ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The first and foremost, I take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to my research supervisors Prof. S.K. Gupta & Prof. R. Tewari for their continuous guidance, encouragement and support during the thesis work. I am greatly indebted to my mentor Prof. D. K. Aswal, who inspired me most during my research journey over last 4 years and encouraged me to see the positive side of every failure. His continued motivational pursuit has resulted in good peer reviewed journals and timely submission of this dissertation.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. A. K. Chauhan, Dr. Vibha Saxena, Dr. S. P. Koiry, and Dr. P. Jha for their help in carrying out experiments, learning various characterization techniques, continuous support and encouragement during the course of the work. Continuous discussions with them have strengthened my fundamentals and sharpened the new ideas proposed in the thesis.

I am extremely grateful to Dr. S Bhattacharya, Dr. Niranjan Ramgir, and Dr. Soumen Samanta for their continuous support and carrying out SEM images whenever I requested.

I owe my deepest gratitude to Dr. K.P. Muthe, Dr. N. Padma, Dr. A. K. Debnath, Dr. Ajay Singh, Shri R. Prasad, Dr. Manmeet Kaur, Dr Ranu Bhat, Mrs Ranita Basu, Mrs Niyanta Dutta, Mrs K Ganapati and Shri K.N. Meshram for extending support and help at various stages of the thesis work. I am also thankful to my labmates Arvind, Nirav, Tanvi, Avani, and Abhay for their help during the course of the work.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family and friends, who have always motivated and supported me. I thank them for their unending support through difficult times, for believing in me, and for being there for me whenever I needed them most.