ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

After having spent a significant portion of my life in the exhilarating, stimulating and scientifically inspiring atmosphere of CSIR-IIIM, in the pursuit of Doctorate of philosophy, it is my pleasure to convey my gratitude to all the people who have contributed to this study.

First and foremost, I would like to convey my gratitude to the person who has always been there to support, encourage and advise me, the backbone of this work, my supervisor Dr. Sumit G Gandhi. His constant encouragement, remarkable guidance, and enthusiastic discussions, always charged me up, throughout my research tenure. Though there have been many ups and downs in my research, his constant faith and confidence in me motivated me to work with renewed zest. There have been times when he charged me up, calmed me down, and commended me for my efforts to bring out the best in me.

I am highly indebted to Dr. Yashbir Singh Bedi, Head, Plant Biotechnology Division, CSIR-IIIM, for his constant encouragement, suggestions and warm support. Thank you, sir, for being so caring and supportive to me, throughout my Ph.D tenure.

I would like express my gratitude to my co-supervisor Dr. Shafaq Rasool, for her constant encouragement, suggestions and warm support. I would like to sincerely thank you, madam, for the guidance and help extended during enrolment, registration and submission of PhD and for the valuable advise and support.

I am highly indebted to Dr. Ram Vishwakarma, Director, IIIM, for providing me the opportunity to work in this esteemed institute with all the latest facilities.

My thanks are due to Dr. Vijeshwar Verma, Director (School of Biotechnology), SMVDU, for support and co-operation.

I would extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Ajai Prakash Gupta, Dr. Sarojini Johri, Dr. Prashant Mishra, Dr. Ganesh Bagler and Dr. Suphla Gupta for their valuable scientific inputs and guidance that has helped me during lab work.

A warm thanks to all my labmates, Irshad Ahmad Rather, Vidushi Mahajan, Sandeep Singh Pagoch, Mir Abid Hussain, Pankaj Pandotra, Sarika Sharma, Farnaz Mattoo, Satinder Rana, Sumeer Razdhan, Niha Dhar, Saima Khan, Wajid Waheed and Archana Bhat for all the support and keeping lab atmosphere warm and lively. I am also grateful to all of them for going through all my idiosyncrasies with a smile and special thanks for their friendship and all the fond memories.

I would also like to thank all the supporting staff of our lab for the relentless efforts to keep the lab in order while helping out with experiments. Thanks are due to Subash, Shyam lal,
Rampal and Bodhraj for their relentless effort in assisting research scholars in their day to day work.

I would like to acknowledge Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for fellowships. I would also like to acknowledge for the financial support for this work from CSIR 12th FYP project ‘PMSI’ (BSC0117) of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

Finally, but most importantly thanks to my family for their never ending support over my entire educational career. I would also want to thank my wife Mrs. Priyanka Awasthi for her continuous support during my Ph.D.

Last but not the least, I pay my deep gratitude to Adi Shakti Maa, who is always there to help me with her endless love and blessing.

Thank u all….!!!

Praveen Awasthi