PREFACE

The author pays his most profound gratitude to Dr. Ajit Kumar Ray, Professor, Department of Commerce, University of North Bengal, India, for supervising this work. This study could not have been possible without his untiring help and encouragement. His meticulous guidance, perseverance and passionate support in each and every step have made this endeavour complete in every respect. His motivation has helped the author to choose this research topic of utmost relevance in the context of contemporary regional tea economy of North Bengal. It is a great privilege for me to work under his supervision and learn a whole gamut of things throughout the tenure of the study from him.

The author wishes to acknowledge his sincere gratitude to Dr. Anil Bhuimali, Professor and Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, University of Raiganj, West Bengal, for his invaluable help and never-ending encouragement towards successful completion of this work. The research work would never be completed without his effort and support.

The author is extremely obliged to Dr. Neelangshu Ghosh, a faculty member of Swami Vivekananda Institute of Management & Computer Science, West Bengal, India, for generously helping him in data collection, data tabulation and completion of computational work. The author would like to acknowledge his unconditional extension of all kinds of collaboration.

The author is fortunate enough to have prolonged discussions and association with the faculty members of the Department of Economics, University of North Bengal. He takes the opportunity to convey his sincere appreciation to them. He has been immensely indebted to Dr. Saswati Biswas, Professor, Department of Sociology, University of North Bengal, and Dr. Pinaki Bandopadhyay, Retd. Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry, University of North Bengal, for their constant inspiration and motivation to pursue this research work with utmost sincerity.

The author would like to acknowledge the helpful service received from Mr.Bijoy Gopal Chakraborty, President, Confederation of Indian Small Tea Grower Associations (CISTA), along with other members of the association during the time of administering field survey in different locations of the survey region.

The author would like to make special mention of his friend Bhriti Bhusan Roy for his sincere help in data collection, tabulation work, cordial company and moral support in time of need.

Finally, but not least important, the author is deeply grateful to his family members and well-wishers, especially, his mother, wife and his son for providing him the necessary mental tranquility and assistance to complete the work with ease.

(Tamash Ranjan Majumdar)

DATE: 61.12.2017