

Institutional Support for the Development of Food Processing Home-Based Enterprises in Assam: A Case Study of Sonitpur District of Assam

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Abstract: A newly started enterprise is like a new born baby. The new born baby needs very special cares and supports of the parents and the family; similarly a newly formed enterprise needs various kinds of supports in finance, technical know-how, marketing etc. from the government and from the society. An entrepreneur should have awareness regarding various plans and policies, subsidies and assistance of the government, especially given to the micro enterprises. In the Indian context, the institutional support systems include three aspects such as support system developed by the Central Government, support system developed by the State Government and Non-government support system. The success of entrepreneurs is based on the proper utilization of various existing supports available in the economy. Support systems may be in different forms such as education & training, technical support, financial support, promotional support, support in marketing and family and society's support. The paper tried to study the institutional support system for the micro enterprises, especially to the food processing home-based enterprises of Sonitpur district of Assam. In this regard, a study was conducted in Sonitpur District of Assam by selecting 50 samples of food processing home-based enterprises by applying snowball sampling method from the different parts of the district depending upon the time and cost.

Keywords: Entrepreneurs, Food processing, Home-based enterprise, Institutional support,

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I. INTRODUCTION

Starting an enterprise is not an easy task and the entrepreneurs need strong support and advisory system in order to turn their startup idea into valuable business enterprises. At the beginning, an entrepreneur needs various kinds of knowledge relating to technology, location, production, finance, market etc. An entrepreneur should also have awareness regarding various plans and policies framed by the government, subsidies and assistance given for the development of business enterprises, especially to the micro enterprises. It is essential to know the existing support systems developed by Central Government and State Governments for the development of enterprises. In the Indian context, the institutional support systems include three aspects such as support system developed by the Central Government, support system developed by the State Government and Non-government support system. The success of the entrepreneurs based on the strong entrepreneurial ecosystem consists of six domains viz. a conducive culture, enabling policies of leadership, availability of appropriate finance, quality human capital, venture friendly market and institutional and infrastructure supports. The last one plays a very important role in the cultivation of entrepreneurs. Support systems may be in different forms such as education & training, technical support, financial support, promotional support, support in marketing and family and society's support. Recently central and state government provided various incentives for the development of food processing industry in the region. The food processing industry is an important industry in India which interlinked agricultural products and industries. This industry is the second fastest growing industry in world by following the tourism industry. The food processing sector in India is poised for enormous growth and already contributes about 12.7 percent of the country's GDP and provides nearly 60 percent of all job opportunities by directly employing around 1.6 million workers. The industry is the 5th largest sector in the country in terms of production, consumption, export and growth. The growth of Indian food processing was 91 billion US dollars in 2010 and it is growing at the rate of 13 percent per annum. By 2017, it is expected to touch 223.7 billion US dollars. The availability of raw materials, changing lifestyles and relaxation in regulatory policies is fuelling the growth of this industry. In Assam there are tremendous opportunities for developing food processing industries. To give a major boost to the food processing sector in the state by adding value and reducing wastages and

losses at each stage of the supply chain. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries established a mega food park, “North East Mega Food Park” at Nathkuchi Village near the Tihu town ship of Nalbari District in Assam on 28 May 2015. Besides that, the World Bank came forward to invest 200 billion US dollars in the project, ‘Assam Project on Agri-business and Rural Transformation’ (APART) on Feb 2016. On Nov. 6, 2016 ‘Patanjali Ayurveda’ set-up a Mega Food Park at AID Complex , Ghoramari of Sonitpur district of Assam.

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

For the last seventy years, the government of India includes various plans and policies in its five year plans for the development of small scale industries in the country. Various institutional supports provided by the government through various agencies for entrepreneurial development in the country for the last four decades. But the results were not satisfactory as per the expectations; the reason is the dissatisfaction of the entrepreneurs regarding government plans and policies. There may be some gaps between the entrepreneurs and various government agencies. Generally, there are two types of entrepreneurs in our country such as entrepreneurs by choice and entrepreneurs by necessity. Entrepreneurs by choice are willingly take risk and passionate enough to reject other viable sources of income and jobs. They are generally educated youth of GEN-Y (1980-2000). But the Entrepreneurs by necessity exist due to the needs and wants of the individuals and they are at the bottom of level of the society and generally less educated. They become entrepreneurs and start-up their enterprises to earn their bread and butter. They are not interest in government plans and policies, because they cannot stand in the long queues to get the government benefits or subsidy, and they cannot waste their valuable time to materially please the government officials for filling forms, prepare project etc. If they stop their working for a day to avail government benefits, they would have to sacrifice their meal for the day. Most of the small and micro entrepreneurs of the Sonitpur district of Assam belong to that category of entrepreneurs, especially in the food processing home-based sector. There should be a positive and realistic solution for the implementation of these plans and policies.

In the above context, the topic entitled, “Institutional Support for the Development of Food Processing Home-Based Enterprises of Assam: A Case Study of Sonitpur District of Assam” has been selected for the study.

III. FOOD PROCESSING HOME-BASED ENTERPRISES IN SONITPUR DISTRICT OF ASSAM

The old Sonitpur District of Assam (before bifurcation of 2015) was located in the middle of the state covering the area of 5,204 sq. km which was 6.6 percent of the total area of the state. Sonitpur district was the second largest district of Assam after the district of Karbi Anglong according to the geographical area. There were 3 sub-divisions, 14 Development Blocks and 1,876 villages in the district. The District topography was climatically suitable for the development of horticulture crops. The area wise production and yield of important horticulture crops for the development of food processing enterprises are presented in the Table No. : 3.1

Table No.: 3.1 Area and Production in Different Horticulture as on 31-03-2016

Name of the Horticulture Crop	Area in Hector	Production in MT	Average Yield MT
A. Fruits:			
Banana	2000	3880	0.19
Pineapple	535	8025	15
Orange	130	1300	10
Lime & Lemon	475	1650	6
Papaya	370	4810	13
Guava	220	3018	13
Litchi	505	2048	4
B. Fruits (Nut crop)			
Aeronaut	4430	3322	0.75
Coconut	1325	8944	7
C. Spice			
Black pepper	125	200	1
Ginger	1450	8700	6
Turmeric	550	4124	7
Coriander	1035	2070	7
Chilies	690	4140	8
Garlic	136	629	5

Onion	300	1365	3
D. Ravi Vegetable			
Potato	6100	54,910	9
Tomato	2736	40040	15
Brinjal	2200	33600	18
Cabbage	4731	10965	15
Curly flower	2321	23210	10
E. Kharif Vegetable			
Ladies Fingers (Bhendi)	663	9950	15
Ridge gourd	1330	13500	10
Cucumber	495	2490	4
Pumpkin	72	720	10
Bitter gourd	392	3920	10
Pointed gourd	570	3060	5

Sources: District Agriculture Office, Sonitpur, Tezpur

IV. HOME-BASED ENTERPRISE

A home based enterprise is a modern form of cottage & village industry with new definition. The Home-Based Enterprises (HBEs), Home-Based Business (HBB) & Household Industries (HIs) are synonymous



Figure: 4.1

and these types of enterprises are belonged to micro enterprises, since the heavy industries are not allowed to establish along with the home or in the residential area by the government regulations. Micro enterprises are those enterprises where total investments are not more than Rs.25 lakhs in case of manufacturing sector and not more than Rs.10 lakhs in case of service sector according to the Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006. Earlier (Before May 2007) these industries belonged to the cottage industries and came under the purview of 'Ministry of Small Scale Industries'. Only difference of a cottage industry and a home-based enterprise is that the location of a cottage industry is restricted in villages whereas the home-based enterprise may also locate in urban and semi-urban areas. Home-based enterprises are based on locally available resources, which are employment potential at low cost of capital. Generally, HBEs are run by the members of the family to meet the local requirements. Census definition of 'Household Industry' provides that as an industry conducted by the head of the household himself/herself and/or by the members of the household at home or within the village in rural areas, and only within the precincts (boundaries) of the house where the household is in urban areas. Home-based enterprises cover artisans, skilled craftsmen and technicians who can work in their own houses if their work requires less than 300 square feet space. Home-based enterprises are sustainable in nature where power and fuel consuming plant and machineries are hardly used. Different types of locally available horticulture crops help to boost food processing home based enterprises in the district. Pickle from fruits, bamboo shoot, King Chilies (*Bhoot Jalakia*) and vegetables, juice, jams, 'Behuwai' / 'Kharoli' (mustard seeds), masalas, traditional cake (*Laddu & Pitah*), *chira & muri laddu* etc. are very famous in Assam and neighboring states. King Chilies and Litchi of Tezpur in the district are world famous. Now a day the '*Laddu & Pitha*' (typical Assamese cake) become very popular and demandable items. These items are not only demanded in the seasonal festival but also for different types of occasions like meeting, conference, seminar, work-shop, marriage party etc. *Muri Laddu & Chira Laddu*, Cream Bond Bread etc. of the district have a great demand in local market as well as in the neighbouring state like Arunachal Pradesh.



Figure: 4.2

V. NEED FOR INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Institutional support system is necessary to provide all kinds of help needed by the entrepreneurs to start-up their enterprises. The new entrepreneurs need various types of information regarding the existing support systems developed by the central and state governments. Basically, the institutional support system is necessary at three stages of the development of entrepreneurs. These are (a) start-up and promotion of a business or industrial unit; (b) day to day management or routine management and (c) expansion and diversification.

VI. Objectives of the study:

The study was conducted on food processing home based enterprises of Sonitpur district of Assam with following objectives:

- (i) To study socio-economic status of owners of the food processing home based enterprises in the district ;
- (ii) To study the institutional support avail by the food processing home-based enterprises in the district;
- (iii) To examine the relationship between institutional support and earning of the food processing home-based enterprises.

VII. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

There is no association between institutional support and earning of the food processing home-based enterprises.

VIII. METHODOLOGY

The study is empirical in nature and based on primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected through sample survey. The primary data were obtained by applying both schedules and questionnaire methods from the respondents. Schedules were filled up by the researcher to observe the depth of the study. Parameters like social status, community, educational & other qualification, training etc of the owners and earning, institutional support of the government in finance, production, marketing etc of the enterprises are included in the schedules.

The secondary data were collected from books, research papers, articles from the internet & newspapers, e-journals and official websites of various agencies to establish the authenticity of the study.

- (i) **Coverage:** The study covered entire old Sonitpur district of Assam, which was sub-divided into 5 study zones viz. Tezpur, Dhekiajuli, Rangapara, Biswanath Charali and Gohpur.
- (ii) **Period of the study:** The study was conducted for the period of Oct. 2016 to March 2017.
- (iii) **Sampling Method:** The non-probability Snowball Sampling method was used in collecting primary data for the study. The sampling frame was not available because the study was based on informal group of the economy.
- (iv) **Sample Size:** Total number of 50 food processing home-based units was selected as sample size for the study, which includes all types of food processing enterprises from different locations of the district.
- (v) **Data Interpretation & Analysis:** The collected data were classified, interpreted and analyzed by using various statistical tools and computer software like MS-Excel, SPSS 16.0.

IX. MAJOR FINDINGS

- (i) The primary data of the study revealed that, out of 50 samples of home-based food processing enterprises in the district, majority of these enterprises i.e. 96 percent (48 units) were run by women.
- (ii) From the analysis of primary data, it was found that the majority of owners engaged in food processing home based enterprises were married i.e.68 percent, 62 percent owners were middle age i.e. 21-40 years with minimum educational qualification (24 percent under matriculation, 48 percent matriculate, 20 percent HS passed & only 8 percent were graduate) and their annual average earning was Rs. 62,500 (average monthly earning was Rs. 5,600).
- (iii) Out of the 50 food processing enterprises, 16 percent entrepreneurs were belonged to SC category, 8 percent were belonged to ST, 34 percent were belonged to OBC and 42 percent were belonged to general category.
- (iv) Most of the food processing enterprises i.e. 52 percent were run by Bengali community followed by 34 percent of Assamese community and 14 percent from other communities.
- (v) The primary survey also revealed that 86 percent entrepreneurs were encouraged by the family to start their enterprise, 76 percent had respect in the family for running an enterprise, 72 percent got family support to run the enterprise and 4 percent had negative attitude from the family for running an enterprise due family burden.
- (vi) The study revealed that most of the entrepreneurs engaged in food processing enterprises in the district i.e. 66 percent faced financial problem, 48 percent had problem in marketing their product due to heavy competition, 32 percent faced problem in production and 18 percent had lack of self confidence in run and expand their enterprise.

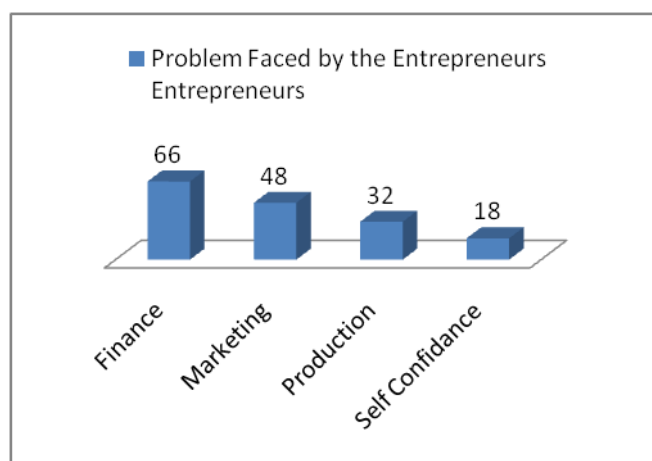
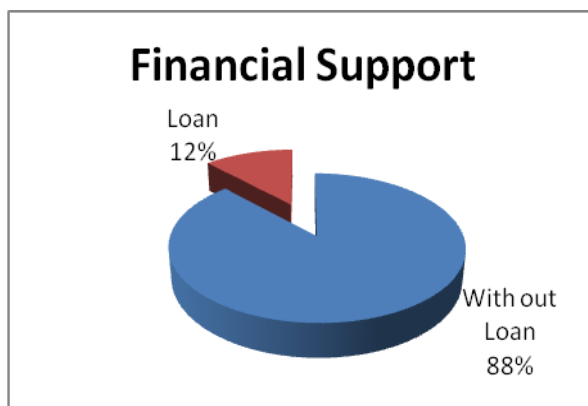


Figure:9.1

- (vii) Out of the 50 samples of food processing enterprises in the district, 88 percent (44 units) could provide employment opportunities to others along with self. Out of these 36 percent (18 units) food processing home based enterprises employed more than 5 workers.
- (viii) Regarding awareness of the government policies, 68 percent of entrepreneurs were totally unaware of government policies and schemes, and out of remaining 32 percent only 19 percent got trainings from DIC, 13 percent got trainings from NGOs.
- (ix) The study also revealed that majority of food processing home based enterprises in the district did not get any financial support and started their enterprises without taking loan or loan with govt. subsidy i.e. 44 enterprises (88 percent) had started with their own fund. Only 6 (12 percent) entrepreneurs started their enterprises by taking loan with government subsidy and most of the enterprises (80 percent) taking loan from the Rural Banks (AGV bank and PG bank).
- (x) 88 percent enterprises used traditional method in their production and packaging of their products and only 12 percent used sophisticated modern technology in the food processing enterprises.

Figure: 9.2



In the study, there were some common problems observed that the HBEs, especially running by women in the district were lack of industrial knowledge, self under estimation, inadequate financial recourses and working capital, incapable of getting external finance of due to absence of tangible security and credit in the market, dependence on the middlemen for marketing, discontinuation of enterprises due to seasonal family burden.

X. TEST OF HYPOTHESIS

Null Hypothesis, H_0 : There is no association between the institutional support and the earning of food Processing HBEs.

Alternative Hypothesis, H_1 : There is an association between the institutional support and the earning of food Processing HBEs.

The value of chi-square test, $p=0.000$ which is less than 0.005, therefore, null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted.

The contingency coefficient= 0.579 which more than 0.5. This indicates that there is high level of association between the two variables.

Therefore, it has been found that there is a relationship between the institutional support and the earning of food Processing HBEs.

XI. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORTS TO THE FOOD PROCESSING ENTERPRISES

Two ministries are mainly associated with the development of food processing industries in the region.

11.1. Ministry of Food Processing Industries: The Ministry of Food Processing Industries is the main central agencies of the Government responsible for developing a strong and vibrant food processing enterprise in India with a view to creating increased job opportunities in the rural areas, enabling the farmers to reap benefit of modern technology, creating surplus for exports and stimulating demand for processed food. The sub-sectors under the purview of the Ministry are Fruits and vegetable processing; Food grain milling; Dairy products; Biscuits; Confectionery etc. It also provides technical assistance and advice to food processing industry. Besides this, there various institutions provided direct and direct supports to the food processing sector.

11.2. Ministry of Agro and Rural Industries (ARI) : The Ministry of Agro and Rural Industries is the prime agency for coordination and development of Village and Khadi industries, tiny and micro enterprises in both urban and rural areas. The various policies, programmes and schemes related to agro and rural industries are implemented by the ministry with the help of its various bodies. The ARI Division looks after the administration of two statutory bodies called the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Coir Board and a newly created organisation called Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Rural Industrialisation (MGIRI). They also supervise the implementation of the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP).

Other Support institutions are:

11.3. Financing institutions

Finance is one of the essential requirements of an enterprise. Without adequate funds, no business can be developed. In India, Central and state governments are promoting number of financial institutions to bring in the industrial development in the country. Some of the important financial institutions are: Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Small Industrial Development Bank of India (SIDBI), Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI), Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI), Commercial Banks etc.

11.4. Promotional Institutions

Government at state and central level has set up number of promoting agencies and institutions to support to the

entrepreneurs, especially small and medium entrepreneurs. These institutions support the entrepreneurs in respect of training, finance and marketing. Some of such institutions are: District Industries centres (DICs) Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO), The National Small Industries Corporation Ltd.(NSIC) Khadi and Village Industries Corporation (KVIC), Indian Institute of entrepreneurs. (IIE), Guwahati
Some institutional support to entrepreneurs of the district:

11.5. Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC): The Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC), established under the Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act, 1956. The objective of KVIC was to provide employment, producing saleable articles and creating self reliance among the poor. Its wide range of activities include training of artisans, extension of assistance for procurement of raw materials, marketing of finished products and arrangement for manufacturing and distribution of improved tools, equipments and machinery to producers on concessional terms. KVIC also aims at providing financial assistance to institutions and individuals for development and operation of Khadi and Village industries. KVIC is handling the government launched, Rural Employment Generation Programme through public sector banks and regional rural banks. This scheme envisages that 25% of the project cost for the project up to Rs. 10 lacs will be provided as “Margin money”. For projects above Rs. 10 lacs and up to Rs 25lacs, rate of Margin money will be 25% of Rs. 10 lacs plus 10% of the remaining cost of the project.

11.6. District Industries Centers (DIC): The Department of Industries & Commerce is the anchor department as far as development of industries is concerned. This department is responsible for formulating and implementation of industrial policies in the State. The Directorate of Industries and Commerce (DIC) which has its headquarters at Guwahati, has a network of District Industries Centers in all the 27 Districts. The mission of the Department is to provide prompt and efficient services to the entrepreneurs/industrialists for smooth and time-bound implementation and operation of industrial projects and schemes. DIC of Sonitpur, Tezpur played a vital role to implemented KVIC and PMEGP schemes in the district.

11.7. Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE): The Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) was established in the year 1993 in Guwahati by the erstwhile Ministry of Industry (now the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), Government of India as an autonomous national institute with an aim to undertake training, research and consultancy activities in small and micro enterprises focusing on entrepreneurship development. The main objectives of the institute are to organize and conduct training for entrepreneurship development, to evolve strategies & methodologies for different target groups & locations.

Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) supporting food processing industries in the district are:

11.8. First Step NGO: FIRST STEP is located in **TEZPUR Assam** . FIRST STEP was registered as a Society at Guwahati, Assam with NGO unique registration ID 'AS/2013/0070982' . The NGO registration was done by Registrar of Societies with registration number SPR/242/F/104 on the date of **2013 July 20th Sat** , Its parent Organisation was Paul Foundation. The Chairman of FIRST STEP was Nabajyoti Patangia and Chief functionary officer was Janak Nath. This FIRST STEP NGO charity was working on Key Issues of Food Processing, Health & Family Welfare, Labour & Employment, Rural Development, Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation, and Vocational Training. Recently, they provided two training programmes on food processing for 3 months each in collaboration with ONGC, India.

11.9. Institute of Integrated Resource Management (IIRM): Institute of Integrated Resource Management (IIRM) was a Non-Profit Organization formed by Dr. H. Dhattatreya. The main purpose of the NGO was socio economic development of community in the Himalayan region. The NGO provided various financial and other services in the Himalayan region of India in a sustainable manner. It promoted grass-root communities through Group to ensure people’s participation in terms of community development programme.

The NGO empowered, secured and enhanced living conditions of the indigenous people of the region by efficient use of the resources, skill up-gradation and employment opportunities.

The government of India and other agencies instituted various policies to boost the development of food processing industries in Assam, some of key policies and schemes are enumerated below:

11.10. North East Mega Food Park: The Ministry of Food Processing Industries established a mega food park, “North East Mega Food Park” at Nathkuchi Village near the Tihu town ship of Nalbari District in Assam on 28 May 2015. The Mega Food Park is an inclusive concept which was aimed at establishing direct linkages from the farm to the consumer markets, through a network of Collection Centres (CC), Primary Processing Centres

(PPC) and Central Processing Centre (CPC). The scheme was launched to help to achieve the Vision 2015 of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, which aims at increasing the processing of perishables from the current 6% to 20%, value addition from the current 20% to 35% and at increasing India's share in global food trade from the current 1.5% to 3%. The primary objective of the scheme was to provide adequate infrastructure for food processing along the value chain from the farm to the Market.

10.11. APART: The World Bank invested 200 billion US dollars in the project, 'Assam Project on Agri-business and Rural Transformation' (APART) on Feb 2016. The proposed Project aim was to 'increase value-added and improve resilience in the production and processing of selected agriculture commodities, focusing on small farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in targeted districts'. The project inter alia would give thrust on enhancing agglomeration of producers to improve economies of scale in producing, processing and marketing. The project would support agriculture and livestock productivity through essential technology transfer in production and improved post-harvest and market operations, and explore and pilot possible financing modalities to support entrepreneurship and agri-business. APART would leverage the natural resource advantages of State of Assam as well as improve the investment climate and in particular, focus would be on processed food, food safety, agribusiness, logistics and infrastructure, MSME finance, and insurance. Project beneficiaries would include farmers and entrepreneurs especially in the MSME segment. Total 16 districts of Assam, including Sonitpur District had been selected for the project out of 27 districts of Assam.

10.12. Patanjali Mega Food Park: Patanjali Ayurved's set -up Rs 1,000 crore Herbal and Food Park in Assam received the status of a Mega Industry. Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal laid the foundation stone for the Patanjali Herbal and Mega Food Park at Balipara on November 6, 2016. Yoga guru Baba Ramdev and CEO of Patanjali Ayurveda, Acharya Balakrishna were also present on the occasion. The park had spread over 400 bighas and manufacture products such as cosmetics, nutrition and kitchen essentials. The facility would have an annual production capacity of 6.57 lakh metric ton tonnes and generate direct employment for more than 6,000 people and several lakhs of the cultivators would be benefited, as per government officials. "The mega herbal and food park of Patanjali at Ghoramari is the second food park of Patanjali after Haridwar", Patanjali had planned to set up world's largest medicinal plant garden at Sijosa, along Assam-Arunachal border covering an area of 21,000 bighas of land area.

10.13. Dabur Biggest Manufacturing Unit:

Dabur started work at its biggest manufacturing unit in Balipara industrial estate in Sonitpur district in March 2017. The company has invested Rs 250 crore for the Assam plant. As per the official sources, this was the biggest manufacturing unit of the company in the country and was a part of the expansion plan. The plant would manufacture a wide array of products made by Dabur like health supplements, Ayurvedic products, oral care and hair care. The factory had a capacity of 3 lakh tonnes yearly production and was spread over 30 acres. The move came at a time when major companies were setting up units in the state. Around 75 units with an investment of Rs 6,000 crore would come up by Marc 2017.

12. Suggestions for the institutional support to food processing home-based enterprises in the State:

The following support systems may be adopted to solve the problem faced by the food processing enterprises in Assam.

(i) **Training Support:** Skills development trainings like managerial, technical and marketing are essential for the development of food processing home based enterprises to create self confidence of the owners. As the training was directly related to the earning of the enterprises according to the primary study, it should be provided near to the location of the farms and daily stipend should be given, because most of the owners depend on their daily income of the enterprises to run the family.

(ii) **Financial Support:** Most of the enterprises fail to get financial support of the government agencies. Therefore, special finance cells may open at different location to cater various financial services at the local level that owners get easy financial supports and services at their door steps. These special cells may provide finance to entrepreneurs at low and concessional rates of interest and on easy repayment facilities. "Material/machinery as loans" are more effective than "Cash as loans".

(iii) **Marketing Support:** Due to lack of skill, experience, information and resource, many micro home-based enterprises fails to market their product. So they needed institutional support for outlet their product. Co-operative marketing policy or cluster marketing cell should adopt to encourage and to assist start-up entrepreneurs. These marketing cooperatives or cell would help the entrepreneurs to sell their products on remunerative prices. It would help in eliminating the problem of middlemen in marketing. Government should give preference in purchasing of HBEs products while purchasing government's requirements.

(iv) **Technology Support:** Most of the food processing units could not fulfill the market demand of their product due traditional and outdated technology used in production and packaging their product. Government may supply modern sophisticated equipments like mixture, grinder, oven, dryer, bottling and packing machinery to these enterprises at concessional rate through the various Government or non government institutions.

(v) **Infrastructure Support:** Home-based enterprises need sufficient infrastructure for their growth like uninterrupted power supply, transportation, banking facilities etc. Especially government support was required in the development of infrastructure in the rural areas.

(vi) **Knowledge Support:** Most of the entrepreneurs of this sector in Assam are totally unaware of govt. scheme and policies and they also hesitated to come forward. Therefore, awareness programmes of the schemes and policies and their benefits become inevitable part of implementing these policies.

XII. CONCLUSION

Start-up entrepreneur are just like new born babies. They cannot stand on their own feet at the initial stage. Therefore, they need strong support system to turn their start-up ideas into valuable business enterprise. The decision makers and law makers in the countries should work towards improving the business environments for developing one strong entrepreneurial ecosystem. By making specific decisions like tax alleviations for small businesses and entrepreneurs, any government can increase the strength of the entrepreneurial system in the country. Changes among educators, teachers and trainers must be made in order to stimulate the leadership skills and natural entrepreneurial talents of their students. The support of family and friends is very important for entrepreneurs and startup owners. They have already sacrifice a lot of their personal time which can affect their relationships with the others. How can entrepreneurs handle unsupportive friends and family is one very difficult yet important question to be answered. The topography of Sonitpur district of Assam is climatically suitable for the development of horticulture. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries has already initiated a number of schemes to promote food processing enterprises in the state in general and the district in particular. But the government is to be developed suitable mechanism to implement their plans and policies through various institutions. On the other hand, a home-based enterprise can easily start without investing establishment cost of capital from the home itself, which may provide more security and flexibility in the daily routine to the entrepreneurs. It is commonly saying that "Entrepreneurs are born but not made", but with the help of effective support system entrepreneurs can be made.

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