Company full of eastern promise

Brothers, Sunil and Prashant Shah are poised to clean up in the biotech services sector.

Born and educated in Cambridge, the Shahs have set up their own chemistry research facility in India, where costs are just a third of those in the UK.

"India has the potential to be the premier destination for conducting chemistry based research for large pharma and biotech companies," the brothers say.

Their new company, Oxygen Healthcare, which has its headquarters in Cambridge, was due to be officially launched today (Wednesday, 04 May) at the start of the ERBI (Eastern Region Biotech Initiative) conference this week at Hinxton Hall.

The launch is being sponsored by beer company, Cobra, which was founded by high-profile entrepreneur Karan Bilimoria, who, like the Shah brothers, studied at The Judge Institute in Cambridge.

The brothers have subsequently been involved in consultancy - Sunil with PA at Melbourn, and Prashant with Accenture, although they also founded a do.combusiness "Surprise Your Woman", which is now run from London, although both remain on the board.

Sunhil says he was able to start his entrepreneurial career by selling his MBA dissertation on virtual drug development to a pharma company. He has also worked on projects with Adprotech, Arakis and Cambridge Biotechnology where he was director of business development. The company was sold in March to Swedish company Biovitrum in a multimillion pound deal.

Sunil says it is estimated 50 per cent of all routine chemistry research will be carried out offshore in five years time.

"The dynamics are compelling, employee costs and the cost of setting up a lab are a third of a comparable operation in the west.

"At the moment 0.5 per cent of global chemistry research is conducted in India, but this is expected to grow five-fold in the next five years."

Take a look at: www.oxygenhealthcare.com

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