

**STUDY OF DELTA ENDOTOXIN IMMUNOCROSSREACTIVITY
OF *BACILLUS THURINGIENSIS*
ISOLATES FROM KHUMBU BASE CAMP OF THE EVEREST
REGION**

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Central Department of Microbiology

Tribhuvan University

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of
Master of Science in Microbiology (Environmental Microbiology)**

By

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2006

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It gives me immense pleasure to express my heartfelt appreciation to all the people who helped me in one way or another to complete my research work.

Respectfully, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors **Prof. Dr. Vishwanath Prasad Agrawal**, Academician, Royal Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (RONAST), Director, Universal Science College, Executive Director, Research Laboratory for Agricultural Biotechnology and Biochemistry (RLABB) for his scholastic inspiration, tremendous support, invaluable suggestions and continuous expert guidance throughout my research work.

I am indebted to my supervisor, Dr. Anjana Singh, Ph.D, Head of Department, Central Department of Microbiology, Tribhuvan University for his guidance and constant encouragement for the completion and accomplishment of this dissertation.

I am much obliged to honorable Prof. Dr. Shital Raj Basnyat, Mr. Binod Lekhak, Ms. Reshma Tuladhar, and all the teachers and staffs of Central Department of Microbiology, Tribhuvan University, all of whom have been very generous and motivating.

I am specially grateful to Mr. Yogan Khatri and Mr. Kiran Babu Tiwari for their sincere efforts, ever willing help, suggestions and continuous encouragement throughout my thesis work.

I am also thankful to Mr. Subarna Pokhrel, Mr. Dilip Shrestha , Mr. Vijendra Kumar Agrawal and all teachers and staffs of RLABB.

I wish to reaffirm my admiration and special thanks to all the friends of mine especially Gyan Sundar Shahukhal and Suman Thapa who assisted me with the completion of this work.

I wish to reiterate my acknowledgement to all my family members (Brothers, Sisters in law, and Cousins) for their insightful help to complete this thesis work.

Finally my special regards goes to my dear parents for their everlasting support.

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ABSTRACT

Bacillus thuringiensis strains were isolated from soil samples collected from Khumbu Base Camp of the Everest region and subsequently identified by standard microbiological techniques including colonial characteristics, morphological characteristics and biochemical characteristics. The stationary phase culture broth was tested for insect bioassay and delta-endotoxins (crystal protein) were extracted from the crystal endotoxin producing strains (46 from Phereche and 40 from Sagarmatha National Park). The crystal proteins were partially purified in alkaline solution and further purified by Native-PAGE. Among the ten randomly selected isolates, *B. thuringiensis* S₆ culture and its purified crystal protein showed the highest insecticidal activity. The endotoxin was found to contain five subunits with molecular weight 107KD, 83KD, 71KD, 58KD and 40KD as revealed by SDS-PAGE. A pair of New Zealand white rabbits were used to raise polyclonal antisera against purified S₆ endotoxin. The presence of polyclonal antibody was confirmed by Ouchterlony double diffusion method against S₁, S_{2a}, S₄, S₅, S₁₀, P₂, P₆ and P₁₀ antigens. Indirect ELISA was optimized using 6-8µg of the endotoxin coated microtitre plate per well. The optimal dilution of the polyclonal antibody was found to be 1000 folds corresponding to OD₄₅₀ = 0.045 for colour observation. Of the total 86 endotoxin producing isolates, 31 (36.05%) corresponding endotoxins were 25-30% crossreactive with the polyclonal antisera. Similarly, 6 (6.97%) were 75-80% and 85-90% crossreactive each, and 4 (4.65%) were 80-85% crossreactive. Only 3 (3.49%) were more than 90% crossreactive. The Discriminatory Index (D) of the Indirect ELISA was found to be 0.92. The antibody raised against the crystal protein was finally confirmed by Western Blot.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APS	Ammonium per sulphate
BHI	Brian Heart Infusion Agar media
CBB R-250	Coomasie Brilliant Blue R-250
CFA	Complete Freund's adjuvant
<i>cry</i> gene	Crystal protein producing gene
<i>cyt</i> gene	Cytolytic toxin producing gene
D value	Discriminatory value
DDT	Dichlorodiphenyl trichloroethane
DMSO	Dimethoxy sulphoxide
D/W	Distilled Water
EDTA	Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
ICP	Insecticidal Crystal Protein
ID	Immunodiffusion
IFA	Incomplete Freund's adjuvant
Ind-ELISA	Indirect Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assay
LB	Lauria Broth
MR test	Methyl red test
NA	Nutrient Agar
PBS	Phosphate Buffer Saline
PBS/T _w	Phosphate Buffer Saline Tween-20
PVDF	Polyvinylidene Fluoride membrane
SDS-PAGE	Sodium Dodecyl Sulphate Polyacrylamide Gel Electrophoresis
SIM	Sulphide-Indole motility agar
Tn element	Transposable elements
TEMED	N, N, N, N'-tetramethylenediamine
TMB	Tetramethylbenzidine
VP test	Voges-Proskauer test
WHO	World Health Organization