

PRESS RELEASE

HBTU launches Strategic Initiatives with the IIT Alumni Council to establish India as a key global player in Novel Materials.

- IIT Alumni Council to partner HBTU along with other premium institutions to set up a Novel Materials Research Campus in NCR.
- The NMRC will align with the existing initiatives of the IIT Alumni Social Fund including the Go Mobility Platform, Ionique Research Platform, Ayushca Habitats Platform and the Kodoy Longevity Platform.
- Seeks consortium members from among its members for creation of complete ecosystem to help establish global supremacy in the novel materials domain.
- Council acts as knowledge partner and catalyst for creation of the complete ecosystem to accelerate development and deployment of appropriate technologies.



NEW DELHI, Sept 22nd, 2025: Harcourt Butler Technical University (HBTU), one of India's oldest engineering institutions, founded in 1921, is undergoing a profound transformation to reclaim its stature as a premier hub for research and innovation.

"We are entering an era of continuous and interactive education. The alumni have to continue being students for life. And our faculty has to learn from them. Education no longer ends with a degree. Faculty have to learn like students whilst they continue to teach. These realities are forcing us to fundamentally change the way we work. We must strengthen our industry linkages and enhance our PhD intake substantially. Industry sponsored PhDs and startups employing PhD students are key to our transformation. We have to strengthen our linkages with other premier institutions in India as well as overseas" added Vice Chancellor HBTU - Prof Samsher on the eve of the Convocation 2025.

HBTU's transformation is anchored in a strategic overhaul of its brand and market positioning. A key component is the reinvention of its alumni platform, modelled after the IIT Alumni Council, to strengthen ties with industry, boost sponsored research projects, and expand PhD programs. The university is upgrading its laboratories and positioning itself as an affiliate hub for western Uttar Pradesh, fostering regional innovation and economic growth. This ambitious five-year plan targets a ranking among India's top 50 engineering institutions, alongside leading institutions like IIT Bombay and ICT University (formerly UDCT) in Mumbai. To achieve this, HBTU is planning a distance campus in collaboration with industry leaders and philanthropic organizations, notably the IIT Alumni Council, many of whose postgraduate members are HBTU undergraduates.

A pivotal milestone in this journey was achieved on the eve of the Convocation 2025, with the signing of a pioneering MoU with the ACME Group, India's foremost renewable energy company. The MoU was formalized by Sri Jitendra Singh, Vice President of ACME, and Sri Amit Kumar Rathore, Registrar of HBTU, in the presence of Vice Chancellor Prof. Samsher,, Shri Satish Mehta from the IIT Alumni Social Fund, and faculty members Prof. Ashwani Kumar Rathore, Dr. S.V.A.R. Sastry, and Dr. Deepak Yadav. The agreement outlines a collaborative framework for advancing critical technologies through sponsored research, onboarding industry engineers for PhD programs, joint intellectual property (IP) development, online skilling courses, and hosting international seminars and symposiums.

"As India gears up for leadership in the Climate Change induced changed world order, close co-operation between the leading institutes would help accelerate the path to global supremacy. Vice Chancellor Prof Samsher is an alumnus of both HBTU and IIT Delhi. Prof Anirudh Pandit, Vice Chancellor of ICT University is a Senate Member of IIT Bombay and an alumnus of IIT Banaras. Shri Jitendra Singh is a distinguished alumnus of HBTU and a distinguished fellow of the IIT Alumni Council. As a knowledge partner and a leading non-profit, we consider it our privilege to align with all premium institutions promoting deep tech research in our focus areas" added Ravi Sharma, President and Chief Volunteer of the IIT Alumni Council – who is himself a native of rural UP and an alumnus of IIT Roorkee.

The IIT Alumni Social Fund, a key partner in HBTU's transformation, has recognized the university as one of India's top ten engineering institutes in chemical technology. This accolade has led to HBTU's

selection as the academic partner for a groundbreaking initiative: the establishment of a 30-acre Novel Materials Research Centre (NMRC) in the National Capital Region (NCR) near Jewar Airport.

Established through the IIT Alumni Research Institute, this campus will target global leadership in novel materials for solar cells, batteries, invertors, catalysts etc. This includes non-silicon solar cells and non-lithium batteries. The NMRC will work closely with IIT Alumni Council supported startups like Go Power (in the field of energy storage systems) and Ionique Research (in the area of electric transportation) on one hand, and established industry leaders like IOCL and ACME on the other.

The upbeat mood at the University continued to the next day at the Convocation 2025 which was led by the Chancellor of the University, Her Excellency Anandiben Patel and Shri Ashish Patel, State Minister for Higher Education. The Guests of Honour included Sri Arvinder Singh Sahney, Chairman of Indian Oil Corporation (and an alumnus of HBTU) and Shri Narendra Bhushan, Secretary Higher Education, UP. Special Invitees included Shri Jitendra Singh from Acme and Shri Satish Mehta from the IIT Alumni Social Fund.

In his highly inspirational and well applauded Convocation address,, Shri Sahney pointed out, “We are in the middle of VUCA – volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. The changing geopolitical situation demands appropriate steps to be taken in areas like energy security and self-sufficiency.” Shri Jitendra Singh added, “This is a trying time for big industry and academic institutions alike. As the world order changes, old leaders could be replaced by unknown startups. The same can happen to academic institutions if they don’t remain relevant. As an alumnus, I am delighted to see the beginning of a radical transformation at HBTU. But this cannot be an effort of only a few. We will require many more industry partners and the whole-hearted support of deeptech literate, deep pocketed foundations like the IIT Alumni Council. I have had the opportunity of participating in task forces of the IIT Alumni Council as well as research projects of HBTU. I also serve as a Mentor to the Go Power advanced storage system platform – which could disrupt the battery industry globally in the near future. This is a win-win combination which brings together academia, industry, startups, alumni and non-profits.”

The IIT Alumni Council, representing over 50,000 alumni across 100 city chapters from all 23 Indian Institutes of Technology, is a global powerhouse for technological and philanthropic advancement. The IIT Alumni Social Fund is the largest nonprofit technology accelerator of its kind, dedicated to catalysing India’s technological renaissance. The Novel Materials Research Centre (NMRC), modelled on Germany’s Fraunhofer Institute, will serve as a hub for interdisciplinary research, uniting over 500 distinguished fellows, 250 industry partners, and nearly 100 academic institutions.

“In my college days – the three colleges I wanted to join were ICT, HBTI or IIT Bombay. I am delighted to see the transformation at HBTU. The NMRC will have our full support – both financially and otherwise. We also hope to onboard around ten more industry partners in the NMRC” added Satish Mehta, Convenor for the IIT Alumni Social Fund and a Chemical Engineer from IIT Bombay.

Industry partners who are interested in participating in the NMRC may write to applications@iitalumnicouncil.org on or before September 30, 2025. This call is NOT open to the public and is only for individual or corporate members of the IIT Alumni Council and for alumni of HBTU or ICT University.

