



Rajib Kumar Biswas
2nd year doctoral student
Department of Civil and Environmental
Engineering
Tokyo Institute of Technology

Hello! I am Rajib and I come from Bangladesh. Currently, I am a 2nd year doctoral student in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the Tokyo Institute of Technology. It's a privilege for me to share here some of my wonderful experiences in Japan and I'd like to express my humble gratitude to my supervisor and to the JSCE editorial committee for giving me this excellent opportunity.

My country, Bangladesh, is witnessing a period of economic growth that's driving a boom in the construction of megaprojects like the Padma multipurpose bridge, Metro Rail, etc. In the near future, the maintenance of such structures will become an important need. Being a civil engineer, I decided to pursue higher studies in the field of concrete structure maintenance. Without hesitation, Japanese universities came to mind first; they are well-known for cutting-edge research and state-of-the-art technology in the civil engineering field. I was also inspired by some of my teachers and prominent people with technical training who are alumni of various Japanese universities. This led me to apply for various scholarships available at Japanese universities. Luckily, I was accepted onto the Asian Development Bank – Japan Scholarship Program (ADB-JSP) at the Tokyo Institute of Technology (Tokyo Tech).

As a result, Tokyo, the clean, vibrant, and safe capital city of Japan, has been my home since October 2016. Before coming to Japan, I was a little nervous since I had minimal knowledge of the Japanese language. However, from the very first day, I received unbelievable support from my lab mates. I have found the Infrastructure Management Laboratory (Iwanami-Chijiwa lab), where I'm doing my studies, to be very friendly and favorable for conducting cutting-edge research. The technical knowledge of my colleagues, the constructive discussions in lab seminars, and our meetings have always encouraged me to be a better version of myself. Lab members help each other out with concrete casting, experimental setup, numerical analysis, and so on. In addition to academic activities, we also discuss interesting and instructive books, movies, useful mobile phone applications, delicious food, sports, games, etc. As well as annual lab trips, there are also various parties, such as for newcomers, graduating students, successful job hunting, lab members' birthdays, and so on. These activities make for a family atmosphere among lab members.

I find Tokyo Tech a fascinating place, with a diverse range of educational and research opportunities. It is home to many international students from 78 different countries, so students can easily experience the cultural diversity on the campus. Tokyo Tech works together with many international organizations and universities to combat different global issues. As a result, students are exposed to different cultures and have the opportunity to work closely with leading researchers around the world. In my case, I recall a chance to visit Imperial College, London as a visiting

researcher in 2019. I also had the opportunity to visit Politecnico Di Milano (Italy), National Central University (Taiwan), and IIT Hyderabad (India) to participate in various short-term programs.

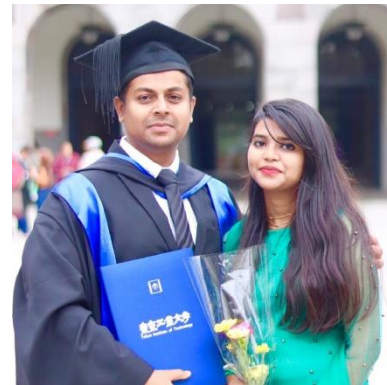
Life in Tokyo is always very convenient. The transportation system is second to none. It is so easy to travel from the city center to the suburbs, and to nearby tourist attractions. In my time here, I have visited many places, but I would like to specially mention Kamakura, Hakone, and Enoshima. The natural beauty of these places always brought peace to my mind. It is also important to say that I find Japanese food very delicious. Onigiri, tempura, and vegetable ramen are my favorites. Japanese people are very polite and honest. I lost my wallet and mobile phone a couple of times, but in each case I got them back intact. People are very kind too. Especially, I would like to mention my landlord Mr. Kazuo Takayanagi and his good wife. They helped me on innumerable occasions with their unconditional love and affection.

Currently, I am working on the assessment of the structural performance of corroded reinforced concrete structures. After finishing my Ph.D., I hope to utilize the knowledge I've acquired for the betterment of my country.

To finish, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor here, Prof. Mitsuyasu Iwanami, for his continuous guidance and support.



Picture 01: With lab members



Picture 02: Masters graduation day



Picture 03: Global fellows program at Imperial College, London



Picture 04: With Takayanagi family