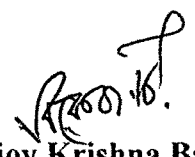


## ***PREFACE***

The Mainamati-Lalmai hill range is extraordinarily rich in its archaeological wealth. There is a very large assemblage of the Buddhist ruins of monasteries dating from 6th to 13th centuries A.D. For its archaeological richness, a large number of tourists, students and visitors visit this area almost throughout the year, even if for enjoying a picnic. Even in my student days in the University of Dhaka, we often used to go there for Departmental picnics. One can observe that all the archaeological sites in this area are well-preserved by the Directorate of Archaeology, Dhaka, Bangladesh and there is also a museum exhibiting the archaeological artifacts (like copper-plate grants, coins, image, terracotta plaques, pottery and various types of objects) found on the sites and in the surrounding areas of this hill range. We, as students, have witnessed the structural sites and the museum. Since those days of my student life, I was fascinated by those silent witnesses of the time and space and when ultimately, I decided to study Sanskrit with Archaeology, my wish to study these inscriptions and artifacts was fulfilled. Fortunately, my assignment as an Assistant Custodian in the Directorate of Archaeology, Bangladesh, actually paved way for my Ph.D. studies in this subject, which had so influenced me from my student days. I had number of occasions to visit the sites of my interest and the seniors of my Directorate actually offered cordial help in this matter. I was able to examine the artifacts closely and at leisure and was also able to consult and apprise myself of the individual studies related to those sites and artifacts. Gradually the idea of this thesis took shape in my mind. The studies of isolated plates etc. were already there and a coherent picture of the political, historical, geographical situations and personalities was slowly emerging in my mind. The I.C.C.R scholarship gave me a keenly awaited opportunity and I decided to put together all my studies, researches and ideas in the form of this thesis. That is how, the present study is now seeing the light of the day.

  
 (Bijoy Krishna Banik)