ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank the God for his blessings. First and foremost, I would like to thank my guide Dr. Arti Parganiha, Senior Lecturer, School of Life Sciences, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur, for her incessant support, guidance and enthusiasm. She has critically reviewed and edited all chapters of my thesis and provided constructive suggestions. Her valuable suggestions, ideas, discussions and simplicity in her personality with a very good sense of humor always encouraged me, throughout the period of my research.

My sincere respect to my CSIR project supervisor, Prof. Atanu Kumar Pati, Ph.D., FNASc, Head, School of Life Sciences, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur, for allowing me to become a part of his lab and offering me a great opportunity to enter the field of chronobiology. He always provides me with his precious guidance, suggestions, good advice and has assisted me greatly during the period of my project and Ph.D. work. I would like to express my regards to our respected madam, Mrs. Sanjukta Pati, for her encouragement throughout the tenure of this work.

I emphatically mentioned the name of the Head of the Department, Prof. Atanu Kumar Pati, who provided kind cooperation, necessary facilities and help during the course of completion of this work. I am very much obliged to all faculty members of the School of Life Sciences, namely Prof. A.K. Gupta, Prof. S.C. Naithani, Prof. S.K. Prasad, Dr. Aditi Poddar, Dr. Vijaya Koche, Dr. R.K. Pradhan, Dr. K.K. Sahu and Dr. Amia Ekka, for their constant encouragements and help. I am also indebted to superannuated professors Dr. V. Rai and Dr. S.K. Mishra for their constant encouragements during the tenure of this Ph.D. work.

I am thankful to Dr. Jayant Biswas for his encouragement during my work.

All my laboratory senior colleagues, namely K. Venu Achari, Shipra Sinha, Anil Ramteke, Anjana Kar, Pushpa Poddar, Rakesh Soni, Paramita Dubey, Babita Pande, Razia Sultana, Arti Singh, Shrutika Kankariya, Premlata Tiwari, Chaynika Nag, Rashmi Mishra, and my juniors Saba Taj, Radhika Shinde, Tikendra Verma and Priyanka Chandel all are very special for me as they have provided me unreserved help, whenever I required the most, related to my Ph.D. work.
I can never forget the names of my friends, namely Pankaj Modi, Preeti Minz, Deepti Verma, Malti Singh, Sumita Arora, Vidya Sahu, Bhupendra Thakur, Pradeep Tandon, Dhananjay Yadav, Ravindra Sirmour, Neelambara, Bharti, Eram Fatima, Parmanand Bhagel, Shuruchi Parkhe, Vimal Pande, Avinash Soni, Jyotirmayee Pradhan, Amita Sharma, Rama Thakur, Neha Singh, Preeti Singh Parihar, Preeti Chandra, Reena and Surendra Gautam who made a happy and pleasant surroundings in this department throughout the course of my work.

I would like to thank all subjects, who participated in this study voluntarily. Without their cooperation I would have been unable to complete this research work.

I must thank the office staff and technical staff of the School of Life Sciences, namely Mr. S.K. Awasthi, Mr. M.D. Manikpuri, Mrs. S.L. Parte, Mr. P.L. Verma and Mrs. Vidya Sharma for their help in official formalities throughout my work. My thanks are due to Suresh Sonkar and Deepak Sahu for their help.

I wouldn’t have been able to do this work without the love and support of my family. I would like to give my special thanks to my father and mother, who has been my source of inspiration and strength. I gratefully acknowledge the immense contribution and blessings of my Didi and Jeejaji for their generous support during my journey from M.Sc. to Ph.D. Finally a very big thank to my loving mother, my elder brother and my other relatives, who are anxiously waiting for my Ph.D. degree and for their encouragements and blessings.

The work presented in this thesis was financially supported by the Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University (JRF, No. 1430/Fin./2007), Raipur and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (SRF, No. 9/266 (69)/2010-EMRI dated 23.03.2010), New Delhi. Facilities available in the Chronobiology Unit are supported by the UGC DRS-SAP Phase I & II sanction to the School of Life Sciences in the thrust area of Chronobiology.

Thanks are due to the DST, CCOST, ICMR and the University for providing me with the travel support for attending the international conference in Pubela, Mexico.

Nishtha Vaidya