenced operations as India's first public-private technological business incubator with the aim of creating at least 48 start-up companies in five years. However, within three and a half years, it became home to over 70 startups in typical incubation mode.

Officials at SV are now excited about their next phase of expansion in which they aim for complete digitization of the incubation process right from filing applications to mentoring, resource allocation and final graduation. The target is to support 10,000 start-up teams in the next five years. The government's 'Start-up India' campaign will be an added boost, top officials at SV told *IndianExpress.com*.

"The idea is recognition that startups are important for India's future. You need to create a million jobs per month and traditional industries cannot create such jobs. Through it, someone sitting in a remote part of the country can contribute to the economy," said Pranav Suresh, CEO, Start-up Village.

Suresh added that SV will exclusively deal with engineering students and campus teams in the second phase of operations.

WowMakers, a designing-cum-digital marketing company, was one of the first startups to be incubated at SV, Kochi. Started out as a graphic design studio, it now focuses more on animated explainer videos on specific topics.

"We had an absolutely life changing experience at Start-up Village...Apart from pro-

## Govt to bear patent cost to boost start-ups

*New Delhi:* To encourage entrepreneurs and innovation, government has decided to bear the entire cost of facilitation for filing of patents, trademarks or designs as well as relaxed public procurement norms for start-ups. As per the action plan announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday, the start-ups would only have to pay the statutory fees.

"Government shall bear the entire fees of the facilitators for any number of patents, trademarks or designs that a start-up may file, and the start-ups shall bear the cost of only the statutory fees payable," the plan said. **PTI**

viding us with good infrastructure, SV helped us in getting connected to many HNIs including top level executives, industry veterans, successful entrepreneurs and start-up gurus," said Vivek Raghavan, co-founder and CEO at WowMakers.

Another much talked-about start-up is Fin Robotics which rattled tech conventions in Silicon Valley last year with its wearable technology brand. 'Neyya', as the product is called, is a smart ring, which when connected via Bluetooth, can control desktop computers and iPhones. With a swipe of the finger on the smooth capacitive touchpad, one can make/receive calls and lower music volumes on iTunes.

"I am happy that it has come at the PMO level, but there are fundamental issues here like starting and closing a company. In India, it is difficult to start or close a business. The government should also streamline things in the companies act. Lack of infrastructure and rampant corruption is another problem," said Prasanto Roy, a senior media consultant.