ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am beholden to the almighty for bestowing me the strength and wisdom throughout this journey and for its successful completion.

I take this opportunity to pay my heartfelt gratitude and best regards to my supervisor Dr. S. Lokesh, Assistant Professor, DoS in Biotechnology, Manasagangotri, University of Mysore for his precious guidance, useful suggestions, constant support and positive encouragement throughout my research work. I appreciate his liberal outlook for letting me take the scholarly decisions during the research and believing in me.

Mere words would fail to express my sense of gratefulness to my mentor Shri J. Sreenath, who introduced me to the word “Research” and walked me the first step as a researcher at Anthropological Survey of India.

I am indebted to the Director, Anthropological Survey of India, Ministry of Culture, Dept of Culture, and Government of India for providing me an opportunity to carry out the present investigation and supporting me with all necessary amenities without which this work wouldn’t have been successfully.

I will always remain grateful to Prof. V.R. Rao, former Director-In-charge, Anthropological Survey of India, for awarding me the fellowship, sanctioning the project and providing me an opportunity to carry out this work.

I sincerely thank Dr. Sathyanarayana, Deputy Director, Anthropological Survey of India, Southern Regional Centre Dr. Digvijay Pandey, Head Office Kolkatta and Dr. BN Sarkar Anthropologist for their kind co-operation during this work.

I whole heartedly express my sincere thanks and heartfelt regards to Dr. D Xaviour, RA, Dr. Raviprasad, RA, Shri Yaseen Saheeb former Anthropologist, Dr. Chandrasekhar, RA, and Shri. Jayashankar Rao, Anthropologist, Anthropological survey of India, SRC, Mysore for their continuous guidance, support and encouragement that made the compilation of my research work possible.
I will be failing my duties, if I do not acknowledge the co-operation extended by the administrative staff of Anthropological Survey of India, Southern Regional Centre Mysore.

I must express my sincere thanks to Dr. S.R. Niranjana, Professor, Dr. H.S. Prakash, Professor, DOS, Biotechnology, Dr B. S Vishwanath Professor, DOS, Biochemistry, Dr. K. A Raveesha Professor, DOS, Botany, for their valuable suggestions and support given for furtherance of my research work.

I am obliged to Dr. Vinay. B. Raghvendra for helping me in successful dispensation of various official formalities of this entire course and also guiding me as my senior scholar at various steps.

I wish to express my deep sense of gratitude to my colleagues Dr. Venugopal, Mr. Abrar Alam, Dr Pushpa Jogihalli, Mrs. Deepti Lokanath, Smt. Suprabha Samantha, Shri. Pulakesh Purkait, Mr. I Arjun Rao, Ms. Savita and all other lab mates for their sincere involvement and timely help at various levels in this project. I admire the affection and moral support they have rendered during the time we worked together.

I convey my thanks to Mr. D’souza and his colleagues at Lions Club Mysore, Dr Vikas Modi and Dr Ramakrishna of Amritakripa Hospital, Rupanagar, Mysore and paramedical staff for organizing medical camps and extending their valuable help during the collection of samples.

Mere thanks won’t be enough to my two loving friends Ms. Lakshmi and Mr. Ranjith for their affection, dedication and invariable support during the course of my journey. I am grateful to them for all the co-operations and never let me realize, I am not home.

Dr Mohammed Salman thanks for walking alongside me more consistently than a shadow, for being patient with me, for understanding me, inspiring me and loving me as a family than being my friend from the start till end of this journey.
I would like to thank my beloved family for their love, consistent support and trust in me. I owe gratitude beyond words to my mother Smt Sumita Dasgupta, who has been my inspiration to pursue on what I believed in and my father Shri Somnath Dasgupta to follow it sincerely. I am indebted to my granny Mrs. Meera Dasgupta and my little sister Ms. Sumona Dasgupta, who always held me when I broke and strengthened me with their love. I would like to thank all my relatives and my in-laws for their encouragement and generosity. Last but not the least I would like to convey my thankfulness to my loving husband Mr. Arvind Kumar Mishra for being so enduring, caring and rendering immense support throughout my research and life ahead.

Finally, I am grateful for all of you, those whom I have mentioned above as well as whom I have failed to spot, for the part of making my time as a PhD scholar the best possible!