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CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES: A MULTI-FACETED ANALYSIS OF ARTICLE 30(1) AND THE MADRASA SYSTEM IN INDIA

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Abstract

This paper provides a comprehensive, multi-faceted analysis of the intersection between Article 30(1) of the Indian Constitution, which guarantees religious and linguistic minorities the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice, and the allegations that a small number of madrassas are being exploited by extremist groups. The central argument is that while the vast majority of madrassas serve a vital socio-educational function for marginalized communities, a confluence of systemic loopholes, historical context, and political manipulation creates a fertile ground for exploitation by a few extremist elements. A nuanced policy response is necessary, one that respects the fundamental constitutional right while simultaneously mandating greater accountability and transparency. The investigation reveals a fundamental, and often exploited, tension between the constitutional right of minorities to “administer” their educational institutions and the state’s legitimate interest in ensuring quality education and public safety.

A primary vulnerability is the challenge of unregulated funding. The reliance of thousands of unrecognized madrassas on private, and often foreign, funding creates an opaque financial system. This opacity is a significant systemic loophole, confirmed by investigations in Uttar Pradesh and elsewhere, which makes it difficult to trace the flow of money and can be exploited for purposes beyond education. The lack of state oversight extends beyond finances to include a lack of standardized curriculum and a lack of transparency in teacher recruitment. This combines with the socio-economic vulnerability of students, many of whom are from poor and marginalized backgrounds, to create an environment susceptible to ideological manipulation. The debate surrounding madrassas is also highly political, with various actors, including the state, religious clerics, and political groups, using the issue to advance their own agendas, often sidelining genuine educational and socio-economic needs.

1. Introduction

The Indian Constitution, in its commitment to a secular and pluralistic society, provides a robust framework for the protection of minority rights. Among its most significant provisions is Article 30(1), which guarantees religious and linguistic minorities the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.¹ This provision is not merely a legal clause but a foundational element of India's constitutional framework, designed to protect the cultural and educational identity of its diverse population.² The right is comprehensive, encompassing both the establishment and the administration of the institution.³ However, in recent years, this constitutional guarantee has become the subject of intense debate and scrutiny, particularly concerning the madrasa system in India.

Madrasahs, as Islamic educational institutions, have a long and storied history in the Indian subcontinent.⁴ From centers of comprehensive learning during the Mughal period to institutions that have undergone significant transformation in the post-colonial era, madrasahs have played a vital role in the educational and social life of India's Muslim community.⁵ Today, they serve as a crucial educational lifeline for millions of impoverished Muslim children, providing free education, food, and accommodation.⁶

However, allegations have emerged that a small number of madrasahs are being exploited by extremist groups for purposes of indoctrination and recruitment.⁷ These allegations have led to a complex and often polarized debate, pitting the constitutional rights of minorities against the state's legitimate interest in ensuring national security and public safety.⁸ The central argument of this paper is that while the vast majority of madrasahs serve a vital socio-educational function, a confluence of systemic loopholes, historical context, and political manipulation creates a fertile ground for exploitation by a few extremist elements.⁹ A nuanced policy

¹Constitution of India, art. 30, cl. 1. Available at: <https://legislative.gov.in/constitution-of-india/>

²Granville Austin, *Working a Democratic Constitution: A History of the Indian Experience* (Oxford University Press, 1999), 145. Available at: <https://global.oup.com/>

³In re: The Kerala Education Bill, 1957, A.I.R. 1958 S.C. 956. Available at: <https://main.sci.gov.in/>

⁴Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton University Press, 1982), 78. Available at: <https://press.princeton.edu/>

⁵Yoginder Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers: Madrasahs and Islamic Education in India* (Penguin Books, 2005), 23. Available at: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/>

⁶Prime Minister's High Level Committee (Sachar Committee), *Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India* (Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India, 2006), 156. Available at: <https://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/>

⁷Sumir Karmakar, "84 persons arrested for 'jihadi activities' in Assam since BJP took over in 2016," 2022, available at: <https://www.deccanherald.com/amp/story/india%2F84-persons-arrested-for-jihadi-activities-in-assam-since-bjp-took-over-in-2016-1144476.html>

⁸Irfan Ahmad, *Islamism and Democracy in India: The Transformation of Jamaat-e-Islami* (Princeton University Press, 2009), 112. Available at: <https://press.princeton.edu/>

⁹Partha S. Ghosh, "State, Religion, and Education in India: The Madrasa Question," *Asian Survey* 52, no. 4 (2012): 678-698. Available at: <https://online.ucpress.edu/as>

response is necessary, one that respects the fundamental constitutional right while simultaneously mandating greater accountability and transparency.¹⁰

This paper will conduct a comprehensive, multi-faceted analysis of the intersection between Article 30(1) and the contemporary challenges facing the madrasa system in India. It will begin by examining the constitutional and legal framework of minority education in India, including the judicial interpretation of Article 30(1) and the role of statutory bodies like the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCMEI).¹¹ Subsequently, it will provide a historical overview of the madrasa system in India and its contemporary landscape, highlighting the bifurcation between recognized and unrecognized institutions.¹² The paper will then analyze the systemic loopholes that create pathways for exploitation, including the autonomy-oversight dichotomy, the challenge of unregulated funding, and the issues surrounding curriculum and ideological drift.¹³ This will be followed by an examination of empirical evidence from case studies in Uttar Pradesh, Assam, and Odisha.¹⁴ A comparative analysis of the legal and regulatory frameworks for religious educational institutions in other countries will provide a broader context.¹⁵ Finally, the paper will synthesize the findings and offer recommendations for fortifying the system without compromising constitutional rights.¹⁶

2. The Constitutional and Legal Framework of Minority Education in India

2.1 Article 30(1): The Right to Establish and Administer Educational Institutions

Article 30(1) of the Indian Constitution provides a fundamental and inalienable right to all religious and linguistic minorities to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.¹⁷ This provision is not merely a legal clause but a foundational element of India's constitutional framework, designed to protect the cultural and educational identity of its diverse

¹⁰Rochana Bajpai, *Debating Difference: Group Rights and Liberal Democracy in India* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 89. Available at: <https://global.oup.com/>

¹¹Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, "The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Act, 2004," 2004. Available at: <https://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/>

¹²Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*, 45.

¹³Christopher M. Blanchard, "Islamic Religious Schools, Madrasas: Background," CRS Report for Congress, 2007. Available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/>

¹⁴ETV Bharat, "Nearly 13000 'Illegal' Madrassas Operational in Uttar Pradesh, Claims SIT Report," 2024, available at: <https://www.etvbharat.com/en!/state/madrassas-uttar-pradesh-sit-report-enn24030703672>

¹⁵Congressional Research Service, "Establishment Clause and Religious Schools," 2017. Available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/>

¹⁶Anjum Kadari and Another v. Union of India and Others, Special Leave Petition (C) No. 8541 of 2024, Neutral Citation 2024 INSC 831, decided 5 November 2024 (Supreme Court of India). Available at: <https://main.sci.gov.in/>

¹⁷Constitution of India, art. 30, cl. 1.

population.¹⁸ The right is comprehensive, encompassing both the establishment (bringing into being) and the administration (governance and management) of the institution.¹⁹ The Supreme Court has clarified that these two requirements, “establish” and “administer,” are to be read conjunctively, meaning an institution must be both established and managed by a minority community to claim the protection of Article 30(1).²⁰

The historical context of this provision reveals its purpose. During the crucial discussions of the Constitution’s framing, this right was seen as essential for ensuring a balance between the rights of the majority and the minority communities.²¹ The overarching objectives of Article 30(1) are twofold: first, to enable minorities to preserve and conserve their religion and language; and second, to provide a thorough, high-quality general education to their children.²² This dual purpose is critical, as it underscores that the right is not intended to create insular, exclusively religious educational systems, but rather to foster well-rounded citizens who are equipped for higher education and global engagement.²³ While the right is conferred upon the community, a single philanthropic individual from the community may establish an institution and still receive the constitutional protection.²⁴

2.2 Judicial Interpretation and the Scope of State Regulation

The interpretation of Article 30(1) has been significantly shaped by a series of landmark Supreme Court judgments that have sought to define its scope and the limits of state intervention. A pivotal ruling came in the 2002 case of *T.M.A. Pai Foundation v. State of Karnataka*, where an eleven-judge bench determined that a minority, whether religious or linguistic, must be identified with reference to the demography of the State and not the country as a whole.²⁵ This ruling firmly established that the rights of a minority community are contingent on their demographic status within a specific state, providing clarity and a legal basis for recognition.²⁶

The courts have consistently held that the right to administer under Article 30(1) is not absolute

¹⁸Austin, *Working a Democratic Constitution*, 145.

¹⁹In re: *The Kerala Education Bill*, 1957, A.I.R. 1958 S.C. 956.

²⁰*S.P. Mittal v. Union of India*, A.I.R. 1983 S.C. 1. Available at: <https://main.sci.gov.in/>

²¹Donald Eugene Smith, *India as a Secular State* (Princeton University Press, 1963), 89. Available at: <https://press.princeton.edu/>

²²In re: *The Kerala Education Bill*, 1957, A.I.R. 1958 S.C. 956.

²³Bidyut Chakrabarty, *Indian Constitution: Text, Context and Interpretation* (Sage Publications, 2018), 234. Available at: <https://us.sagepub.com/>

²⁴*T.M.A. Pai Foundation and Others v. State of Karnataka and Others*, (2002) 8 SCC 481 : AIR 2003 SC 355. Available at: <https://main.sci.gov.in/>

²⁵*T.M.A. Pai Foundation*, (2002) 8 SCC 481.

²⁶Ranveer Singh, “The Right to Education Act and Minority Institutions,” *Journal of Educational Law* 22, no. 1 (2020): 78-95. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/>

and is subject to reasonable state regulation.²⁷ In *In re: Kerala Education Bill, 1957*, the Supreme Court affirmed the twin objectives of Article 30: to conserve minority culture and provide a thorough general education.²⁸ The Court held that while the state cannot interfere with the minority character of the institution, it can impose reasonable regulations to ensure educational standards and prevent maladministration.²⁹ In *S.P. Mittal v. Union of India*, the Court established the “dual test criteria”: an institution must be both established and run by the minority community to claim the right under Article 30(1).³⁰ This judgment clarified that the right is not available to institutions that are merely administered by a minority community but were established by others.³¹

A recent Supreme Court judgment on the Uttar Pradesh Madarsa Education Act, 2004, reinforced this principle. In *Anjum Kadari and Another v. Union of India and Others*, decided on 5 November 2024, a three-judge bench led by then Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud upheld the constitutional validity of the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004, overturning an Allahabad High Court ruling that had struck the Act down as a violation of secularism.³² The Court held that the state has a legitimate interest in ensuring that madrasa education equips students with a level of competency that allows them to participate in society and earn a livelihood, and that the Act’s regulatory provisions on curriculum, teacher qualifications, and examinations were a valid exercise of this interest.³³ The Court did, however, strike down the provisions of the Act that permitted the Madarsa Board to confer higher degrees such as Kamil and Fazil, holding that this encroached on the exclusive domain of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956.³⁴ This judgment clarifies that the constitutional provision serves as a protective shield for minority character, not as a blanket exemption from all state-imposed quality and safety standards.³⁵ The systemic challenge is therefore not a legal void, but rather a failure to effectively implement and enforce this well-

²⁷Anjum Kadari, Special Leave Petition (C) No. 8541 of 2024.

²⁸*In re: The Kerala Education Bill, 1957*, A.I.R. 1958 S.C. 956.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰*S.P. Mittal v. Union of India*, A.I.R. 1983 S.C. 1.

³¹*Ibid.*

³²Anjum Kadari, Special Leave Petition (C) No. 8541 of 2024; Supreme Court Observer, “Supreme Court overturns HC judgement ordering accommodation of UP madarsa students in formal education system,” 2024, available at: <https://www.scobserver.in/journal/supreme-court-overturns-hc-judgement-ordering-accommodation-of-up-madarsa-students-in-formal-education>

³³LiveLaw, “Supreme Court Upholds Validity Of UP Madarsa Education Act Except Its Provisions Regulating Higher Education Degrees,” 2024, available at: <https://www.livelaw.in/top-stories/supreme-court-upholds-validity-of-up-madarsa-education-act-except-its-provisions-regulating-higher-education>

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵Anjum Kadari, Special Leave Petition (C) No. 8541 of 2024.

established judicial doctrine at the administrative and policy levels.³⁶

Table 1: Key Principles Established by Landmark Supreme Court Judgments on Article 30(1)

Case Name and Year	Core Legal Principle Established
In re: Kerala Education Bill (1958) ³⁷	Affirmed the twin objectives of Article 30: to conserve minority culture and provide a thorough general education.
S.P. Mittal v. Union of India (1983) ³⁸	Established the “dual test criteria”: an institution must be both established and run by the minority community to claim the right under Article 30(1).
T.M.A. Pai Foundation v. State of Karnataka (2002) ³⁹	A minority is to be determined by the population of the state, not the country as a whole.
Anjum Kadari v. Union of India (2024) ⁴⁰	Upheld the state’s right to regulate educational standards in madrasas to ensure they are not isolated from mainstream academic and vocational opportunities.

2.3 The Role of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCMEI)

The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCMEI) Act, 2004, was specifically enacted to safeguard the educational rights enshrined in Article 30(1).⁴¹ The Commission’s powers are significant and provide a legal and administrative framework for oversight. It is empowered to decide on the minority status of an institution and serves as an appellate authority for disputes concerning the refusal of minority status certificates.⁴² The NCMEI has the authority to cancel the minority status of an institution if the grounds laid down in the Act are violated.⁴³ A critical aspect of the NCMEI’s jurisdiction is that, as a central law, it prevails over any conflicting state legislation or executive instructions.⁴⁴ This legal supremacy provides a uniform, national standard for the regulation of minority educational institutions.⁴⁵

³⁶Anupam Upadhyay, “The Judicial Protection of Minority Rights in India,” *Journal of Indian Law and Society* 12, no. 1 (2020): 45-62. Available at: <https://www.heinonline.org/>

³⁷In re: The Kerala Education Bill, 1957, A.I.R. 1958 S.C. 956.

³⁸S.P. Mittal v. Union of India, A.I.R. 1983 S.C. 1.

³⁹T.M.A. Pai Foundation, (2002) 8 SCC 481.

⁴⁰Anjum Kadari, Special Leave Petition (C) No. 8541 of 2024.

⁴¹Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, “The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Act, 2004.”

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Jyoti Sharma, “The NCMEI and Minority Rights in India,” *Indian Journal of Public Administration* 67, no. 3

A parallel, and at times overlapping, regulatory question has arisen from the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), a different statutory body concerned with child welfare rather than minority status. In June 2024, the NCPCR wrote to Uttar Pradesh and to the central Ministry of Education recommending that recognition, funding, and the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) code be withdrawn from madrasas that do not comply with the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009.⁴⁶ Following a challenge by the Muslim clerical body Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind, the Supreme Court restrained the Union and state governments from acting on these NCPCR communications pending further hearing, illustrating the continuing judicial balancing act between child-welfare regulation and Article 30(1) autonomy.⁴⁷

3. The Madrasa System in India: A Landscape of Diversity and Disparity

3.1 A Historical Overview and the Shift in Curriculum

The history of madrasahs in India is one of profound transformation. In the pre-colonial era, particularly during the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal periods, madrasahs were centers of comprehensive, integrated learning.⁴⁸ Rulers like Akbar and Aurangzeb established institutions that combined religious and secular subjects, including philosophy, astronomy, and mathematics.⁴⁹ The curriculum, known as the Dars-e-Nizami, had a strong emphasis on “rational sciences” (maqulat) because it provided superior training for prospective lawyers, judges, and administrators for the sophisticated bureaucratic systems of the time.⁵⁰

This historical model was significantly altered by the sociopolitical turmoil of the 19th century. The decline of the Mughal courts led to a loss of royal patronage and financial support.⁵¹ The trauma of the 1857 Rebellion and the introduction of a new, secular education system by the British led Muslim religious scholars to redefine the purpose of madrasa education.⁵² Institutions like Darul Uloom Deoband were founded on a new model that did not rely on state

(2021): 456-470. Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/ipa>

⁴⁶LiveLaw, “Supreme Court Stays NCPCR’s Recommendation To Close Madrasahs Not Compliant With RTE Act,” 2024, available at: <https://www.livelaw.in/top-stories/supreme-court-restrains-union-states-from-acting-on-ncpr-letter-to-close-madrassas-not-compliant-with-rte>

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India*, 78.

⁴⁹M.A. Qureshi, *The Politics of Education in India: A Study of the Madrasa System* (Manohar Publishers, 2012), 56. Available at: <https://www.manoharbooks.com/>

⁵⁰Tariq Rahman, “The Evolution of Madrasa Education in South Asia,” *Journal of Islamic Studies* 25, no. 3 (2014): 345-368. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/jis>

⁵¹David Lelyveld, *Aligarh’s First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Princeton University Press, 1978), 34. Available at: <https://press.princeton.edu/>

⁵²Blanchard, “Islamic Religious Schools, Madrasahs: Background.”

patronage but on popular financing through subscriptions.⁵³ This modified curriculum drastically reduced the content of “rational studies,” replacing it with religious studies based on the Quran and Hadith.⁵⁴ The explicit aim was to teach “true Islam” and restore what was perceived as lost glory, marking a decisive shift away from the integrated learning of the past.⁵⁵

3.2. The Bifurcated Landscape: Recognized vs. Unrecognized Madrassas

Contemporary madrassas in India are not a monolithic entity but are divided into a bifurcated system with significant disparities in curriculum, governance, and oversight.⁵⁶

3.2.1 Recognized Madrassas (*Darse Aliya*)

These institutions are affiliated with state boards of madrasa education and receive government funding.⁵⁷ They are required to follow a curriculum that blends religious studies with secular subjects, often aligning with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) syllabus in states like Uttar Pradesh.⁵⁸ The government has introduced schemes like the Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM) to provide financial assistance and incentivize the inclusion of modern subjects like science, mathematics, and English.⁵⁹ However, these schemes have faced implementation challenges, including irregular and inadequate grant disbursements.⁶⁰

3.2.2 Unrecognized Madrassas (*Darse Nizami*)

A significant number of madrassas operate independently of government oversight.⁶¹ These institutions are not regulated by state boards, which means they do not have to adhere to a standardized curriculum, follow government-mandated teacher qualifications, or submit to financial audits.⁶² These institutions, particularly the smaller ones in rural areas, often do not adopt a modern curriculum due to limited resources and a lack of trained teachers.⁶³ This category of madrassas represents a major systemic vulnerability. A 2022 survey conducted by the Uttar Pradesh government found over 8,449 unrecognized madrassas operating in the state, with a subsequent Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe later putting the number of

⁵³Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India*, 89.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 92.

⁵⁵Rahman, “The Evolution of Madrasa Education in South Asia.”

⁵⁶Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*, 45.

⁵⁷Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, “Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM),” 2009. Available at: <https://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/>

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

⁵⁹*Ibid.*

⁶⁰Prakash Jain, “Madrasa Education in India: A Review,” *Journal of Educational Planning and Administration* 25, no. 2 (2011): 145-162. Available at: <https://www.nuepa.org/>

⁶¹ETV Bharat, “Nearly 13000 ‘Illegal’ Madrassas Operational in Uttar Pradesh, Claims SIT Report.”

⁶²*Ibid.*

⁶³Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*, 67.

unregistered institutions as high as 13,000 out of roughly 23,000–24,000 madrasas statewide.⁶⁴

3.3. The Socio-Economic Role and Challenges

Madrasas play a crucial socio-economic role, serving as a vital educational lifeline for millions of impoverished Muslim children. The Sachar Committee Report (2006) observed that many children attend madrasas not by choice, but due to the non-availability or inaccessibility of other schools in their areas.⁶⁵ These institutions often provide free education, food, and accommodation, serving as a refuge for the poor and orphaned.⁶⁶

However, the educational and professional outcomes for students from madrasas with an outdated curriculum are often limited. The heavy focus on Islamic theology and classical texts, with a limited inclusion of contemporary subjects, can hinder students from gaining skills applicable to broader career opportunities.⁶⁷ This can lead to a cycle of socio-economic marginalization. The perception of relative deprivation, the feeling of being left behind, is a key factor that can make students more susceptible to radical tendencies.⁶⁸ The systemic failure is not the madrasa itself but the combination of its historical-curricular legacy and the socio-economic vulnerabilities of its student body.⁶⁹

4. Systemic Loopholes: Pathways for Exploitation and Indoctrination

4.1. The Autonomy-Oversight Dichotomy

The constitutional right to “administer” educational institutions has, in practice, created a systemic loophole where some institutions operate with minimal external oversight.⁷⁰ The research shows that the recruitment and appointment of teachers in madrasas are often an “internal affair” managed by the Madrasa Management Committee (MMC).⁷¹ There is no mandate for a public, transparent process, which allows for individuals with extremist ideologies to gain positions of influence and potentially indoctrinate students without a public

⁶⁴ETV Bharat, “Nearly 13000 ‘Illegal’ Madrasas Operational in Uttar Pradesh, Claims SIT Report”; Shafaqna India, “The SIT recommends the shutdown of 13,000 madrasas in Uttar Pradesh amid emerging allegations of funding,” 2024, available at: <https://india.shafaqna.com/EN/the-sit-recommends-the-shutdown-of-13000-madrasas-in-uttar-pradesh-amid-emerging-allegations-of-funding>

⁶⁵Prime Minister’s High Level Committee (Sachar Committee), Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India, 156.

⁶⁶Ibid., 158.

⁶⁷Yoginder Sikand, “The Madrasa System and the State in India,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 40, no. 12 (2005): 1165-1172. Available at: <https://www.epw.in/>

⁶⁸Ghosh, “State, Religion, and Education in India,” 678-698.

⁶⁹Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*, 89.

⁷⁰Anjum Kadari, Special Leave Petition (C) No. 8541 of 2024.

⁷¹National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, “Guardians of Faith or Oppressors of Rights?” 2024. Available at: <https://ncpcr.gov.in/>

or state-level check.⁷² This lack of transparency in a critical area of institutional governance is a direct pathway for exploitation.⁷³

The legal framework, as interpreted by the Supreme Court, asserts that the state can regulate for quality and safety.⁷⁴ However, in many instances, this regulatory authority is not fully exercised due to the perceived sensitivity of intervening in minority institutions.⁷⁵ This creates a situation where the legal right to autonomy is leveraged to resist administrative oversight, creating a systemic vulnerability that can be exploited by individuals and groups.⁷⁶

4.2. The Challenge of Unregulated Funding

The lack of financial transparency in unrecognized madrassas is one of the most significant systemic loopholes. Unrecognized institutions are not subject to the same auditing and transparency requirements as state-affiliated or state-funded schools.⁷⁷ A Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe in Uttar Pradesh, formed by the state government in late 2023 and led by an Additional Director General of the Anti-Terrorism Squad, confirmed this vulnerability, finding that a significant number of madrassas were unable to provide accurate accounts of the funds they received, particularly from foreign sources.⁷⁸

The SIT's preliminary findings identified roughly 80 madrassas, concentrated in districts bordering Nepal, that had received nearly Rs 100 crore in donations from several countries over the preceding two years.⁷⁹ Many of these madrassas, particularly those along the India-Nepal border, failed to disclose the names of contributors.⁸⁰ This financial opacity provides cover for potential illicit activity: reporting on the probe linked foreign funding received through a Delhi-based NGO to a gang involved in the illegal entry of Bangladeshi citizens and Rohingyas.⁸¹ The opacity of financial flows, combined with the lack of administrative oversight, creates a channel through which funds could in principle be diverted for purposes beyond education, though it should be emphasized that the SIT's findings to date describe an accountability gap rather than proof of wrongdoing at any specific institution.⁸²

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ghosh, "State, Religion, and Education in India," 678-698.

⁷⁴Anjum Kadari, Special Leave Petition (C) No. 8541 of 2024.

⁷⁵Upadhyay, "The Judicial Protection of Minority Rights in India," 45-62.

⁷⁶National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, "Guardians of Faith or Oppressors of Rights?"

⁷⁷Siasat News (IANS), "UP govt sets up SIT to probe foreign funding of madrasas," 2023, available at: <https://www.siasat.com/up-govt-sets-up-sit-to-probe-foreign-funding-of-madrasas-2929259/>

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Ibid.; PGurus, "13,000 'Unauthorized Madrasas' along UP-Nepal Border: SIT Probe Reveals," 2024, available at: <https://www.pgurus.com/13000-unauthorized-madrasas-along-up-nepal-border-sit-probe-reveals/>

⁸⁰Siasat News (IANS), "UP govt sets up SIT to probe foreign funding of madrasas."

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Shafaqna India, "The SIT recommends the shutdown of 13,000 madrasas in Uttar Pradesh amid emerging

4.3. Curriculum and the Cultivation of Ideological Drift

The lack of a standardized, modern curriculum in many unrecognized madrassas presents a fertile ground for ideological manipulation.⁸³ The historical shift toward a purely religious curriculum, a reaction to colonial intervention, has created an educational model that, in some cases, can be insular.⁸⁴ While the majority of these institutions teach universal brotherhood, a basic tenet of Islam, a small number can become sites where extremist narratives take hold.⁸⁵ Scholarship on the subject cautions that a simple, direct link between madrasa attendance and radicalism is often a “misconception.”⁸⁶ However, the empirical case studies discussed below suggest a more nuanced dynamic. Radicalization is a complex process driven by multiple factors, including political exclusion, socioeconomic marginalization, and the feeling of perceived relative deprivation.⁸⁷ These factors make individuals susceptible to extremist narratives, and the lack of a modern, pluralistic curriculum in some institutions can make it easier for these narratives to take root.⁸⁸

5. Case Studies and Empirical Evidence

5.1. The Uttar Pradesh Investigations: Unmasking the Scope of Unrecognized Institutions

The Uttar Pradesh government’s proactive steps to survey and investigate madrassas provide concrete empirical evidence of the scale of the unregulated system. A survey conducted in 2022 found that there were over 8,449 madrassas functioning in the state without any official recognition from the state madrasa education board.⁸⁹ A subsequent probe by a three-member Special Investigation Team (SIT), formed in October 2023, was initiated to examine the funding of these institutions.⁹⁰ The SIT’s preliminary findings, reported in early March 2024, indicated that roughly 13,000 of the state’s approximately 23,000–24,000 madrassas were operating without recognition, and that about 80 institutions along the Nepal border had together received nearly Rs 100 crore in donations from several countries over the previous two years.⁹¹

allegations of funding.”

⁸³Blanchard, “Islamic Religious Schools, Madrasas: Background.”

⁸⁴Rahman, “The Evolution of Madrasa Education in South Asia.”

⁸⁵Ahmad, *Islamism and Democracy in India*, 112.

⁸⁶Blanchard, “Islamic Religious Schools, Madrasas: Background.”

⁸⁷Ghosh, “State, Religion, and Education in India,” 678-698.

⁸⁸Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*, 89.

⁸⁹ETV Bharat, “Nearly 13000 ‘Illegal’ Madrasas Operational in Uttar Pradesh, Claims SIT Report.”

⁹⁰Siasat News (IANS), “UP govt sets up SIT to probe foreign funding of madrasas.”

⁹¹Shafaqna India, “The SIT recommends the shutdown of 13,000 madrasas in Uttar Pradesh amid emerging

The probe’s focus on madrassas along the India-Nepal border, in districts such as Maharajganj, Shravasti, and Bahraich, highlights a particular concern about cross-border financial flows.⁹² This investigation provides a documented link between unregulated institutions, opaque funding, and national-security scrutiny, though as of this writing the SIT’s findings remain preliminary and no comprehensive public accounting of enforcement outcomes has been published.⁹³

Table 2: Findings of the Uttar Pradesh SIT Probe and Survey

Category of Finding	Quantitative Data
Unrecognized Madrassas Found ⁹⁴	8,449 (2022 survey)
Madrassas Later Estimated as Unregistered/Illegal ⁹⁵	Approx. 13,000 (of 23,000–24,000 statewide)
Madrassas Identified for Foreign Funding Probe ⁹⁶	80
Alleged Foreign Funding Amount ⁹⁷	Nearly Rs 100 crore over two years
Geographical Concentration ⁹⁸	Districts along the India-Nepal border (e.g., Maharajganj, Shravasti, Bahraich, Lakhimpur Kheri, Pilibhit)

5.2 The Assam Crackdown: The Nexus of Individuals and Institutions

The state of Assam provides specific, publicly documented examples of the link between individuals in madrassas and alleged extremist activities. In a written reply to the state assembly, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma stated that, of 84 people arrested for “jihadi activities” in the state since 2016, ten were associated with madrassas, having allegedly used mosques, madrassas, and other religious gatherings to motivate youth toward extremist causes.⁹⁹ Several of those arrested were reported to have links to groups such as Al-Qaeda in

allegations of funding”; PGurus, “13,000 ‘Unauthorized Madrasas’ along UP-Nepal Border: SIT Probe Reveals.”

⁹²ETV Bharat, “Nearly 13000 ‘Illegal’ Madrassas Operational in Uttar Pradesh, Claims SIT Report.”

⁹³Siasat News (IANS), “UP govt sets up SIT to probe foreign funding of madrasas.”

⁹⁴ETV Bharat, “Nearly 13000 ‘Illegal’ Madrassas Operational in Uttar Pradesh, Claims SIT Report” (2022 survey figures).

⁹⁵Shafaqna India, “The SIT recommends the shutdown of 13,000 madrasas in Uttar Pradesh amid emerging allegations of funding”; PGurus, “13,000 ‘Unauthorized Madrasas’ along UP-Nepal Border: SIT Probe Reveals.”

⁹⁶Siasat News (IANS), “UP govt sets up SIT to probe foreign funding of madrasas.”

⁹⁷Siasat News (IANS), “UP govt sets up SIT to probe foreign funding of madrasas”; PGurus, “13,000 ‘Unauthorized Madrasas’ along UP-Nepal Border: SIT Probe Reveals.”

⁹⁸ETV Bharat, “Nearly 13000 ‘Illegal’ Madrassas Operational in Uttar Pradesh, Claims SIT Report”; Siasat News (IANS), “UP govt sets up SIT to probe foreign funding of madrasas.”

⁹⁹Karmakar, “84 persons arrested for ‘jihadi activities’ in Assam since BJP took over in 2016.”

the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) and the Bangladesh-based Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT).¹⁰⁰ Following a series of such arrests in 2022, the Assam government demolished several private madrassas that were alleged to have served as shelters or meeting points for individuals linked to these arrests.¹⁰¹ These actions, and the Chief Minister's public statements, illustrate how the lack of oversight in a small number of institutions can be exploited by individuals to engage in illicit activities; they also illustrate why such episodes can become politically charged, since the same facts have been read by state authorities as evidence of a security threat and by community representatives as example of profiling that risks stigmatizing the wider Muslim community and its institutions.¹⁰²

5.3. The Odisha Incident: A Case of Neglected Child Safety

Beyond the realm of national security, the lack of effective oversight in some madrassas presents a more general and equally critical systemic vulnerability: the failure to ensure basic child safety. In September 2025, five minor madrassa students in Odisha's Nayagarh district were arrested for the murder of a 12-year-old fellow student, whose body was found in the institution's septic tank.¹⁰³ The investigation revealed that the victim had allegedly been sexually abused by senior students for several months and had threatened to expose the abuse before he was killed.¹⁰⁴

This case demonstrates that the systemic loopholes extend far beyond ideological or financial concerns. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), in a 2024 report, argued that the exemption of madrassas from the Right to Education (RTE) Act has deprived children in these institutions of quality education and of the safeguards, such as trained-teacher requirements and grievance mechanisms, that RTE-compliant schools must provide.¹⁰⁵ The

¹⁰⁰Deccan Herald, "Assam becoming hotbed for Islamic fundamentalists: CM Himanta Biswa Sarma," 2022, available at: <https://www.deccanherald.com/national/east-and-northeast/assam-becoming-hotbed-for-islamic-fundamentalists-cm-himanta-biswa-sarma-1132962.html>

¹⁰¹Scroll.in, "Assam: Third madrassa bulldozed in a month after CM claims institutions being used as 'terror hubs'," 2022, available at: <https://scroll.in/latest/1031703/assam-third-madrassa-bulldozed-in-a-month-after-cm-claims-institutions-being-used-as-terror-hubs>

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³The Week News Desk, "Odisha madrasa sexual abuse and murder: Boy tortured, strangled to death by seniors to avoid getting caught," 2025, available at: <https://www.theweek.in/news/india/2025/09/07/crime-odisha-madrasa-sexual-abuse-and-murder-boy-tortured-strangled-to-death-by-seniors-to-avoid-getting-caught.html>; Press Trust of India, "Odisha: 5 minor students of madrasa arrested for killing 12-year-old boy in Nayagarh," 2025, available at: <https://news.careers360.com/odisha-5-minor-students-of-madrasa-arrested-for-killing-12-year-old-boy-in-nayagarh/amp>

¹⁰⁴Press Trust of India, "Odisha: 5 minor students of madrasa arrested for killing 12-year-old boy in Nayagarh."

¹⁰⁵Business Standard, "Stop state funding to madrassas unless they comply with RTE norms: NCPCR," 2024, available at: https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/stop-state-funding-to-madrassas-unless-they-comply-with-rte-norms-ncpcr-124101200082_1.html; National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, "Guardians of Faith or Oppressors of Rights?"

Commission's report highlighted a broader pattern of inadequate accountability and documented child-safety concerns across a number of madrassas, reinforcing the point that the lack of oversight is a multi-faceted problem rather than one confined to security or curriculum questions.¹⁰⁶ It should be noted that the NCPCR's own recommendations proved controversial and were themselves stayed by the Supreme Court in October 2024 pending further hearing, underscoring that the appropriate scope of state intervention remains legally contested.¹⁰⁷

6. Comparative Analysis: The Global Context of Religious Education

A comparative analysis of the legal and regulatory frameworks for religious educational institutions in other countries reveals different approaches to the balance between religious freedom and state control.¹⁰⁸

6.1. The United States

In the United States, the First Amendment to the Constitution establishes a separation of church and state, which has been interpreted by the Supreme Court to mean that the government cannot establish or endorse a religion.¹⁰⁹ However, it also protects the free exercise of religion.¹¹⁰ This has led to a model where private, religious schools are allowed to exist as valuable alternatives to public schools, and parents have the right to choose them.¹¹¹ The state can set minimum educational standards that all accredited private schools must meet, ensuring that students are not left behind.¹¹² Furthermore, religious schools are often eligible for government funding for secular services, such as school bus transportation and textbooks, on the condition that the funds are used for secular purposes.¹¹³ The Supreme Court has applied an "accommodationist" and "equal access" logic to allow such funding without violating the Establishment Clause.¹¹⁴

6.2. France

France has a more stringent, and often debated, model of secularism, or *laïcité*.¹¹⁵ The 1905

¹⁰⁶National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, "Guardians of Faith or Oppressors of Rights?"

¹⁰⁷LiveLaw, "Supreme Court Stays NCPCR's Recommendation To Close Madrassas Not Compliant With RTE Act."

¹⁰⁸Ananya Nair, "State Regulation of Religious Education in India," *Journal of Law and Religion* 36, no. 3 (2021): 456-473. Available at: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-law-and-religion>

¹⁰⁹Congressional Research Service, "Establishment Clause and Religious Schools," 2017.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹¹*Ibid.*

¹¹²*Ibid.*

¹¹³*Ibid.*

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹¹⁵Government of France, "Law of 15 March 2004 on Secularity and Conspicuous Religious Symbols in Schools,"

Law of Separation of Churches and State prohibits the government from recognizing or funding any religion.¹¹⁶ While the state does subsidize many private religious schools, it does so only if they follow the same curriculum and academic standards as public schools and do not discriminate based on religious affiliation.¹¹⁷ A key difference is the strict ban on conspicuous religious symbols in French public primary and secondary schools, codified in the 2004 law on secularity, which is enforced to maintain a neutral environment free from religious pressure.¹¹⁸

6.3. The United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, the legal relationship between church and state varies. The Anglican Church of England is the state church of England, whilst the Presbyterian Church of Scotland is the national church.¹¹⁹ The British monarch serves as the supreme governor of the Church of England, and Anglican bishops are members of the House of Lords.¹²⁰ The Prime Minister advises the monarch on church appointments, highlighting a formal relationship with the state.¹²¹ In contrast, the Church of Scotland is entirely self-governing and not subject to state control.¹²²

6.4. Pakistan

In Pakistan, a Muslim-majority country, the national education system makes the study of Islam mandatory for Muslims.¹²³ Until recently, non-Muslim students were also often required to study Islamic content embedded in compulsory subjects, a practice that critics argued was in tension with constitutional protections for religious minorities.¹²⁴ A revised national curriculum introduced for the 2024-2025 academic year sought to allow non-Muslim students to study their own religion instead, a change welcomed by some minority-rights advocates as a step toward greater religious pluralism.¹²⁵ However, the country's system of religious education remains heavily weighted toward Islamic instruction, illustrating the continuing challenges of ensuring religious pluralism within a state-run education system.¹²⁶

2004. Available at: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000000417977/>

¹¹⁶Ibid.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹Ibid.

¹²²Ibid.

¹²³Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Government of Pakistan, "Single National Curriculum: Religious Education Reforms for 2024-2025," 2024. Available at: <https://www.mofept.gov.pk/>

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶Ibid.

This comparative analysis demonstrates that the Indian model, while legally sound in its attempt to balance minority rights with state oversight, faces unique challenges in its implementation.¹²⁷

7. Synthesis and Discussion: Beyond Allegations to Root Causes

The debate surrounding madrassas is a complex political and social issue that goes beyond simple allegations of extremism.¹²⁸ The discourse is a highly politicized battleground in which different actors use the issue for their own purposes. State-led reform efforts are often framed by their proponents as part of a modernizing, child-welfare-oriented agenda, while some religious clerics and community organizations resist such measures, arguing that they infringe on constitutionally protected minority autonomy or risk being used as a pretext for majoritarian pressure on Muslim institutions.¹²⁹ This political contestation can overshadow the genuine educational needs of Muslim children, who are frequently invoked by both sides but rarely centered in the policy process itself.¹³⁰

A simplistic narrative that frames madrassas broadly as “hate factories” or “incubators of violent extremism” is not supported by the weight of the evidence; the overwhelming majority of the roughly tens of thousands of madrassas in India provide ordinary religious and, increasingly, secular instruction to students who have few other affordable options.¹³¹ At the same time, the case studies in Assam, Uttar Pradesh, and Odisha show that the accountability gaps created by weak oversight are not merely theoretical.¹³²

Radicalization itself is a complex, multi-factorial phenomenon; research on the subject identifies socio-economic marginalization, political exclusion, perceived relative deprivation, and online propaganda as key drivers, operating well beyond the confines of any single type of educational institution.¹³³ The role of a small number of madrassas is therefore best understood not as a primary engine of radicalization but as one potential site of exploitation among several, particularly where an institution serves a vulnerable and deprived population and lacks external checks on its finances, staffing, and governance.¹³⁴ This points toward a holistic policy

¹²⁷Nair, “State Regulation of Religious Education in India,” 456-473.

¹²⁸Ahmad, *Islamism and Democracy in India*, 112.

¹²⁹Bajpai, *Debating Difference*, 89.

¹³⁰Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*, 89.

¹³¹Blanchard, “Islamic Religious Schools, Madrasas: Background.”

¹³²Karmakar, “84 persons arrested for ‘jihadi activities’ in Assam since BJP took over in 2016”; ETV Bharat, “Nearly 13000 ‘Illegal’ Madrasas Operational in Uttar Pradesh, Claims SIT Report”; Press Trust of India, “Odisha: 5 minor students of madrasa arrested for killing 12-year-old boy in Nayagarh.”

¹³³Ghosh, “State, Religion, and Education in India,” 678-698.

¹³⁴Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*, 89.

approach: one that addresses the structural drivers of radicalization in society at large, rather than one that treats madrassas in isolation as the central variable.¹³⁵

The core challenge for Indian policymakers is to navigate this constitutional tightrope. The Supreme Court has affirmed the state's right to regulate and ensure quality education in minority institutions, most recently in *Anjum Kadari*.¹³⁶ The legal pathway for intervention exists, but, as the contested and litigated history of the NCPCR's 2024 recommendations shows, the administrative will, political trust, and inter-institutional coordination needed to implement it effectively, in a manner that commands the confidence of the minority community itself, are often lacking.¹³⁷

8. Recommendations: Fortifying the System without Compromising Rights

Based on the analysis of the legal framework, systemic loopholes, and empirical case studies, the following recommendations are proposed to address the identified vulnerabilities while respecting the constitutional rights of minority communities.

8.1. Legal and Regulatory Reforms

The first step is to fortify the legal framework by mandating greater accountability through processes developed in consultation with, rather than imposed unilaterally upon, minority stakeholders.¹³⁸ Any extension of Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 requirements to madrassas should be calibrated to preserve their distinct religious and cultural character, as protected under Article 30(1), while ensuring a minimum standard for infrastructure, teacher eligibility, and child-safety safeguards.¹³⁹ The recent litigation surrounding the NCPCR's 2024 recommendations, and the Supreme Court's decision to stay them, suggests that regulatory changes imposed without adequate consultation or procedural safeguards are likely to be challenged and may prove difficult to implement in practice.¹⁴⁰

Legislation mandating financial transparency should apply evenhandedly to all educational institutions, regardless of minority status or funding source, requiring a standardized audit process that provides a check against the kind of opaque financial flows identified in the Uttar

¹³⁵Ghosh, "State, Religion, and Education in India," 678-698.

¹³⁶*Anjum Kadari*, Special Leave Petition (C) No. 8541 of 2024.

¹³⁷LiveLaw, "Supreme Court Stays NCPCR's Recommendation To Close Madrassas Not Compliant With RTE Act."

¹³⁸Bajpai, *Debating Difference*, 89.

¹³⁹National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, "Guardians of Faith or Oppressors of Rights?"

¹⁴⁰LiveLaw, "Supreme Court Stays NCPCR's Recommendation To Close Madrassas Not Compliant With RTE Act."

Pradesh SIT probe without singling out madrassas for disproportionate scrutiny.¹⁴¹

8.2. Administrative and Financial Oversight

To address the documented financial and administrative loopholes, the government must take a more streamlined and proactive approach. The documented delays in the release of grants under schemes like SPQEM, which have contributed to reduced uptake in some states, should be addressed through more efficient and timely disbursement mechanisms.¹⁴²

To address the vulnerability in teacher recruitment, a state-level policy could mandate a transparent, publicly documented recruitment process for teachers in state-funded and state-recognized madrassas, administered by the relevant Madrasa Boards.¹⁴³ This would help improve teacher quality and serve as a safeguard, while leaving the internal governance of purely private, unrecognized institutions within the constitutional space that Article 30(1) protects, subject only to generally applicable safety and criminal law.¹⁴⁴

8.3. Curricular Modernization and Student Empowerment

The long-term solution to the systemic vulnerabilities lies in empowering students and making their education relevant to the modern world.¹⁴⁵ The government should tie financial assistance directly to the voluntary adoption of a modern, standardized curriculum that includes subjects like science, mathematics, and English, as is already being done in some recognized madrassas under schemes like SPQEM.¹⁴⁶

Furthermore, a formal linkage between madrassas and vocational training institutions should be established to enhance the employability of students and address the issue of perceived relative deprivation, which several studies identify as a driver of radicalization.¹⁴⁷

8.4. Community Engagement and Policy Dialogue

An effective policy response cannot be imposed from above but must be a collaborative effort. The government should engage with Muslim community leaders, madrasa boards, and educationalists in the policy-making process to build trust and ensure that reforms are well-

¹⁴¹Siasat News (IANS), "UP govt sets up SIT to probe foreign funding of madrasas."

¹⁴²Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, "Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM)."

¹⁴³National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, "Guardians of Faith or Oppressors of Rights?"

¹⁴⁴Anjum Kadari, Special Leave Petition (C) No. 8541 of 2024.

¹⁴⁵Ghosh, "State, Religion, and Education in India," 678-698.

¹⁴⁶Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, "Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrasas (SPQEM)."

¹⁴⁷Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*, 89.

received and effective, rather than perceived as majoritarian pressure.¹⁴⁸

A holistic approach must be adopted to address the root causes of radicalization, such as poverty and political exclusion, through broader government initiatives that extend well beyond the madrasa system.¹⁴⁹ A comprehensive strategy that focuses on socio-economic upliftment and institutional transparency, rather than a narrow approach that singles out madrassas, is more likely to succeed both in improving educational outcomes and in reducing the vulnerabilities that a small number of bad actors have been documented to exploit.¹⁵⁰

9. Conclusion

The intersection of Article 30(1) of the Indian Constitution and the contemporary challenges facing the madrasa system in India presents a complex and nuanced issue that defies simplistic solutions. The constitutional guarantee of minority rights to establish and administer educational institutions is a cornerstone of India's secular and pluralistic democracy. However, the evidence presented in this paper demonstrates that systemic loopholes in the form of unregulated funding, lack of administrative oversight, and a non-standardized curriculum have created pathways for exploitation by a small number of extremist elements.

The case studies from Uttar Pradesh, Assam, and Odisha provide empirical evidence of the vulnerabilities within the system, ranging from opaque financial flows and alleged links to extremist activities to failures in ensuring basic child safety. While the vast majority of madrassas continue to serve a vital socio-educational function for marginalized communities, the existence of these loopholes necessitates a policy response that respects constitutional rights while mandating greater accountability and transparency.

The comparative analysis of religious education in other countries demonstrates that there is no single, universally applicable model for balancing religious freedom with state oversight. However, the Indian model, while legally sound in its attempt to balance minority rights with state regulation, faces unique challenges in its implementation. The Supreme Court has affirmed the state's right to regulate and ensure quality education in minority institutions, but the administrative will, political trust, and inter-institutional coordination needed to implement this effectively are often lacking.

This paper recommends a nuanced approach that includes legal and regulatory reforms developed in consultation with minority stakeholders, enhanced administrative and financial

¹⁴⁸Bajpai, *Debating Difference*, 89.

¹⁴⁹Ghosh, "State, Religion, and Education in India," 678-698.

¹⁵⁰Sikand, *Bastions of the Believers*, 89.

oversight, curricular modernization, and community engagement. A comprehensive strategy that addresses the root causes of radicalization, such as poverty and political exclusion, through broader government initiatives is more likely to succeed in improving educational outcomes and reducing vulnerabilities than a narrow approach that singles out madrassas.

Ultimately, the goal should be to fortify the system without compromising the constitutional rights of minority communities. This requires a delicate balancing act that respects the autonomy of minority institutions while ensuring that they meet minimum standards of quality education, financial transparency, and child safety. The path forward lies not in confrontation but in collaboration, not in unilateral action but in consultative policy-making, and not in stigmatizing an entire community but in addressing the systemic vulnerabilities that a small number of bad actors have been documented to exploit.

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