

India takes a big step towards time uniformity

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Tech

India Mandates Indian Standard Time for All Activities: ‘One Nation, One Time’ Becomes Reality

One Nation, One Time: New Rules to Synchronize Legal, Commercial, and Digital Sectors with IST, Boosting National Security and Digital Accuracy.

India Mandates Indian Standard Time for All ActivitiesThe Bridge Chronicle

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IST Rules 2025: The Government of India is set to mandate the use of Indian Standard Time (IST) for all legal, commercial, digital, and administrative activities. This sweeping reform, under the soon-to-be-notified Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2025, marks a decisive shift away from reliance on foreign time sources and ushers in a new era of synchronized national infrastructure.

For decades, India’s critical sectors—including telecommunications, banking, utilities, and transportation—have depended on foreign sources like the US-based GPS for time synchronization. This dependence has posed risks ranging from cyberattacks to inconsistent billing and investigative challenges in digital security. By institutionalizing IST as the sole legal time reference, the government aims to eliminate these vulnerabilities and ensure fairness, transparency, and trust in everyday services.

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The Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2025, will require all government offices, public institutions, and private sector entities to synchronize their operations with IST. The use of alternative time references will be strictly prohibited unless explicitly authorized for scientific, astronomical, or navigational purposes.

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, highlighting the strategic significance of the initiative, stated, “In today’s data-driven world, unsynchronized clocks lead to digital mismatches, investigation challenges, and network inefficiencies. With these rules, we are moving towards ‘One Nation, One Time’—a step that will ensure fairness, accuracy, and national security”

This move is also a significant stride towards self-reliance in critical infrastructure. By leveraging the expertise of the CSIR-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL) and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), India will disseminate IST with unprecedented accuracy, reducing dependence on foreign systems and reinforcing national sovereignty.

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The draft rules were published in January 2025 for stakeholder feedback, and the final notification is expected soon. Once implemented, all sectors will be required to comply, with regular audits ensuring strict adherence.