

## **Daylight Saving Time**

### **Why in news?**

Clocks in the US will “fall back” an hour on Sunday, signalling the end of Daylight Saving Time (DST) this year.

### **What is Daylight Saving Time (DST)?**

- DST is the practice of resetting clocks ahead by an hour in spring, and behind by an hour in autumn (or fall).
- The rationale behind setting clocks ahead of standard time, usually by 1 hour during springtime, is to ensure that the clocks show a later sunrise and later sunset — in effect a longer evening daytime.
- In the Southern Hemisphere, the opposite happens, where countries “spring forward”.
- Because the spring to fall cycle is opposite in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, DST lasts from March to October/November in Europe and the US
- in New Zealand and Australia it lasts from September/October to April.

### **How many countries use DST?**

- DST is in practice in some 70 countries, including those in the EU.
- India does not follow daylight saving time as countries near the Equator do not experience high variations in daytime hours between seasons.
- (There is, however, a separate debate around the logic of sticking with only one time zone in a large country.)
- Most Muslim countries do not use DST — during the holy month of Ramzan which could mean delaying the breaking of the fast for longer.
- Morocco has DST, but suspends it during Ramzan. However, Iran has DST, and stays with it even during Ramzan.

### **What does this system mean to achieve?**

- The key argument is that DST is meant to save energy.
- According to a report, it was initially followed by a group of Canadians on July 1, 1908, when residents of Port Arthur, Ontario, turned their clocks forward by an hour.

- Other locations in Canada soon followed suit.
- However, the idea did not catch on until Germany and Austria introduced DST in 1916 to minimise the use of artificial lighting to save fuel during WWI.

### **How relevant is DST now?**

- A century ago, when DST was introduced, more daylight did mean less use of artificial light.
- But modern society uses so much energy-consuming appliances all day long that the amount of energy saved is negligible.
- Among the biggest disadvantages is the disruption of the body clock or circadian rhythm.

### **What are the countries that want DST gone?**

- In March 2020, the European Union moved to scrap the custom of DST, with the European Parliament voting 410-192.
- After 2021, EU member states will choose between “permanent summertime” or “permanent wintertime”.

**Source: The Indian Express**

