Politics Vs Bureaucracy - Delhi

Why in news?

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There is an ongoing tussle between the elected government and the bureaucracy in Delhi.

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What is going on in Delhi?

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- **Government** - Delhi CM Kejriwal has said there was “de facto President’s Rule” in the national capital.
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- Mr. Kejriwal, Deputy Chief Minister, and some ministers have been staging a sit-in at the Raj Niwas.
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- They called attention to an "illegal strike by Delhi government officers".
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- They demanded that Lieutenant-Governor order an end to what they call a strike by officers.
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- **Bureaucracy** - But Raj Niwas and the IAS officers’ association has said there is no strike.
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- Passing of the state budget and the accompanying budget session are pointed as proofs of a working machinery.
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- However, they admit to being part of what is at least a ‘non-cooperation campaign’.
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- They have restricted communication with the political executive to the written form alone since February.
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- Also, not attending meetings convened by Ministers.
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- This was in protest of the alleged assault on Chief Secretary by AAP MLAs at

Mr. Kejriwal’s residence.
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- The bureaucrats claim they feel vulnerable in the absence of Ministerial assurances of their safety.
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What is the tussle for?

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- Delhi witnesses a tussle for “full statehood” versus “partial statehood”.
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- Relations between the Chief Minister and Lieutenant General in Delhi has for long been a concern.
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- But this has less to do with constitutional correctness and more with the political compulsions.
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- The principle of special sensitivities for national capitals exists for Delhi too.
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- This is on account of the national, international importance, geographical location and strategic significance.
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- This makes the claim to “full statehood” for Delhi to be treated differently.
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What are the implications?

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- It results in a fractured arrangement of power-sharing.
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- This applies to law and order, land and services residing with the central government.
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- This arrangement has always been contested by the state government.
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- Such constitutional arrangements militate against the preferences of the “elected government”.
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- The compromises and restrictions defeat the purposes of democracy and accountability in elected governments.

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- E.g. the formation of the present Delhi government was followed by the LG's office imposing many constraints.
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- It disabled the power of the state government to transfer employees.
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- Also, restrictions were imposed on ordering vigilance probes on complaints or proceeding against corrupt officials.
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Why is the issue significant?

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- Trust between the political class and bureaucracy is necessary for good governance.
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- The impasse in Delhi suggests a total breakdown in the relations between the two sections.
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- This spate between the LG and the CM has further diminished the nobility of constitutional offices.
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- The government must introspect and adopt a more mature approach to the bureaucracy.
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Source: The Hindu, Indian Express

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