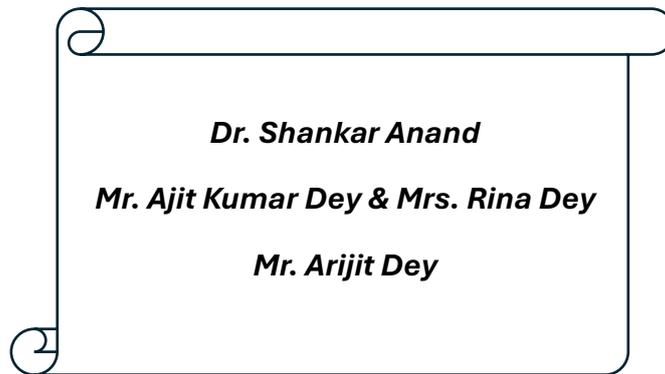


DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, parents and brother



For their endless love, unconditional support and encouragement and countless prayers