National Institute of Technology, Jamshedpur, earlier known as Regional Institute of Technology was established on 15th August 1960 as a joint venture of Government of India and the Government of Bihar in the chain of RECs (Regional Engineering College) in India with the aim to generate technical graduates of highest standards who could provide technological leadership to the region.. It was among the first eight Regional Engineering Colleges (RECs) established as part of the Second Five-Year Plan (1956 - 1961). This was the only REC in the country which was named as RIT (Regional Institute of Technology). Therefore RIT Jamshedpur was actually the REC of undivided Bihar & Jharkhand. The foundation stone of RIT (REC) Jamshedpur was laid by Dr. Srikrishna Sinha, the then chief minister of Bihar, with the aim of nurturing talent and setting high standards of education and excellence.

On 27th December 2002, in the line of all other RECs of India, RIT Jamshedpur (may be read as REC Jamshedpur too) was converted to National Institute of Technology, Jamshedpur with the status of a Deemed University as per the decision of Govt. of India. The Institute is fully funded and governed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India since 1st April, 2003. On 15 August 2007, NIT Jamshedpur was given the status of the Institute of National Importance through an Act of the Parliament known as the NIT Act.

The Institute has 12 departments including engineering, science and humanities. The Institute, with 120 faculty, 3000 students, 150 administrative and supporting staff, is a self-contained campus. It is located on the outskirts of Jamshedpur on 320 acres of sprawling, rolling hilly, wooded land. It combines natural beauty of countryside with urban glamour of an industrial area. The flowing river and picturesque backdrop of low hills on one side and large tracks of forest on the other make the 320 acres of rolling campus an ideal place for higher learning and research. It has been growing from strength to strength ever since it was established in 1960.

Situated in the heart of the rich mineral and industrial belt of Jharkhand State, the campus encompasses the Main building, the Library, the Computer Center, 11 hostels (9 Boys hostels and 2 Girls hostels), staff quarters, Guest House, a Students Gymkhana, a Post-office, a branch of State Bank of India, two ATMs, central store and a dispensary. The hostels and departments are connected with high speed wireless LAN. The institute maintains courts for basketball, volleyball, badminton and tennis. Apart from this, it also has cricket, hockey and football grounds. The institute is poised for bright and promising future. The courses have been completely restructured and prepared as per the needs of society and industries.