Acknowledgements

At the outset, I indeed consider myself to be extremely blessed and privileged to be the first research scholar under my Ph.D. supervisor Dr. Paramananda Majumdar. I take this opportunity to express my deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness to him for his painstaking efforts in completing my research works under his scholarly guidance, despite his hectic academic as well as social obligations. No amount of words is sufficient to gratefully acknowledge the invaluable guidance he has rendered to me during the course of my research.

My deep sense of gratitude goes to both Dr. Kishore Bhattacharjee (Professor & HOD) and Dr. Anil Kumar Boro, Associate Professor, Department of Folklore Research, Gauhati University, for their whole hearted co-operation during my research tenure. I would specially like to record my profound sense of indebtedness to Dr. Prabin Chandra Das, Former Secretary, University Classes, Gauhati University, for his constant encouragement and support.

I am grateful to the Govt. of Assam, Home & Political Department for according permission for undertaking my research works, vide notification No. HMA (IPS) 250/154 – A, dated 18th January, 2014, which has eased in completing my works without affecting my normal police duty.

I sincerely acknowledge Dr. Manjit Kr. Mazumdar, Associate Professor, Pragjyotish College, Guwahati, who has been instrumental in providing me with witch-hunt information obtained through the RTI mode.

I am thankful to Mrs. Mamani Saikia, District Programme Coordinator, Assam Mahila Samata Society, Goalpara District Implementation Unit, along with her colleagues who had not only accompanied me during my field works but had also provided me with different data/records pertinent to my research works. I also take this opportunity to express my thankfulness to Dr. Birubala Rabha, Chairman, Mission Birubala and Dr. Natyabir Das Coordinator, Mission Birubala, for their assistance and company during the field works.

Different non-governmental organizations like NEDAN Foundation, (Kokrajhar), The Action North East Trust (Rowmari), North East Network (Guwahati), Brothers (Guwahati), North East Society for the Promotion of Youth and Masses (Guwahati) have extended their cooperation and help to me in my research work by providing information on their organizational as well as their activity profiles. I am really thankful to the office bearers of all these organizations.

Different eminent personalities from abroad like Ulo Valk (Professor of Folklore Studies, University of Tartu, Estonia), Prof. John Zemke (Professor of Spanish, Romance Languages & Literatures, University of Missouri, USA), renowned personalities from Assam like Justice (Dr.) Aftab Hussain Saikia, Chairperson, Meghalaya State Human Rights Commission; Mr. Biplab Kumar Sharma, former Hon’ble Justice, Gauhati High
Court; Mr. Preetom Saikia, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Education (Ele) & Cultural Affairs Department; Dr. Subhram Rajkhowa, former Head and Dean, Faculty of Law, Gauhati University; Mr. Madhaw Prasad Sharma, ACS, Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Revenue & Disaster Management Department; Dr. Indranee Dutta, former Director & Professor, OKD Institute of Social Change & Development; and many other learned persons having study on the subject of my research, took pains in providing me with their personal opinion and feedback that formed one segment of my research works. I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thankfulness to each one of them.

I also take this opportunity to specially thank Dr. Pulama Deka (Rajee), Faculty Member, Post-Graduate Department of Tourism Management, Pragjyotish College, Guwahati for her continuous inspiration since the very beginning of my research works. All the Police officers and personnel of Goalpara, Kokrajhar, Kamrup and Udalguri districts, who have extended their help in various forms to me during the field works, in spite of their official responsibilities, certainly deserve my heart-felt thanks. At the same time, I also thank all the fellow researchers of our batch, for their continuous inspiration to me since beginning, along with Shri Dilip Kumar Deka and Md. Mahbadul Haque of the Department of Folklore Research, Gauhati University.

I gratefully acknowledge Shri Monjit Borthakur of OKDISCD for lending his expertise during the statistical analyses carried out in SPSS. I am also thankful to Shri Sujay Deb Nath, Md Basir Ahmed and Choudhury for assisting me in the reprographical works.

Last but not the least, I would like to express my thankfulness to Mrs. Papari Saikia (my better half) and Ms. Kamakshi Saikia (my only daughter), whose unstinted support proved out to be a constant source of inspiration to me all throughout my research tenure.

Shyamal Prasad Saikia