<u>Acknowledgement</u>

It gives me immense pleasure to eulogize my profound gratitude to my "SIR" Dr. Siddhartha Proteem Saikia, Senior Scientist, MAEP Division, CSIR-NEIST, Jorhat, Assam, India for his invaluable guidance, enthralling advice, constant encouragement and constructive criticism throughout the course if this research endeavour. His running efforts, parental care, benign help and soothing concern have made it possible to bring out this thesis.

I am extremely grateful to Sir, Dr. Rabin Kumar Sharma, Pro Vice Chancellor, USTM, for his magnanimity in accepting to be the co-guide of my research work and for his constant support, constructive suggestions and valuable guidance throughout my present study.

The author wish to record a particular debt of gratitude to Dr. P. G. Rao, Vice Chancellor, USTM, who permitted me to carry out this study at CSIR-NEIST, Jorhat during his tenure as a Director there. I am also grateful to him for his continuous encouragement, faith and moral support throughout my research period.

My sincere thanks also goes to Dr. Ratul Saikia, Scientist, CSIR-NEIST, for his kind allowance to carry out my research work with his all-round support by providing the Biotech lab in time.

I am very much thankful to Dr. S.C. Das, Professor and Dean, School of Biological Sciences, USTM for his all-round support with timely guidance and valuable suggestions.

The author is also indebted to Dr. C. R. Sarkar, Controller of Examinations & Admissions and Dr. G.K. Sharma, Dy. Controller of Examinations & Admissions, USTM for their sincere guidance and hand holding support till the completion of my Ph.D. work since the time of my admission to this University.

Sincere thanks are due to Dr. Kalpataru. Dutta Mudoi, Dr. Rumi Kataky and Mrs. Archana Yadav, Dina Da and Anulekha Ba for their whole –hearted encouragement and spontaneous help they have rendered for the completion of my endeavour.

The author is also grateful to Ms. Nilakshi Mahanta, SO, USTM for her all-round hand holding support from time to time during my entire Ph.D. work.

The author is also indebted to Sergio Mapeli, Incornata Gallasso, Silvia Gianì and Luca Braglia of Italian National Research Council, Italy for their kind support during the carrying out of the research work at CSIR-NEIST, Jorhat, Assam.

I could not but intone my feelings of adoration to my beloved brothers and friends Jiten Da, Shantanu Da, Rupak, Rajal and Anwesha for their whole –hearted encouragement and spontaneous help they have rendered for the completion of my endeavour.

I manifest my gorgeous love to my parents and my brother (Nipu), for their buoyant affection.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those (not mentioned here), who helped me a lot directly or indirectly throughout the period of my investigation.

At the last but not the least, the author owes his profound gratefulness to the "Almighty" for giving him a lot of endurance and solace at the time of need.

(Animesh Gogoi)

Dated: