Acknowledgement

Every word that abounds this volume is filled with memories. Memories sweet and sour has always been a constant companion in this long, arduous yet facile journey that has shaped the following pages. This is a journey that one probably undertakes once in a life time and for reasons obvious, every effort goes into making it monumental. There have been turns and cross-roads, apart from the many that life unfolds in its course. It has involved conquering mountains of unsurmountable literature and endless seas of grave data and dense forests of mathematics and statistics apart from the aimless tracts traversed initially in search of ideas. All these pains have, at times without my knowing, transformed themselves into pleasures of smooth sailing, over tranquil, placid seas only to reveal treacherous ice-bergs and the fury of tumultuous waves. I have survived them all and this volume is proof that I have finally reached the shores. However, this is just the beginning. All through, I have never been alone in this expedition. It has indeed been a privilege to have had the good-wishes, blessings, companionship, succour, guidance, backing and advice of many. Words can never express the true feelings that lie within.

I acknowledge my gratitude to my supervisor Prof. D. N. Rao for guiding this work through. A personality of contrasts, as his, has indeed been a boon for me. Gentle yet plain-spoken, caring yet stern, casual but conscious of a students' mind, Sir, has always been patient despite my numerous failings. The efforts that he has put in is worth adulating. The Rao s have always been a spring of warmth and comfort during my entire stay in JNU.

My heart-felt gratitude goes out for Prof. Ram Prasad Sengupta of the Centre, for his constant and meticulous advice right from the initial stages of this thesis; to Prof. Kunal Sengupta for being an extremely valuable counsel many a times in his own special way, to Prof. Sharmila Bannerji of the University of Calcutta for her good guidance that had seen me through to JNU and ultimately to this stage. I am sure, this would do her proud. I express my indebtedness to Prof. Katherine Segerson of the University of Connecticut for her help and patience against my constant inane queries. Sincere gratitude are also due to Prof. M. N. Murthy of the Institute of Economic Growth and Prof. S. Datta of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad for their valuable suggestions.

I have been blessed always with very good 'superiors'. At the Centre for Science and Environment, Mr. Anil Aggarwal and Ms. Sunita Narayanan had been extra caring and turned my first experience of working into a truly memorable learning experience. I have gained a lot both in terms of knowledge and experience from my association with them. At the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, Dr. Rita Pandey too was very co-operative and went out of her way to provide classified data without which much of the empirical exercise carried out here would not have been possible. Drs. Hiranya Mukhopadhyay and Kavita Rao of the institute, though not directly associated through terms of employment, have been an enormous source of inspiration, guidance and succour. Their help has found expression both as money and material. Saumen-da needs a special mention here.

Institutions and their libraries have special impersonation in this thesis. I acknowledge my thankfulness to the staff members of the libraries of Jawaharlal Nehru University, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, Indian Statistical
Institute, Ratan Tata Library, Tata Energy Research Institute, Centre for Science and Environment and The World Bank. I feel a word of gratitude to Mr. Rajagopal and Mr. Bachche Singh of the Centre would be an understatement. They have been extremely helpful at every step at the Centre.

Friends have been my constant source of sustenance throughout. They have made the going more pleasant and affable at every point. With friends; 'first and foremost' and 'last but not the least' never holds. They are all confidants through times good and bad; they are bridges over troubled waters.

I acknowledge with warmth the efficient support system created by my fellow-sufferers, my class mates; Biswajit, Prithwish, Malini, Raghu, Sabya (Kar), Shaon, Uday, Mousumi and Sunil; Shantanu, for his genuine concern and anxiety inspite of the burden of his own thesis.

Biswajit and Prithwish have been comrades, compatriots and colleagues over my entire stay in JNU and their concern at every stage have been real even though I had always been miles behind their efficient running towards the 'post'. Chatto, Sabya and Soumen have made my stay at Sutlej Hostel memorable. I will always look back with fond memories and relish the thoughts of those 'golden' days. Chatto with his intellectual input, Soumen with his resourcefulness and Sabya the genius but lazy genie have been perfect inputs for a home away from home. Thank you all for the camaraderie.

Ishita and Basab, Saubhik, Suman and Anindya have all been resourceful across the miles. Their support and encouragement have proved time and again that I am never out of their mind inspite of being out of sight. I sincerely reciprocate your feelings. Rajkumar-da with his mild nature has been supportive in my endeavours. Soumya and Leni too deserves a special mention here. Pallavi has been of help at times good and bad. Being senior to valuable juniors like Manish, Niladri, Atulan, Abhijit, Nandan, Indranath, Arijit have had their own benefits in terms of being able to learn to comprehend difficult situations in an easy and lucid manner. Sudeep and Anik have been of extreme corporeal help and have also been sources of carousal. Appreciation is due to Banarji, Goutham, Godsen, Pari, Naseer and Vikram for being the nice chums on 'the floor'. Prasad has been a sincere, and a strict big-brother to what he felt were my dawdling and unrestrained ways of life. I adore his frugal temperament that expresses in all he says and does.

Comestibles have always been my weakness and a lot many friends have indulged me in this 'vice'. Tunki and Dipankar have turned Malviya-Nagar a favourite destination for me; G.K.- II has special relevance for me courtesy Sumita, Surojit-da and Mimo; Meghna and Bishu’s home is always a special place for its warmth and care; Sumitro, the one-man house-hold has left me tipsy by sheer dint of his huge heart; Ranja and Subrato have been ideal hosts to many a memorable dinner. Caring and affectionate as they all are, it is difficult to find someone as genuine as them.

The belief, that it can be done, has been instilled in me by my family. Words of thanks for them would be baseness on my part. I fondly remember Chhoto Kaku for his advice carefully hidden in repartee and humour; Mamamoni and Mamoni for their desire to see me through with my thesis. Didi and Ranjan-da’s regard and respect for my work have been a constant source of inspiration. Their love and tenderness have been treasures that I know would always be there for me. Bubudi
and Rana-da’s affection have been unfailing right throughout. I have always wallowed in their designed indulgence. Love to Rotu and Tun for their adulation and respect. To my parents I owe everything. Their trust, confidence, faith and reliance on me have been my greatest forte. Never have I felt agonised in this uphill task since I always had a tender and balmy place to fall back on. I value you both for being there at all times and love you for shaping my life.

I wish to convey my gratitude to those who do not wish to be acknowledged in my thesis with the belief that they have little or nothing to do to make it better. I still convey my appreciation to them for being there at all times. However, the errors in and the failures of the thesis, that remain, are entirely mine.

(Somsankar Ghosh)