

***Title: Fundamental Rights in India – A Citizen’s Shield, Authored By: Anuj  
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## **ABSTRACT:**

*Fundamental Rights are the backbone of the Indian Constitution. They protect individual liberty and ensure justice in a democratic society. This article explores the nature, scope, and importance of these rights, especially from the perspective of young citizens entering the legal field.*

## **I. INTRODUCTION:**

As a first-year law student, I’ve come to realize how deeply Fundamental Rights shape our understanding of justice and citizenship. These rights are not just legal provisions; they are moral commitments that define the relationship between the State and its people. Enshrined in Part III of the Constitution, they empower individuals to live with dignity and freedom.

## **II. TYPES OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS:**

**The Constitution of India guarantees six major Fundamental Rights:**

➤ **Right to Equality (Articles 14-18):**

Ensure equal treatment before the law and prohibit discrimination.

➤ **Right to Freedom (Articles 19-22):**

Includes freedom of speech, movement, profession, and protection from arbitrary arrest.

➤ **Right against Exploitation (Articles 23-24):**

Prohibits forced labor and child labor.

➤ **Right to Freedom of Religion (Articles 25-28):**

Allows individuals to practice, profess, and propagate any religion.

➤ **Cultural and Educational Rights (Articles 29- 30):**

Protects the rights of minorities to preserve their culture and establish educational institutions.

➤ **Right to Constitutional Remedies (Article 32):**

Empowers citizens to approach the Supreme Court directly if their rights are violated.



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### **III. IMPORTANCE FOR STUDENTS:**

*Understanding these rights is crucial for students, especially those studying law. It helps us:*

- *Grasp the foundations of democracy and justice.*
- *Recognize and challenge social inequalities.*
- *Build awareness of legal protections available to every citizen.*

*In contrast to textbook definitions, these rights come alive when we see them applied in real-life situations from protests to privacy debates.*

### **IV. JUDICIAL SUPPORT:**

*The judiciary has played a vital role in interpreting and expanding the scope of Fundamental Rights. Two landmark cases illustrate this:*

- *Maneka Gandhi vs. Union of India (1978)<sup>1</sup>:*

The Supreme Court held that the right to personal liberty under Article 21 must be interpreted broadly, linking it with Articles 14 and 19.

- *Kesavananda Bharati vs. State of Kerala (1973)<sup>2</sup>:*

This case established the “*basic structure doctrine*,” ensuring that Fundamental Rights cannot be amended in a way that destroys their essence.

*These judgments show how the Constitution evolves through judicial interpretation, keeping pace with changing societal needs.*

### **V. CONCLUSION:**

*In my view, understanding Fundamental Rights early in our legal education empowers us to become responsible advocates of justice. These rights are not just tools for legal protection - they are instruments of social transformation. As future lawyers, it is our duty to uphold and defend them, both inside and outside the courtroom.*

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<sup>1</sup> AIR 1978 SC 597.

<sup>2</sup> (1973) 4 SCC 225; AIR 1973 SC 1461.

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- *Constitution of India*
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