Delhi Police-Lawyers Clash

Why in news?

Delhi witnessed an unprecedented protest resulting from a clash between the Delhi police personnel and lawyers.

What happened?

- The clash was between police and lawyers following an argument over parking at the Tis Hazari Court complex.
- It led to violence in which people from both sides were injured.
- Thousands of Delhi Police personnel took on protest outside the Police Headquarters in Delhi.
- The protest was a reaction to two attacks on the police personnel.
- The families of the personnel also took to streets seeking arrest of the lawyers involved in the clash.
- The lawyers too abstained from work in all district courts in the capital.
- They demanded the arrest of the police personnel involved in the clash.
- The intervention by the Delhi High Court appeared to be shielding the lawyers while being harsh on the police.
- After more than 11 hours, the protest was called off following multiple appeals including from police's chief.
- Senior officers assured that their grievances would be addressed.
- It was also assured that a review petition would be filed against the Delhi High Court order in connection with the clash.

What are the larger concerns among police personnel?

- Overworked and often used as tools by political masters, police forces are far from professional in any part of India.
- The outburst of the constables in Delhi is also the result of their accumulated resentment against senior officers.
- Under the direct supervision of the Home Ministry, the Delhi police is often caught in the crossfire of many political battles.
- Consequently, the junior personnel are often the worst-affected.

What are the governance implications?

- The blockade of the Delhi police headquarters by its personnel and the

disruption of courts led to a governance breakdown in the national capital.

- At a deeper level, the clash is an alarming sign of an increasingly weakening governance deficit and collapse of the rule of law.
- This takes many forms, such as police support for mobs and legal processes that victimizes victims of crimes further.

What is the way forward?

- Lawyers and the police are critical to law enforcement.
- Their unfailing commitment to the law and the legal process is an essential attribute that a society counts on.
- The judicial intervention in the clash between lawyers and the police must not only be impartial and fair but also be seen as such.
- To restore public confidence in policing and judicial process, strict action must be taken against those who indulged in the violence.

Source: Economic Times, The Hindu

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