

Indian Standard Time (IST) Rules, 2026

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Government policies and interventions

Why in News?

The Union Government has notified the Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2026, making Indian Standard Time (IST) the single reference time for official purposes.

Key Provisions

- **Common time reference** - IST to be used across the country for official, legal and commercial activities.
- **Digital synchronisation** - Aims to ensure accurate and synchronised timestamps in banking, digital payments, telecom, transport, power grids and computer networks.
- **Indian timing sources** - Seeks to reduce dependence on foreign satellite-based timing sources.
- **NavIC** - It can be used for secure and reliable IST dissemination.

NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation) is India's independent regional satellite navigation system developed by ISRO.

- **Transition period** - 180 days for government departments, businesses and institutions to comply.

One Nation, One Time Initiative

- **In progress** - To disseminate accurate IST through Indian institutions and legal metrology laboratories.

White Rabbit Technology-based IST Dissemination Demonstration Network was commissioned at RRSL, Bengaluru.

- Demonstrated secure transmission of IST between RRSL Bengaluru and NSE Chennai.
- Institutions involved -
 - National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL),
 - Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO),
 - Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI),

- National Stock Exchange (NSE) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL).

Accurate Time Importance

- **Banking & digital payments** - Precise transaction timestamps.
- **Telecommunications** - Network synchronisation.
- **Transport** - Coordination of railways and airports.
- **Power sector** - Synchronisation of power systems.
- **Governance** - Accurate legal and government records.
- **Emergency services** - Coordination of time-critical operations.

Reference

[The Hindu| Indian Standard Time \(IST\) Rules, 2026](#)

