ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No words are adequate to express my profound gratitude to Prof. Rajendra Prasad for the inspiration, constructive criticism and ambidextrous guidance that I received from him during the tenure of this work. Not only he gave an insight into the problem but also extended invaluable help in bringing this thesis to fruition.

I am grateful to Prof. N.Z. Baquer for her advice and interest and Prof. P. Mohanty for providing necessary facilities.

Thanks are due to R.N. Saini for lucid drawings and H.P. Sharma for skilled laboratorial assistance.

It gave me immense pleasure to work with Verma, Rao, Anil, Sultan, Shalini, Simi, Poonam and Mahanty.

Indelible help and cooperation from Simi during the last phase of work and preparation of thesis are sincerely
It gives me pleasure to acknowledge my friends, Alok, Ranjit, Shukla, Natraj, Kisloy and Vijay for their help and moral support.

Above all, I owe a great deal to all my family members, for their invaluable cooperation, infinite patience and for being a constant source of inspiration.

Financial assistance from CSIR as SRF is duly acknowledged.

(PRASHANT MISHRA)