



Department of Consumer Affairs Notifies Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2026

Rules to establish Indian Standard Time as common time reference across the country

Rules to come into force after 180 days

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The Department of Consumer Affairs has notified the **Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2026** on **27 August 2026**. The Rules will come into force **180 days from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette**.

The Rules provide for **Indian Standard Time (IST) as the common time reference across the country** for legal, administrative, commercial and other official purposes. The 180-day period will allow Government departments, businesses, institutions and other organisations to make the required changes to their systems before the Rules come into force.

The need for a common time reference has increased with the growing use of digital and technology-based systems. Banking and digital payments, telecommunications, railways, power systems, computer networks and government records depend on accurate time and time stamps. Differences between time sources can affect the coordination and recording of such activities. The Rules are aimed at ensuring that important systems across the country use **accurate and consistent Indian Standard Time**.

The common time reference will support:

- accurate time-stamping of **banking and digital payment transactions**;
- coordination of **railways, airports and other transport systems**;
- reliable operation of **telecommunication and internet networks**;
- accurate time-keeping in **power systems**;
- maintenance of **government and legal records**; and
- coordination of **emergency and other time-sensitive services**.

Use of Indian Timing Sources

The Government is developing infrastructure to disseminate accurate Indian Standard Time across the country through **Indian institutions and Legal Metrology laboratories**. The Rules also provide for the use of **NavIC, India's satellite navigation system**, and other approved Indian timing sources for reliable and secure time dissemination.

At present, several systems use foreign satellite-based time sources. The development of an Indian time dissemination infrastructure will provide additional options for critical systems and reduce dependence on external time sources.

White Rabbit Technology Demonstration

As part of the ‘**One Nation, One Time**’ initiative, a **White Rabbit Technology-based Indian Standard Time Dissemination Demonstration Network** was commissioned at the **Regional Reference Standard Laboratory (RRSL), Bengaluru, in July 2026**.

The system has demonstrated the dissemination of Indian Standard Time for sectors including **banking, telecommunications, power, transportation and digital governance**. The Department has also demonstrated secure dissemination of IST between **RRSL Bengaluru and NSE Chennai**, in collaboration with **CSIR-NPL, ISRO, SEBI, NSE, BSNL and other stakeholders**.

The **180-day period before commencement of the Rules** will provide stakeholders time to review their existing systems, undertake necessary technical changes and prepare for implementation. The Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2026 will provide a **common Indian Standard Time reference for time-dependent systems and official purposes across the country**.

RT/ SB / ARC

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