ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The task of initiating, implementing and completing my doctoral work would not have been made possible without the sincere and unconditional guidance of many professional colleagues, friends and family. Their involvement has been critical in enabling the completion of this important milestone. I am indebted to each one of them and wish to express my sincere thanks for their constant support and encouragement.

At the outset I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our beloved Chancellor Thiru. V. R. Venkataachalam for providing institutional ambiance that nurtures faculty to pursue their professional interests with the highest amount of freedom and flexibility. My sincere thanks are due to Dr. T. K. Parthasarathy (Professor of Eminence & Chief Advisor), Dr. S. P. Thyagarajan (Professor of Eminence & Dean [Research]), Dr. J. S. N. Murthy (Vice Chancellor), Thiru. N. Natarajan (Registrar), Dr. K.V. Somasundaram (Dean of Faculties), Dr. Vijayalakshmi Thanasekaraan (Controller of Examination), Dr. P. V. Vijayaraghavan (Director [Academic Administration] & Dean Education) and Dr. S. Anandan (Dean Medical College) for their sincere support and encouragement.

I would like to profusely thank my Guide Dr. (Mrs.) Bhaswati Ganguli, Professor, of Department of Statistics, University of Calcutta, Kolkata. Her expertise in Statistics and scholarly guidance, mentoring and steadfast encouragement from inception to completion of this doctoral program has helped me enormously in successfully completing this thesis. I would like to thank my Co-Guide Dr. (Mrs.) Kalpana Balakrishnan, Professor of Department of Environmental Health Engineering and also Director, WHO Collaborating Center for Research and Training, Occupational and Environmental Health. Her expertise in environmental health and scientific writing also enabled me to successfully complete this thesis. Besides, she was a constant source of inspiration to me which enabled me to achieve this most important milestone of my lifetime.

I sincerely thank my Research Advisor Dr. P. Venkateshan, Retired Scientist E, National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis, ICMR, Chennai, currently Professor in Research, Department of Community Medicine, Sri Ramachandra University for providing technical insights whenever required.

My utmost gratitude to Dr. Sugata Sen Roy and Dr. Aditya Chatterjee, Professors at the Department of Statistics, University of Calcutta for their unfailing technical support whenever requested for completion of this thesis work.
I would like to thank the faculty and research team of Department of Environmental Heath Engineering for their constant support. In particular, I would like to thank my head of the department Dr. S. Sankar for providing logistics support for study execution, Dr. Krishnendu Mukhopadhyay, Dr. Vidya Venugopal for their moral support and encouragement and for cheering me up. I would also like to sincerely thank Dr. R. Padmavathi, Professor and Head, Department of Physiology and Dr. Priscilla Johnson professor, Department of Physiology for providing their technical insights and collegiality. Their involvement was critical in helping me understand the health dimensions of data.

A research program comprising of time series study would not have been made possible without the required financial and administrative support. My thanks are due to Indian Council of Medical Research for partially funding this project. I would like to thank Directorate of Public Health Office, Directorate of Medical Education, Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board and Regional Meteorological Centre for providing necessary permissions for data acquisition.

Last but not the least, I am grateful for the support of my family, in particular my beloved wife Moumita. Without her encouragement and unfailing support, I could not have completed this exercise. On many occasions when the analytical complexity overwhelmed me, the cheer and enthusiasm of my family helped me tide over the challenge. Finally, I am grateful to the omnipotent God, for His showers of blessings throughout the period to complete the thesis work successfully.