Suspension of UK Parliament

What is the issue?

- British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has prorogued Parliament for five weeks (till October 14).
- It is seen as an attempt to silence elected representatives on the key issue of Britain's future ties with the European Union (EU).
- It will limit parliament's ability to derail his Brexit plan by cutting the amount of time it will sit before EU exit day on October 31.

What is prorogation?

- Prorogation is to bring a parliamentary session to end by the monarch on the advice of the government.
- Usually, Parliament is prorogued every year. But last year, then PM Theresa May didn't recommend prorogation due to Brexit debates.
- This year, Queen Elizabeth II approved the Johnson government's request, which he says that prorogation was long overdue.

What does it mean for Brexit?

- It has effectively curtailed lawmakers' opportunities to reject his Brexit plans.
- This would have been a crucial time for rebel MPs to come up with legislation against a no-deal Brexit, which Mr Johnson has not ruled out.
- There's an EU summit on October 17 and 18 in which Mr Johnson could seek a fresh Brexit deal.
- After the summit, if he has a new deal, he will present that to the lawmakers, which means the MPs will get only 9 working days to either pass or reject the deal.
- It is not sure whether PM Johnson will even have a Brexit deal that's different from Ms. May's deal.
- Thus, the threat of no-deal will be hanging over lawmakers.

What is the current status of Brexit?

- When PM Theresa May proposed deal that provides 21-month transition period for Brexit, MPs rejected her deal thrice.
- They failed to come up with an alternative plan either.

- The deadline for Brexit was extended to 31 October.
- The only thing they agreed regarding Brexit was to oppose a no-deal Brexit.
- In a no-deal scenario, the UK would immediately leave the EU with no agreement about the transition process.
- Now, to avoid a no-deal Brexit on 31st October, the UK government must pass a Brexit divorce plan into law, obtain another extension from the EU, or cancel Brexit.

What has happened after Prorogation?

- Legal bids to halt the suspension of Parliament was filed in Scotland and London.
- Scotland and London judges rejected the request for a temporary injunction.
- The appeal of the rulings will go directly to the U.K Supreme Court.

Source: The Hindu, Business Standard

