I deem this as an opportunity in expressing my profound sense of gratitude and indebtedness to my teacher and research supervisor Prof. M.V. Naguda, Head, BoS. Dept. of Virology, Dean, School of Biological and Earth Sciences, S.V. University, Tirupati for his constructive criticism, exemplary guidance and encouragement throughout my research work.

I am very much beholden to Dr. P. Sreenivasulu, Reader, Dept. of Virology, S.V. University, Tirupati, who had willingly spared his precious time in critical evaluation of the manuscript and for his ever available help and advice all along.

It has been my special privilege to have had the good fortune of working under the able guidance of Dr. K.S. Savitri, Dept. of Biochemistry, I.I.Sc. Bangalore for her unstinted cooperation and personal interest in the progress of peptide mapping and amino acid sequencing in I.I.Sc. I do admit that without her best efforts, this thesis may not be in this shape.

I am grateful to Prof. M. R. M. Murthy, Dept. of Molecular Biophysics, I.I.Sc. Bangalore for his keen interest, and for the inspiration during the period of my work at I.I.Sc.

My sincere thanks are due to Prof. N. Appaji Rao, Chairman, Dept. of Biochemistry, I.I.Sc. Bangalore for the free access to use the protein sequenator PSS4 in DBT project and for the lab facilities.

I express my sincere thanks to the Registrar, I.I.Sc., Bangalore and Chairman, Dept. of Biochemistry, for permitting me twice to work as a short term researcher at I.I.Sc.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. D. V. R. Reddy, Principal Virologist, ICAR-IAT, Patancheru, India and I am thankful to A. S. Ratna, I.R.C, Legumes Virology, ICAR-IAT.

My most sincere thanks to Prof. K. R. Rao, Prof. J. V. I. Rao (former Heads) and Prof. P. M. Swamy, Head, Dept. of Botany, S.V. University, for the provision of some facilities for my research work.

My thanks are due to Dr. C. P. Sehgal, Dept. of Plant Pathology, University of Missouri, Columbia, USA for providing antisera to SRMV-Ep
strain; A.L.Fuentes, Agricultural Canada, Vancouver, Canada for the generous supply of antisera to SBMV-Cp strain. Dr. J.W. Demski, University of Georgia, USA for providing antisera to SBMV-type strain and Prof. Anupam Varma, IARI, New Delhi for providing antisera to SBMV-Cp strain.

I express my thanks to Dr. R. J. R. Frank, Dept. of Plant Pathology, University of Adelaide, Australia; Dr. O. W. Barnett, Dept. of Plant Pathology, Clemson University, South Carolina; R. J. Hamilton and Stace-Smith, Agricultural Canada, British Columbia; and Danish Government of seed pathology for developing countries, Denmark, for sending gift samples of antisera to nepoviruses used in this investigation.

I express my thanks to my colleagues and friends, Dr. T. Satyanarayana, Miss G. Kiranmai, Mrs. V. Brandavani, Mr. K. V. S. Raju and T. V. P. Raju, Dept. of Virology who always helped me with their advice, suggestions and encouragement in the pursuit of this research.

My thanks are due to A. N. T. Jacob, Ramesh Kehuda, B. Bhaskar, Krishna Prasad, A. Sreenivas and G. Sailaja who helped me a lot during my stay at I.I.Sc. I am also thankful to all the research students and Technical Staff of Prof. N. Appaji Rao and Dr. H. S. Sowthris’ lab. Above all I owe a lot to my aunty and uncle who are responsible for my today’s position. Last, but not least, I thank my Parents, Sisters, Brother and Brother-in-laws, whose understanding and constant encouragement made this venture possible.

Finally, I extend my acknowledgements to the University Grants Commission (in the form of UGC-DRS programme) and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (in the form of CSIR-SRF), New Delhi, India for providing the financial assistance during the tenure of my research.

Thanks are due to Karthik and Chandra, Siddhartha Photostats, Tirupati for perfect typing of the thesis.

K. GOPINATH