A New Challenge in the Brexit Process

Why in news?

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Theresa May government in Britain faced a new challenge in the Brexit process, with an amendment being passed in the parliament.

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What is the recent development?

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- The rebels within the ruling party allied with major opposition parties to push through an amendment to the Brexit legislation.
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- The amendment prescribes a greater say for the Members of Parliament on the terms of Britain's departure from the EU.
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- The amendment was passed despite a last-minute attempt by the government to offer a "concession".
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What are the implications?

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- **Brexit** - Britain recently made landmark agreement after tough negotiations with the EU on the terms of Britain's exit.
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- The terms of agreement include those on -\n
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i. the status of British and EU migrant residents in their respective territories
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ii. the financial settlement of London's outstanding dues

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iii. reconfiguration of the EU-UK border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland
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- The recent vote in the parliament casts a shadow over this consensus development in the Brexit process.
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- **Government** - The tussle between parliamentary sovereignty and executive authority has existed since the Brexit referendum.
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- The country's Supreme Court ruling held that since domestic laws would be altered following Brexit, a parliamentary vote on initiating that process was mandatory.
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- In this backdrop, the defeat in parliament comes as a humiliating loss of authority for the government.
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- The development was met with anger from hardline Brexit supporters.
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- However, it is an important guarantee of parliamentary scrutiny over the future course of London's relationship with the EU.
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- The amendment will ensure that legislators have a voice in finalising the terms of the exit agreement.
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- This gains greater significance with the impact on residency status of millions and London's financial liabilities in a post-Brexit scenario.
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How does the future look?

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- Ms. May will have to make some difficult compromises in the months ahead.
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- And be more accountable to her party and to the Parliament.
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- Another test lies ahead in Parliament, pertaining to the differences over the March 2019 deadline for Brexit.
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- Also, with referendums becoming a popular tool worldwide, the world countries should consider the larger debate on whether such votes should override the will of the legislature, or guide it.
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Source: The Hindu, Business Line

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