Need of rights in a Democracy

Rights are necessary for the very sustenance of a democracy. In a democracy every citizen has to have a right to vote and the right to be elected to government. For democratic elections to take place, it is necessary that citizens should have the right to express their opinions, form political parties and take part in political activities.

Rights also perform a very special role in a democracy. Rights protect minorities from oppression of majority. They ensure that the majority cannot do whatever it likes. Rights are guarantees which can be used when things go wrong. Things may go wrong when some citizens may wish to take away the rights of others. This usually happens when those in majority want to dominate those in minority. The government should protect the citizens’ rights in such a situation. But sometimes elected governments may not protect or may even attack the rights of their own citizens. That is why some rights need to be placed higher than the government, so that the government cannot violate them. In most democracies the basic rights of the citizens are written down in the constitution.