CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 SUMMARY

Considering the importance of accommodation sector in the hospitality industry in respect of entrepreneurship development, economic contribution, employment generation, an analysis of the status and prospects of the sector in Assam is the thrust area of the work. The work is also directed towards assessing future prospect of hotel business in Assam.

Though the hospitality business in Assam has started in the early 1950s, its growth continued to be very slow till 1990. The total number of hotels and lodges till 1990 were 116 constituting only 29.67 percent of the total hotels and lodges available in the state with a capacity of 1500 (17.64 percent) rooms and 2602 (17.02 percent) beds of the state. With the improvement in law and order situation and with increasing volume of commercial activities after 1990s along with the improvement in transport sector, the hotel business started growing in the length and breadth of the state. Apart from such private entrepreneurial initiatives of the state, the study also focuses on the activities of the government agencies related to tourism as hospitality component is one of the mainstays of the tourism sector.

The first chapter of this work gives an over view of the work undertaken. Attempt has been made to discuss the importance of hospitality industry for proper tourism development as well as for economic development of the state. The chapter also presents the objectives of the work, its significance, a brief review of relevant works, methodology and important terms and terminology used in the work. The second chapter is devoted to depict the physical as well as socio economic basis of Assam, covering physiographic framework, climate characteristics, transport and communication, its economy along with population and its peopling process. Such basis provides vital clues in understanding the trend of development of hospitality enterprise in spatio- temporal perspectives.

The third chapter of the work gives an overview of the origin of the hotel industry in the global context, the trend of tourist arrival to India as well as to the state
of Assam and subsequent development of the accommodation sector both in the approved category as well as in unapproved category including the lodges owned by government tourism players like State Tourism Department and Assam Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. This chapter also outlines the importance of the hospitality sector and its economic aspects. While giving a look to food services of hospitality sector of the state, the chapter also provides an overview of food preference of the people with respect to the age group.

The fourth chapter deals with covering all the possible aspects required for the development of hospitality sector including physical status of the accommodation sector along with several key information regarding hotels and lodges, nature of occupancy pattern, availability of room, room tariff, etc. Attempt has also been made to understand the human resource scenario in the accommodation sector in the light of age group of employees, sex ratio, their educational qualification, etc. Issues associated with government policies for hospitality sector and institutional support base for the hospitality entrepreneurs are also addressed in this chapter.

The fifth chapter evaluates the channels used in hospitality marketing by the government agencies and entrepreneurs for selling the product. Attempt has been made to understand the means used by the individual hotels and lodges for selling their product based on information generated from a door to door survey of hotels and lodges in nine cities/towns of Assam. The sixth chapter is dedicated to understand the regulatory aspects associated with establishment of hotels and lodges and their implications in the case of Assam. The present chapter 7th is devoted to summarize the work.

7.2 CONCLUSION

Hotel business is one of the upcoming businesses especially in the towns and cities of Assam. It is an outcome of the growth of mobility resulting from diversification of economic activity, transforming social attitude and gradually growing touristic activities. Though the hotel industry is at budding state in Assam, it constitutes an important segment of the tertiary sector. It plays a vital role in the economic life of a society, its potentialities for providing employment, promoting the growth of ancillary industrial activities through its broader linkage effects.
With the development of reliable transportation and associated rising income and standard of living, there has been a rise in the flow of tourists both domestic and foreign for different purposes to the state, so the need of hotels. As a result there has been a gradual rise in the total number of hotels and lodges with the corresponding rise in rooms and bed capacity in the accommodation sector in Assam.

Fast and reliable transport system has influence in the development of tourism for a country or to a state and the quality of transport has a direct impact on hospitality sector. So far as Assam is concerned, it is connected to the other parts of India by road, rail and air transport. But, still there is lacking in terms of a sound transport and communication system as enjoyed by Indian counterpart. Geographical isolation, difficult terrain and lack of attention of both state and central government are some of the basic factors which are responsible for poor development of transport and communication facilities. The road transport is bearing a major responsibility of providing an efficient means of transport due to the limitation of rail, air and water transport. However the national highways, state highways, city roads and rural roads are found to be least maintained at majority of the places making the journey an unpleasant one for the tourists as well as general passenger traffic. Similarly roads to some of the prominent nature tourist destinations like Manas, Pobitora, etc. are in bad condition which discourages the recreational tourists to move to those tourist spots.

Assam is also connected with almost all the states of India and within Assam with the rail transport. Guwahati is served with as many as 80 trains to the different parts of India. However, for its lack of efficiency in service it is not a popular mode of transport for the high end foreign as well as domestic tourists. However, this mode is popular among the budget class domestic tourists visiting Assam.

Guwahati is well connected by air transport with the major towns and cities of the country. Guwahati is served by as many as 384 flights in a week (2011-12). Thus, it is easy to reach the gateway of the region. Guwahati is connected by Air India, Indigo, Kingfisher, Jet Airways, Jetlite, Go Air, Spicejet and Druk Airflight. However, the services of some of the private service providers are not regular and the flights are often cancelled and sometimes rescheduled. Though Guwahati is connected by air with six other towns and cities of the state, the frequency of the flights are very limited. Regular air transport services of the state connect only Mohanbari (Dibrugarh), and Kumbhirgram (Silchar) airports. There are also international flights flying to and fro
from Guwahati to Bangkok and Paro (Bhutan) twice in a week. Apart from it, limited helicopter services are also provided to the states like Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya.

As far as the water transport is concerned, it can be said to be at an infant stage. The vast potential of the river Brahmaputra and other navigable tributaries has not yet been properly utilized both in terms of utilitarian or recreational purpose. Of late, Assam Tourism Development Corporation Limited has taken a bold step to tap river tourism prospect by introducing a long distance luxury river cruise in collaboration with private players by developing water transport connectivity to tourist attractions like Kaziranga and the largest river island, Majuli.

Climate plays a very pivotal role in the hotel business. Pockets like Kaziranga totally depend on the climate. The State of Assam lies in the regime of monsoon climate characterized by cold dry winter and hot wet summer. The monsoon season starts in Assam in late June and continues to late September. The period is characterized by high temperature, heavy rainfall and high relative humidity. The post- monsoon or retreating monsoon period starts with fair weather and morning fog in late September and continues up to the month of November. This is also the period of autumn with comfortable weather and the paddy fields being full of eye-catching greenery, which begins to change to golden hue. From the later part of November, winter begins to set in, cool bracing weather begins and the horizon becomes foggy in the morning and evening hours. The periodic sequence of climatic condition also affects the occupancy pattern in hotels; especially those rely on recreational tourists. As a result of slow growth of secondary and tertiary sector of economy, flow of business clients to hotel sector is limited and that too in the major nodes of the state. Such situation hampers overall growth of accommodation sector of the state.

Though hotel industry is at infancy stage in Assam, it is gaining momentum due to its gradually transforming economy of the state along with the reduction of insurgency problems, the region faced for last three decades. At the same time the cost of travel has also fallen down following the government liberation of the airline industry which has initiated a price war among the airlines. The travel of low cost airlines and the associated price wars have given domestic tourists more options than ever before. The ‘incredible India’ campaign has also helped the growth of domestic tourism markets including religious tourism. There has been an increase in domestic tourists to
Assam, though there was a negative growth in the financial year 1998-99 and 2000-01 with compound annual growth rate of domestic tourists from the financial year 1996-97 to 2011-12 being 14.21 percent. The foreign tourist visits to the state too have been increasing over the years, though there was a negative growth during the financial year 1997-98, 2001-2002, 2003-2004 and 2005-2006. The foreign tourists visit to the state during the financial year 1996-97 to 2011-12 witnessed a compound annual growth rate of 10.83 percent. Though there is a gradual increase of tourist traffic to the state, it accordingly enhanced the demand for hotel rooms in the state.

Though in terms of quality accommodation, situation of the state is found to be not so impressive, it has a good number of hotels and lodges to meet the growing demand of the tourists of different economic background. As the movement of tourist to the state is increasing, the hotel business is also increasing gradually. Apart from the private operator, Department of Tourism, Government of Assam set up several tourist lodges in all leading tourist spots of Assam. At present the state has to its credit 20 numbers of approved hotels having a room capacity of 723. However, out of 2483 approved hotels of India, Assam has a share of only 0.81 percent of the total approved hotels in the country. The maximum numbers of approved hotels are in the category of three stars (14 numbers) with a room capacity of 523 followed by two star hotels (5 numbers) with a room capacity of 129. However, Assam does not have five star and five star deluxe hotels for the high end domestic or foreign tourists. With the improving law and order situation, Assam has registered a positive growth in terms of tourist arrivals to the state. If the economic growth continues and law and order situation further stabilized in future, it will surely attract more and more corporate, business and leisure tourists, etc. to the state. In Assam, especially Guwahati, the gateway to the northeast which is one of the 100 fastest growing cities in the world has registered potential growth in terms of physical expansion, population and commercial activities. With the commercial activities increasing in many folds, Guwahati has been able to attract more and more corporate, business and leisure travelers to the city. Seeing this prospect, a good number of hospitality giants, both national and international like Taj group, Mariott group, Radision group, Hyatt group, Lemon Tree group apart from local entrepreneur/companies have spread their wings and eyeing for Assam’s hospitality market and are in the process of setting up approved hotels ranging from three star to five star category in Guwahati.
So far the hotel industry is concerned; it is observed that there has been considerable degree of spatial variation in terms of its growth and trend of development. The factors responsible for localization of the initial establishments and the present hospitality firms are numerous. The geographical spread of the industry is determined by great complexity of consideration namely, historical, political, economic, natural and many other associated factors.

The hospitality sector can act as a catalyst for accelerating economic growth for economically backward state like Assam. Though the hospitality sector in Assam is at budding stage the hospitality sector is one of the important sector for economic development of Assam in terms of its contribution to employment generation, foreign exchange earnings, income generation, and output growth that hospitality sector has significant impact on state economy. The employment and income effects of hospitality sector are very closely related and follow a common source, namely expenditure on accommodation and food and beverage by different type of tourists. Tourist expenditure provides direct income and also generates employment in hotels, restaurant, bars, bakery etc. This sector also generates an immense volume of indirect employment and income with a multiplier effect.

Sound planning and policy initiative is the backbone for successful entrepreneurship development in any front, and hospitality sector is not an exception in this regard. The experience of hospitality sector of many areas of the world has demonstrated that, on a long term basis, the planned approach to developing this service sector can bring benefit without significant problems, and maintain satisfaction level of the respective market segments. The scenario of entrepreneurship in the hospitality in India vis-à-vis Assam is in fact that the result of policy initiatives undertaken over the years. According to the North East Industrial and Investment Promotion Policy (NEIIPP), 2007, the Central Government has approved a package of fiscal incentives and other concessions for the North East Region which would be valid for 10 years. The policy advocates for total tax free zone, for units located anywhere in the North East, Central Excise benefits available for goods, transport subsidy for both raw materials and finished products to and from the region. The policy also states about 30 percent capital investment subsidy for new and expansion of existing units without any limit; working capital interest subsidy @3 percent on loan for industrial units and comprehensive insurance scheme for industrial units where 100 percent premium would be borne by the
Government of India. Apart from different policies, both the central and state government has set up several institutions in the state like Assam Tourism Development Corporation (ATDC), Assam Small Industries Development Corporation Limited (ASIDC), Assam financial Corporation (AFC), Assam Industrial Development Corporation (AIDC), Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE), North Eastern Development Finance Corporation (NEDFi) etc. for necessary guidance, finance, marketing and nurturing the entrepreneurship in the state including hospitality sector.

The hotels and lodges of Assam registered an impressive growth from 2005 onwards which accounts for 26.85 percent share in the volume of hotels and lodges with an average room occupancy of 45.79 percent. However, the economy category of hotels and lodges dominating the hotel business registering 66.11 percent of the total hotels and lodges in Assam with the corporate clientele dominating (41.39 percent) the hotel business.

Human resource plays a very crucial role for the success of an organization and it is more so in the case of hospitality industry. Hospitality industry is characterized by high level of human involvement in both the production and delivery of its service to its guest. Many ways and means may be employed to deliver hospitality services to its guests, but the role of human as individuals or groups is almost universal. With the changing trend of hospitality industry and its intangible nature, it demands skilled personnel to deliver quality service at the present competitive market environment. As regard to the workers of the hotels and lodges in the state, 63.67 percent are of below 29 years. Dominating age group of workers in the hotels and lodges is found to be 19-29 years and they represent 57.91 percent of the total work force of the workers in the sector. Within this age group, the people from rural areas migrate to the nearest city/town in search of employment. The workers in this group are generally unmarried and do not have much family responsibilities, therefore they find an easy place to get job like hotels, lodges, restaurants etc. So far educational background of the hospitality workers is concerned, majority of them are below HSCL (63.67 percent). The number of hotel management professionals i.e. trained professionals working in the hotel industry in Assam is found to be very less, i.e. 5.40 percent of the workers which has direct effect in the delivery of service to its guests. The male worker dominates the sector which accounts 92.09 percent of the work force. Majority of the hotel employees (69.78 percent) found to be getting less than Rs. 2500 per month and ironically,
majority (66.91 percent) of the hotel employees had to work for more than 12 hours in Assam. Only 9.35 percent of hotel employees enjoy weekly off days; 8.99 percent of the employees enjoys ESI (employees state insurance) facilities; 9.35 percent of them get provident fund benefit; 2.16 percent enjoy casual leave; 2.16 percent enjoy earn leave and 2.16 percent enjoy medical leave facilities. In other words employees of the hotel sector are deprived from even basic rights of workers. Under such circumstance, only a few numbers of hotels and lodges of the state, i.e. 7 out of 391 hotels and lodges (1.79 percent) are having employees’ union. Thus, Hospitality is found to be one of the sectors in the economy where the employees are mostly exploited in terms of salary, working hours and other associated benefits.

Success of hospitality sector in an area basically relies on need based, area specific human resource development. The relevance of hospitality education is an important issue for the hospitality industry as it becomes the major driver for the hospitality business. Hospitality industry is now putting much effort in education, training and development. There have been significant efforts at generating hospitality related skills in India. As of now there are 21 Central Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition and 12 such institutes under state government, affiliated to National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology in the country. Apart from these institutes, 18 private hotel management institutes have also been given affiliation by the National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology. Food Craft Institutes have also been established in various parts of the country for providing training in hospitality related disciplines. The scenario of hospitality education in the state is improving gradually, as a number of institutions offering hotel management courses in recent years. At present Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition, Guwahati is delivering 3-years B. Sc in hospitality and hotel administration along with post graduate diploma in accommodation operation and management and certificate course in craftsmanship course in food production and one Food Craft Institute at Samaguri delivering certificate course in craftsmanship course in food production, bakery and confectionary, reception, housekeeping and food and beverage service at the government level. However, there are other organizations in private sector like Air Hostess Academy, Frankfinn institute, Sky Aviation Academy etc. which is also contributing towards hospitality education in Assam. The Ministry of Tourism,
Government of India, has taken several steps to impart skills to the existing manpower in this sector and to create skills in youth as vocational options. In the context, the *Hunar se Rozgar*, is a key initiative of the Central Ministry of Tourism to create employable skills. The Ministry of Tourism has initiated training programmes to cover certain core service specific area of hospitality sector namely Food Production, Food and Beverage Service, Housekeeping and Bakery to improve the service conditions of the catering establishments, hotels and lodges. However, such trained workforce has not yet been absorbed by the state’s hospitality sector.

The marketing process has become a vital ingredient towards the success in every sector of the economy including business organization or even non-profit organizations. Assam as one of the most promising tourist destinations in India requires sound campaigning of its hospitality sector to reap its touristic potential. It has indeed, so much to offer to meet varied needs of tourists both in terms of natural as well as cultural fronts. The government and private entrepreneurs must keep abreast with all modern development in the highly technical and complex field of tourism and link this with properly and planned logistic for travel, food and accommodation along with a sustained and planned marketing effort. Department of Tourism, Government of Assam organizes fairs and festivals at local, national and international level apart from having its Tourist Office at different places in the country as well as within the state to promote tourism sector. The fairs and festivals are organized at the prominent places in the state to showcase the potentiality of the state tourism products. The entrepreneurs in the accommodation sector is also using different channels for marketing their product by using hoarding, website, electronic and print media, travel agent, rickshaw puller, auto rickshaw and taxi driver and internal marketing are some of the support base, frequently used by hoteliers of the state.

For setting up and management of hotels and lodges, many formalities are to be completed for obtaining permissions and licenses. Discussions with the hospitality entrepreneurs in Assam revealed that for most of them obtaining permissions and licences are a time consuming process. As a result, the growth of quality hotels and lodges in the state is not impressive except in the economy category. Under such circumstances, a single window clearance mechanism should to make the procedures easy, less time consuming, which may encourage potential investors, and existing ones...
to build a sound basis of accommodation sector in the state. Due to complex and time consuming process of approval, the entrepreneurs of accommodation sector in the state prefer to go for unapproved hotel business as these establishments do not require all these formalities except a trade license from the municipal authority to run the business. Thus, the growth of non-classified hotels category is found to be maximum in the state and hospitality sector is deprived from quality services and hospitality environment. On the other hand, due to soft legal formalities, hotels and lodges especially in the unapproved category, many a time contributing to law and order problem. As these hotels and lodges do not maintain proper guest information record, taking the advantage of the fluid legal situation, anti social activities in the form of flesh trade, drugs, gambling, etc., are in the rise in the hotels and lodges, even in major nodes of the state. Though, such activities may help the owners to earn revenue from increasing occupancy, they pollute the social environment.

7.3 MAJOR FINDINGS

The present work unfolds many new issues associated with hospitality sector in Assam. Some of the important findings of the work are as follows:

1. Transport facilities to and from the state are not yet adequate to cater to the growing demand of tourists. Less room occupancy which is one of the problems of accommodation sector can be attributed to such poor transportation systems.

2. The hotel business is very sensitive to the law and order situation. The hotel occupancy drastically goes down with, civil unrest, law and order situation, etc. that prevails in destinations.

3. Seasonality in hotel occupancy is a character in those destinations of the state, which relies more on recreational tourists as occupants. In destination like Kaziranga hotel industry is basically seasonal. Due to marginal development of secondary and tertiary sector that too polarized in pockets of the state, trend of growth of non-seasonal business class travelers are limited yet, both numerically and spatially.

4. Affluent domestic and foreign tourist segment have not yet been attracted to the state due to the non availability of quality accommodation and service.

5. Government machineries have not been able to bring the benefit of the government policies closer to the hospitality entrepreneurs. For example, announcement for power subsidies are made long back, but not yet extended to the hospitality entrepreneurs.
6. Institutional support to the hospitality entrepreneurs is minimum. Though, government has set up various institutions but they have failed to meet the expectations of both perspective and existing entrepreneurs.

7. Financial institutions do not have separate schemes for hospitality entrepreneurs. The hospitality entrepreneurs are availing loans from financial institution at a very high percentage of interest ranging from 12 to 15 percent (keeps on changing). Due to under occupancy most of the hotels and lodges have not been able to keep up their promises of repaying their loans to the financial institutions. These lead to the selling or closure of the units in some cases.

8. The mushrooming of hotels and lodges in the unapproved category leads to the stiff competition among themselves, thus eating up the share of business.

9. Though the hotels are being added with increase in number of rooms, the industry is suffering from the problem of under occupancy, with room occupancy going down even 20 percent in some cases.

10. The hotel industry of Assam suffers from an acute shortage of trained, skilled manpower at various levels and trained experts for running hotels, particularly at executive level. The percentage of technically trained manpower in the hotels and lodges of Assam stands at merely 5.40 percent.

11. From academic background, 63.67 percent of the hotel workers in Assam are below the level of HSLC. In terms of age structure majority of them (63.67 percent) are below 29 years of age. Interestingly, 92.09 percent of the hotel workers are male.

12. Hotel workers of Assam are deprived from basic minimal service conditions. 66.91 percent of the hotel workers work for more than 12 hours without extra benefits like overtime, compensatory off etc. in lieu of working over time. 69.78 percent of the employees are getting salary less than Rs 2500 which is below the minimum wages prescribed by the State Government.

13. Marketing is another problem which is faced by hotel industry in Assam. Poor marketing fails to attract tourists to the state. Though the Department of Tourism, Government of Assam is putting some effort with its limitation in the publicity budget from the state government but at the same time marketing from the entrepreneur side is also very limited and use the traditional methods.

14. Although the hotel industry in Assam is suffering from many problems, field investigation revealed that there is steep rise in the development of hotel business all over Assam particularly in economy category, which alone constitute for 66.11
percent of hotels and lodges of the state. Share of budget category is also moderate but the share of luxury category is very less i.e.11.09 percent.

15. The slow growth of secondary and tertiary sector can be attributed to be a major cause for the slow growth of the hotel industry in the state. Increasing night bus services and evening flight services from major nodes of the state also plays an adverse role in promoting the accommodation sector in comparatively highly accessible nodes in the state.

7.4 SUGGESTIONS

After evaluating the status of the accommodation sector in the state, the following suggestions are placed for the promotion of accommodation sector in the state:

1. The growth of tourism and hotel industry depends upon the adequate development of transport and communication facilities. The government should take necessary steps for expansion of efficient road, railways, and air transportation facility.

2. National and international hotel chain should be encouraged to come forward to setup approved category hotel especially 5star and 5star deluxe in the state by offering investment incentives.

3. Though the central and state governments are giving numbers of benefitters through different policies and schemes to the hospitality entrepreneur, field experience reveals that merely 10 percent of entrepreneur of the sector is aware of such policies and schemes. Therefore it is suggested that the Department of Tourism, Government of Assam, should be entrusted to organize business awareness camp among the prospective and existing entrepreneurs from time to time.

4. Electricity should be made available at concessional rates to the hospitality entrepreneurs by the state government to encourage them.

5. Adequate loan facilities should be provided by the governments, financial institutions for construction of new hotels at liberal terms of finance and for the renovation and modernization of facilities in the existing hotels.

6. Since the hotels and lodges in Assam gets maximum business from corporate clientele, therefore it is suggested that the government and nongovernmental organizations should take initiatives to educate the owners of the hotels/lodges
especially in the unapproved category about the importance of providing clean and hygienic service to the guest and subsequent benefit derived from such services.

7. Hotels/lodges should encourage adapting the ‘day use basis’ during slack period. This will encourage increasing room occupancy and will help those who visit the town only for the day and back to the other place using evening or night services.

8. Hotel industry in the state should employ at least 30 to 40 percent skilled staff to provide extensive personal services which is the need of the hour to improve the images of the hotel industry. If necessary, government may adopt legal provisions to make it mandatory to accommodate skilled staff in hotel business. It will enhance the service standard of hotels in one hand and open room for skilled/trained staff in hotel business.

9. Employees must be given training at regular interval by the industry expert to keep them abreast with the recent development in the hotel industry. For the small hotels/lodges etc., where it is not possible to have separate training departments, can join hands with the other hotels/lodges forming a hotel owners association in the respective area and can train the employees collectively in a batch manner. This will be cost effective for the individual hotels/lodges.

10. The pay package should be attractive for the employees to especially those with hotel management degree/diploma if the hotels want to retain hotel management professional and subsequently improve the standard of the service in general.

11. Working hours should not exceed more than eight hours. If the employees are made to work for more than eight hours, overtime should be given. Additionally there should be weekly off day for the employees. Benefits like provident funds, employees’ state insurance, casual leave, earned leave, and medical leave should be extended to the employees of hospitality sector.

12. The importance of hotel in terms of economic importance, employment generation and career prospect should be included in school syllabus and hotel management as a vocational subject may be incorporated in 10+2 standard.

13. The Departments of Tourism and Assam Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. who are the nodal agencies of government of Assam for the promotion of tourism should be given a professional look by employing professionally qualified and experienced persons having knowledge of management and marketing to head the organization rather than shifting bureaucrat from administrative service, often transfer to the other job.
14. The state government should allocate sufficient budget to the Tourism Department particularly for publicity purposes through electronic and print media at both national and international level to project the positive image of the state apart from undertaking infrastructural development.

15. Familiarization trips must be organized at regular intervals by inviting tour operator, travel agent, travel writer, etc. from within the country and from different countries particularly tourist generating countries of Asia and Europe to showcase the heritage of Assam and to lure the recreational tourist to the state.

16. The entrepreneurs of the economy category hotels/lodges can form the owners association and market the product collectively using different channels. The owner association of that particular area can also print hotels and lodges directory and market it with the travel agent of the country. Using these channels they can reach out to many prospective customers with a minimum budget.

17. The state government should come forward to help the hospitality entrepreneurs by making regulatory process simpler and easier thus making the process less time consuming and if possible should be made one stop shop for all regulatory processes.

18. A sound tourism policy based on the ground reality is the need of the hour. Tourism Department should form a task committee nominating at least one expert from all the stake holder of tourism infrastructure so that the required input can be given time to time from each area for the development of tourism. This committee can also be made to act as a pressure group for the government for the cause of tourism development in the state. The committee should stress on the infrastructural development for all class of tourist and utilization of resources as the best possible way by giving maximum benefit to the locals.

19. Viable alternative business should be thought during off season specially places like Kaziranga where the hotel business is seasonal in nature.

The problem of lower revenues or closure during the off season in the destinations like Kaziranga could be addressed with propositions of alternate activities by the hospitality industry to tourists. Such market propositions can create alternative business during the off season to attract visitors to the Kaziranga region and keep the hotels running with guests. Some of the viable alternatives that could be developed in
the region are: (i) ethnic tourism (ii) adventure sports (iii) health and eco tourism (iv) children’s summer adventure camp (during summer vacation) and (v) tea garden trail and tea festival. However, the development of such entrepreneurial business venture would definitely require reasonable amount of capital and human resources. Interested parties (hotel, lodge owners or new entrepreneurs) can make business plans for innovative market offering and present before potential investors and the Department of Tourism Government of Assam for investment and financial aid. Right planning and promotion could create new vistas for alternative business during the summer months and help the hospitality industry in the world famous national park thrive all around the year.

The future of the hotel industry depends upon the economic, social, political, scientific and technological changes. The hotel industry is very much sensitive to all these factors. Changes in any of these aspects or in any branch of activity are immediately reflected in this industry. It is a type of business in which technique, ideas, modes and methods of operation undergo continual alterations. The present study has tried to unfold a number of issues related to the development of hotel industry in Assam, as per the objectives of the work. Therefore, it does not claim to have examined all the issues associated with the industry. But it has surely covered at least some vital aspects confronted by the industry. However, with the vastness of the industry, the treatment of the problems leaves, still there lies further scope of study in a number of directions. The present work, first of its kind, will surely lead to the path for further research in developing the hospitality sector of Assam.