Protecting the street vendors

Why in news?

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Recently hawkers near Mumbai's Haji Ali Dargah had field complaint in the Supreme Court about their eviction by corporation authorities.

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What are the significance of street vendors?

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- Street vendors are often those who are unable to get regular jobs in formal sector on account of their low level of education and skills.
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- The government recognised street vending as a source of self-employment for the poor in cities and towns with their meagre financial resources.
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What are the acts which protects the street vendors?

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- The hawkers are protected under the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014.
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- The Act was passed on the basis of the legislative recognition that street vendors constitute "an integral part of our urban economy".
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- It also empowers them to provide "affordable" as well as "convenient" services to a majority of the urban population.
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- The law mandates that hawkers can be removed only as a last resort or unless there is a clear and urgent need, that too to rehabilitate them.
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How this law empowers the street vendors?

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- **Committee -**The law provides for the constitution of a town vending committee in each local authority to ensure implementation of the provisions of the Act.
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- **Representation -** It has representatives among officials, non-officials, and street vendors, including women vendors.
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- It also has a due representation from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, minorities, and persons with disabilities.
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- Forty percent of the committee members are from among street vendors to be selected through election, of which one-third shall be women.
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- **Decision making -**The committee makes decisions on various aspects, including determination of natural market, identification of vending zones, preparation of street vending plan, survey of street vendors, and so on.
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- **Certification -**To avoid arbitrariness of authorities, the law had provided for a survey of all existing street vendors.
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- It will issue of certificates of vending to all the street vendors identified in the survey.
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Source: The Hindu

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