India is a major nation with a population of some 1.3 billion people, and with the country experiencing rapid economic growth, there is an increased need for the development of its inter-urban transportation network. In 2009, the Indian Ministry of Railways formulated the India Railways Vision 2020, which stipulated that the development of a high-speed railway line between Mumbai and Ahmedabad was a top priority. Then, in 2015, based on a joint declaration at a summit meeting between Japan and India, it was confirmed that the high-speed railway line between Mumbai and Ahmedabad would be developed using Japanese high-speed railway technology (the Shinkansen system) and experience.

In March 2016, one of the companies in our group, Japan International Consultants for Transportation Co., Ltd. (JIC), was commissioned to provide consulting services relating to the creation of high-speed railway technical standards for this line. In December 2016, JIC was commissioned to provide consulting services relating to design and bidding for the high-speed railway as part of a joint venture, which it is currently doing.

**Overview of India High-Speed Railway Project**

Amid growing concern about global environmental issues and the growth of emerging economies, railways are attracting more and more interest worldwide as an environmentally friendly means of public transportation. At present, railway projects are being considered in many parts of the world. The global railway market is projected to grow by an average of 2.6% per year in future, increasing to around 22 trillion yen by 2020. In light of this, JR East, in partnership with companies both in Japan and abroad, is seeking to develop global projects that leverage our expertise in operations and maintenance (planning, managing, supporting, and implementing railway operation, facility maintenance, etc.) and other fields. We have identified Asia in particular, which is experiencing remarkable growth, as a priority region and are involved in railway projects in various locations there.
JIC was commissioned by JICA to conduct detailed design studies for the Indian high-speed railway construction project. My role was to handle structure-related detailed design studies, especially for station area construction plans, and review these plans in light of on-site conditions and other factors. It was a struggle at first, due to the rules being different from rules for railway construction projects in Japan and the need to converse in English with our counterparts at Indian Railways and elsewhere. I therefore made an effort to understand India’s specific rules and study English. What’s more, in order to deal with Indian English, to which I’m not accustomed, I learned about its characteristics and came up with solutions like having things written down on paper during discussions.

Now that I’m involved in a construction project in a foreign country, which is something I’ve been interested in for some time, I find my day-to-day work to be very rewarding. I hope that building a high-speed railway between Mumbai and Ahmedabad will enable smoother, more frequent transportation of people and contribute to India’s economic and cultural development. And by moving the project forward and carrying out my daily duties, I also wish to do my part as a member of society.