

## Educational Schemes of Waqf and Madrasa

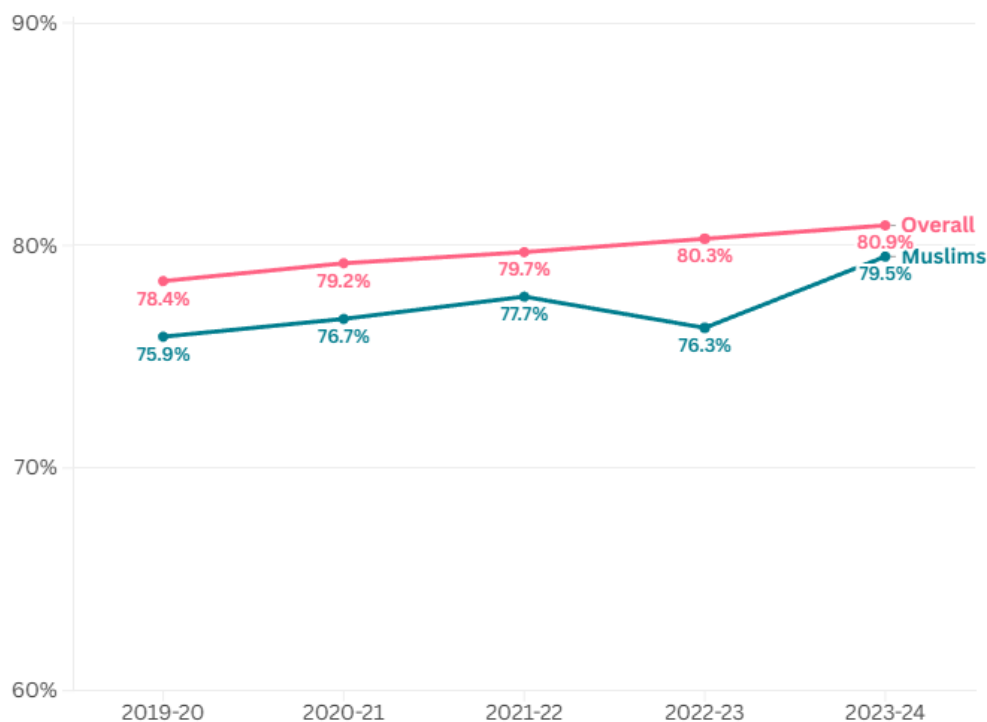
### Why in news?

Recently, the Centre had revealed that the budgetary allocations for madrasa and Waqf educational schemes had been lashed almost to nil.

### What is the educational status of Muslims?

- **Lower literacy rates of Muslims** - It stands at 79.5% which is below the national average 80.9%, as per recent Minority Affairs Ministry report.

Literacy rate (in %) of Muslims aged 7 and above

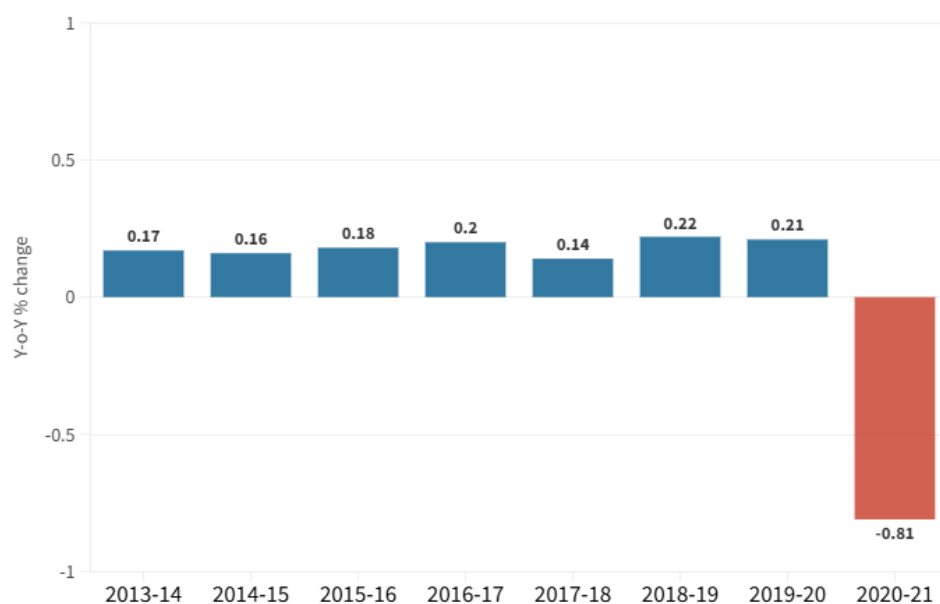


Source: Annual Periodic Labour Force Survey

- **Decline in Muslim Higher Education Enrolment** - All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2020-21 reported an **8% decline** in Muslim enrolment compared to 2019-20.
- The drop was greater than that of Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC).

## Year-on-year change in the share of Muslim students in higher education

From 2013 to 2020, the total share of Muslim students in higher education was increasing. But in 2020-21, the share of Muslim students was 0.81% lower than what it was in 2019-20.



Source: AISHE

## 'State of Muslim Education in India' Report

- *Reduction in female enrolment* during 2020-21.
- High dropout rates in states like Assam and West Bengal.
- On an average 18.64% Muslim students drop out at the secondary level, compared to the national average of 12.6%.
- *Enrolment declines from Class 6 onwards*, reaching the lowest in Classes 11 and 12.

## What are the waqf educational schemes?

### Waqf Board

- It is a *statutory body*.
- **Role** - They *manage waqf properties*, which are endowments for religious or charitable purposes in Islam.
- They oversee assets like mosques, madrasas, graveyards, and welfare institutions.

- The Ministry of Minority Affairs oversees 2 key waqf schemes.
- **Quami Waqf Board Taraqqiati Scheme (QWBTS)** - It aims to develop and modernize waqf properties.
- **Shahari Waqf Sampatti Vikas Yojana (SWSVY)** - It aims to support urban waqf properties for community welfare and educational purposes.
- **Implementing agency** - Both the above two schemes are implemented by Central Waqf Council (CWC).

**Central Waqf Council** is a statutory body under the Ministry of Minority Affairs was set up in 1964 to advise the Central Government on matters concerning the working of the Waqf Boards.

## What is the Scheme for Providing Education to Madrassas and Minorities (SPEMM)?

***Madrassas** have been centers of Islamic education, dating back to the 8th-9th century during the Abbasid Caliphate.*

- **Launched in** - 2014-15.
- **Nodal agency** - Ministry of Minority Affairs.
- **Objectives** - To restructure existing education schemes for Muslims and to include more minority communities.
- To provide ***modern education*** in madrassas by
  - Improving teacher training
  - Strengthen madrassa boards
  - Enhance infrastructure in minority institutions
  - Raise awareness about education programs.
- **Funding mechanism**

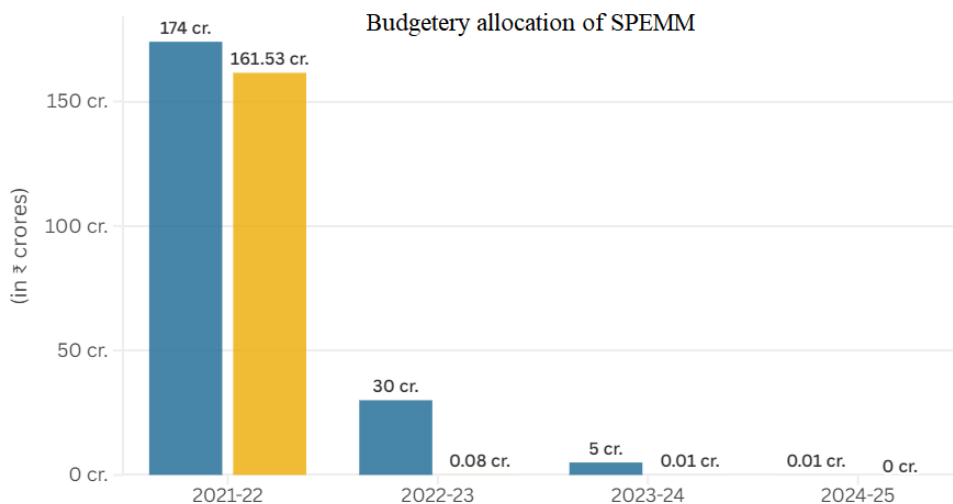
Regions	Centre	State
North-Eastern states & Himalayan states	90%	10%
Union Territories without legislature	100%	-
Other states	60%	40%

- **Eligibility** - *Madrassas affiliated with recognized school education boards* and mapped on the Geographical Information System (GIS) were eligible for financial assistance.
- **Financial assistance** - For teachers and madrassa boards for administration.

## What are the concerns associated with Muslims education?

- **Decline in education funding** - The *allocation and expenditure for QWBTS and SWSVY have steadily decreased* between 2021 and 2025, with little to no spending in recent years.
- **Nil Funding for SPEMM** - While it started at Rs. 194 crore in 2014-15 and dropped to *zero in 2024-25*.

■ Budget Allocation ■ Actual Expenditure



- **Closing of Madrassas** - In 2021, the Assam government repealed 2 madrassa-related Acts (1995, 2018), closing all government and government-funded private madrassas.
- They were later converted into general schools in 2023.
- **Issues in Madrassa education** - The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) told the Supreme Court that madrassas are unsuitable for proper education with following concerns
  - Islamic supremacy in textbooks.
  - Violating the right against forced participation in religious instruction or worship of non-Muslim students in madrassas.
  - Lack of curriculum standards and teacher eligibility issues.
  - Opaque funding and land law violations.
  - Failure to provide a holistic educational environment.
- **Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024** - If the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 is passed in present form, it will
  - Increase Central regulation over waqf properties.
  - Allow non-Muslim members in waqf boards.
- Since waqf boards manage most madrassas, this move will reduce the influence of Islamic trusts and bring madrassas under greater government control.

## What lies ahead?

- Steps can be taken to identify and enrol out-of-school children in age-appropriate classes.
- Coverage of financial aid to Muslim students can be increased.
- Provision of scholarships, grants for the community can be increased.

## Reference

[The Hindu | Drop in Funding for Waqf Educational Schemes](#)



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