ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to express his deep sense of gratitude and sincere thanks to his supervisor Dr. Syed Khalid for his valuable guidance during the course of investigations reported in the thesis. Frequent discussions with him during the progress of work infused confidence in him and made possible the submission of the first ever Ph.D thesis in the Department of Civil Engineering, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

The author is extremely grateful to Professor S.M. Hasan for his constant encouragement, affection and discussions throughout the period of this study.

The author expresses his gratefulness to Prof. Aslam Qadeer, Chairman, Deptt. of Civil Engineering for his affection and encouragement and for providing all possible facilities during the course of this study.

The author expresses his sincere thanks to Prof. Shamim Ahmad and Prof. S.S. Nabi for their affection and encouragement during the period of this study.

The author will always remember with gratitude, the moral support and sympathy he received from Dr. Ashok Kapoor and his wife Mrs. Kapoor (Bhabi), during the most trying period of his life.
The author will be ungrateful if he does not express his gratitude to his brother and sister for their constant love, affection and moral support, which did not let him feel lonely during the eight long years he has been away from his country IRAQ.

Words are helpless to express his deep sentiments for the all pervading and ethereal understanding, love and affection the author received from his mother, whom the author will never be able to see now, as she has left for her heavenly abode in October last year.

( IBRAHIM R. MUSAFIR )