Turmoil in Sri Lanka

Why in news?

The Sri Lankan Parliament voted against the controversially appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa government in a No Confidence motion.

What events led to this constitutional crisis?

- The coalition of the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) formed the National Unity government in Sri Lanka on 2015.
- President Maithripala Sirirsena is the Chairperson of SLFP and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe is the leader of UNP party.
- The coalition was formed in 2015 to oust the then-president Mahinda Rajapaksa, who many feared was becoming too powerful.
- On October 26th, 2018, Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena fired his Prime Minister Wickremesinghe.
- Srirsena installed Sri Lanka's controversial former leader Mahinda Rajapakse as the country's new prime minister.
- The move plunged the island nation into an unprecedented constitutional crisis.
- President Maithripala Sirisena cited policy and personal differences between the two for Ranil's removal.
- Subsequently Mr. Sirisena dissolved the Parliament and prevented a vote on the House to test the rival camps' (Ranil's Claim to Prime Ministership) claims to majority.
- He also called for snap elections on January 5,2019.
- Following which almost all political parties, except those aligned to the Sirisena-Rajapaksa front, petitioned the Supreme Court challenging the "illegal" action.

What was the verdict of the Sri Lanka's Supreme Court?

- Sri Lanka's Supreme Court stayed President Maithripala Sirisena's dissolution of Parliament.
- It also restrained the Election Commission from preparing for snap elections.
- Following the ruling, Speaker convened the Parliament.

What happened in the Sri Lankan Parliament?

- The reconvened Parliament conducted the floor test to determine the majority in the house.
- In the landmark vote, the Sri Lankan parliament passed a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa's government.

What are the recent developments?

- Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa joined the recently formed Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP).
- He bid a farewell to SLFP with which he was associated for 50 years.

Source: The Hindu, The Guardian

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