ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This has come to me as an opportunity to thank all the efforts, small or big, that resulted in the culmination of a long arduous journey to a fruitful destination.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude and thanks to Prof. T. Satyanarayana for giving me the opportunity to begin my scientific career in the upcoming field of ‘Metagenomics’. His inspiring guidance, constant encouragement, enthusiasm and immense knowledge helped me a lot to shape this study. His criticism, suggestions and questions enabled me to sharpen and strengthen the analysis and to eliminate errors. Thank you sir for believing in my abilities and giving me an opportunity to work in a congenial atmosphere, without which, it would have been difficult for me to survive and prove my worth.

My sincere thanks are due to Prof. J. S. Virdi, Head, Department of Microbiology, for his advice and valuable suggestions, and to Prof. R. K. Saxena, Prof. R. C. Kuhad, Prof. Rani Gupta, Dr. Swati Saha, Dr. Amita Gupta, Dr. Y. P. Khasa and Dr. Rajeev Kaul for their helpful suggestions and extending cooperation.

My heartfelt thanks are due to Dr. Pradeep Burma, Prof. Sheela Srivastava, Dr. M.V. Rajam and Dr. Suman Kundu for their guidance and support. I am indebted to Prof. Gunashekran (MKU, Madurai), Dr. Rakesh Sharma (IGIB, New Delhi,) and Dr. Narendra Sharma (ABC Paper Mills, Hoshiyarpur) for their help and advice, and allowing me to use their laboratory facilities.

I am grateful to our foreign research collaborators Prof. Yutaka Kawarabayasi (Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan), Prof. Kentaro Miyazaki, (AIST, Tsukuba, Japan) Dr. Taku Uchiyama (AIST, Tsukuba, Japan) and Dr. K. Yushimune (Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan) for their guidance and providing me the opportunity to work in their laboratories.

The Junior/Senior Research Fellowship from DBT and CSIR, Government of India, during the course of this investigation is gratefully acknowledged. I am also grateful to DST and JSPS (Japan) for providing financial assistance to work as a guest researcher in Japan, which provided me an opportunity to work in the world class laboratories and giving me an international exposure.

It gives me pleasure to acknowledge the suggestions, support and help received from my seniors Dr. Archana Ayyagari, Dr. Ashima Vohra, Dr. Deepak Chand Sharma, Dr. J. L. Uma Maheswar Rao, Dr. Srikant Adhikari, Dr. Parvinder Kaur, Dr. Bijender Singh, Dr. Manju Bhardwaj, and Dr. Pardeep Kumar. I would also like to acknowledge the help and support of
Acknowledgements

colleagues and friends (Venkat, Adarsh sir, Archana, Bharti, Vikash, Swati, Deepika, Ranganath, Firoz, Nisha, Shazia, Deepak and Harshul.). Merely these few words of thanks are not sufficient for my lab mates. This thesis was possible through their encouragement, continuous help and support, and the motivating working atmosphere and most importantly for the booster doses given by one or the other.

Special word of thanks to Jagdish Rana, Dev Singh, Rakesh Sharma and Faninder Pandey for their help and support in several ways. I am thankful to the helping and supportive staff of the Department of Microbiology, Mrs. Meena Singh, Mr. Madanlal, Mr. Satish, Mr. Mustafa, Hussain, Mr. Shyam, Mr. Rishi Pal and Akhtar Hussain for their day-to-day help.

So long as we love, so long as we are loved by others, I would almost say that we are indispensable, and no man is useless while he has a friend. I am very indebted to have a nice group of such people. Company with Mahesh will always be memorable, with whom I worked closely, puzzled and discussed over many of the problems. I am fortunate to explore a wider breadth of experience with him. Pradeep, Pawan, Sahilendra, Bhuvnesh, Rishi and Vishal for some much needed humour and entertainment in what could have otherwise been a somewhat stressful environment. Without all of you, guys, my tenure in the campus would not be this vibrant. Wishing to be friends is quick work, but friendship is a slow ripening fruit. Hope to see you guys, again in the near future.

I also place on record, my sense of gratitude to Deeksha Tripathi, who has been there as a friend beside me for helping directly and indirectly throughout this venture.

My heartfelt thanks to my seniors, Dr. Neeru Bhagat, Dr. Ekta Tiwari, Dr. Krishna Kant Sharma, Dr. Nitika Ghosh, Dr. Paritosh and Dr. Manish for their suggestions and support. To my colleagues and friends, Diwakar, Deepa, Richa, Swati, Pinki, Preeti, Soniya, Abha, Priyush, Adesh, Rinki, Ruchi, Ritu, Anuradha, Neha, Kastoori, Devanand, Amit, Sheetal, Sachin and Vikas. I am grateful to have wonderful company of my juniors cum friends, Vinod, Richi, Kartik, Priyanka, Shweta, Garima, Firdaus, Kavish, Sandeep, Priyanka, Somendro, Stuti, Mohita, Khushboo, Poonam, Niharika, Meenakshi, Ashima, Vatika, Tarvi, Parul, Ira, Arushi, Prema and Arti for being very supportive and helpful whenever needed.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Dr. (Mrs.) Shashi S. Narayana, Shrutika and Kritika with whom I have always felt a homely environment.

It would be a great pleasure for me to acknowledge the support provided by my friends outside the campus. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to Pankaj, Saurabh, Jaivardhan, Vivek, Sanjay and Priyanka for their consistent help and encouragement.
The unparalled support and constant encouragement which I have received from my parents has been the foundation stone to reach where I am today. Mummy and Papaji, I hope I have succeeded in fulfilling your aspirations. Thanks to my younger sister Gunjan, and brother-in-law Sanjeev for all the cheer ups and funny discussions. To my chachaji, who has always been in support in all my efforts. To my relatives, who have been my avid supporters all the way, without you, folks, I won’t be here where I am today.

Words fail to convey my heartiest gratitude to my elder sister, Archana and brother-in-law, Sri Rajesh for their earnest support, utmost care, unstinting encouragement and whole heartened cooperation without which this task would not have been accomplished. Many thanks for always being there. My nieces, Suhani and Mahi, have always made my Saturdays cheerful and refreshing Mondays.

Last, but most important, I thank the Almighty for providing me the best opportunities and for supporting me in my most trying moments. I have been truly blessed throughout my life.

Digvijay Verma