

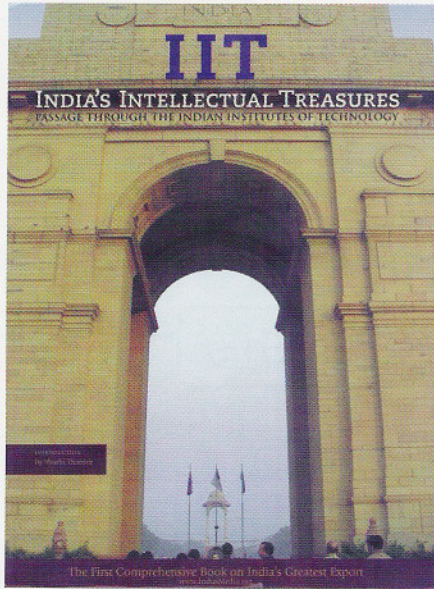
in research – including visiting IIT campuses, where they interviewed deans, professors and students.

Pant said they received “great support” from the Indian embassy, IIT directors, deans and alumni associations. “We conducted interviews with hundreds of alumni and a large number of distinguished IIT graduates.

Two historians associated with the IITs provided us access to well-researched material. We even read through 50 years of annual reports for the IITs.”

The authors also visited MIT in Cambridge, Mass, which was the model for the creation of IIT-Kanpur. “It was a pleasure interviewing many illustrious persons, most notably 96-year-old Professor John Kenneth Galbraith, former U.S. ambassador to India, who invited us to his home and spoke about his days in India when the IIT-Kanpur was being established with U.S. assistance, and told us ‘nothing, as I look back, had a more durable reward.’”

Pant and Rajguru emphasized they were committed to providing a comprehensive view of the seven institutes of technology, but they also wanted to make sure the book was “accessible” to a “wider audience,” so



The approach “could be emulated by many developing nations today. It is now India’s turn to assume a leadership role and promote the IIT model to other, lesser-developed nations.”

they chose the coffee-table-style format, with full-page color photographs and brief sketches of about 25 leading IIT alumni.

“We wanted to make it more user-friendly and have a wide appeal. I don’t know anything that is as comprehensive and covers all the IITs,” Rajguru said.

The book points out that the first five IITs were founded with support from UNESCO, Russia, Germany and Great Britain. “The ‘IIT model,’” Pant said, “developed in the 1950s and 1960s, when leading technical institutions in developed countries assisted India in an unprecedented “international experiment in higher education.”

The approach, he added, “could be emulated by many developing nations today. It is now India’s turn to assume a leadership role and promote the IIT model to other, lesser-developed nations.”

Pant and Rajguru are also making a video documentary, which they will release later this year.

The initial press run of the book is 2,000 copies, with about half of the books pre-sold.

It retails for \$60, but the authors are working with IIT alumni associations on discount plans.

The administrative building of IIT Bombay.

