

SMILE REPORT



RELIEF & REHABILITATION WORK

Bahraich | Uttar Pradesh

OCTOBER- DECEMBER 2024



CONTENTS

Incident Overview 01

Intervention by Miles2Smile 03

Smile Stories 06

Twitter Wall 11

Incident Overview

A violent clash occurred during a Durga idol immersion procession in Bahraich, leading to the death of one individual and injuries to many on October 13, 2024. The clashes swept over the area when members of Muslim community asked the DJ music to be turned off as the procession passed near the mosque. The request soon led to an argument, resulting in stone pelting between the two groups. The situation escalated when a 22 year old man identified as Ram Gopal Mishra was shot dead with a bullet piercing through his chest after he was seen replacing the green flag with the saffron one.

Soon after the death of Mishra the city Bahraich and its neighboring areas came on edge for days, witnessing various incidents of arson, vandalism and destruction, mostly of the muslim community.



Following the incident, disturbing visuals made rounds on the social media platform narrating the chilling ordeals of the eyewitnesses. The violent clash started when after Mishra's last rites in Maharajganj, a city near Bahraich, thousands of Hindus barged into the city and went on rampage, selectively targeting Muslim properties, looting, vandalizing and setting them ablaze.

On October 18, as per the reports, a backdated demolition was notified to 23 properties – 20 of them to Muslims. Furthermore, by October 25, 2024, the Uttar Pradesh Police had reportedly arrested 87 people in connection with the rioting and approximately 1,000 people were booked after at least 11 FIRs were registered in the matter. Internet services were also suspended for several days, impacting communication and daily life for residents in the affected areas.

Later in the month, five suspected to be involved in Mishra's death were apprehended after an encounter with the UP Police in which two of them Mohammad Talim and Mohammad Sarfaraz suffered gunshot injuries.

Meanwhile, Circle Officer Rupendra Gaur, Tehsildar Ravikant Dwivedi and District Information Officer Ghulam Waris Siddiqui were removed from their positions following the violence. A station house officer and a police outpost in charge were suspended.



Intervention by

Miles2Smile

In the midst of the devastation and chaos caused by the violence, Miles2Smile went on the ground to assess the damage, listen to the heartbreaking stories, and help rebuild shattered lives.

Upon entering the violence-affected areas, we were met with an eerie silence, charred buildings, and shuttered shops. We saw an ocean of police spread across the area, we witnessed several checkpoints and barricades, and crossed narrow lanes where the violence unfolded.

On our two-day relief visit, we met dozens of surviving families and heard their pains, which was palpable enough to puncture our hearts. We immediately provided respite to them through financial aid and promised them to rebuild what has been lost.

On returning to Delhi, we launched a comprehensive fundraiser to reconstruct the house and reestablish livelihood for those who lost it. With the assistance of our donors, we were able to:



Construct Houses

In addition to the destruction of homes, many survivors saw their livelihoods completely shattered. These livelihoods were their sole means of earning a living. With the support of generous donors, Miles2Smile took steps to restore the economic stability of these individuals. This initiative focused on rebuilding businesses and providing e-rickshaws to help sustain their livelihoods.



Establish Livelihood

Upon becoming aware of the violence, we discovered that many survivors' homes had been destroyed and burned. These survivors were struggling to rebuild their houses. Through our fundraising efforts, we were able to reconstruct their homes, providing them with much-needed shelter. The act of giving them a roof over their heads brought us great warmth and fulfillment.



Winning Hearts, Earning Smiles

With these initiatives, Miles2Smile won hearts and earned smiles from the survivors. We, with the small efforts and big help of the donors, brought back the normalcy in the riot-ridden areas. Established nearly five years ago, the Miles2Smile Foundation is dedicated to making a positive impact on marginalized communities in India. From the crisis response during the Delhi riots in 2020 to ongoing efforts in education and advocacy, the Foundation remains steadfast in its commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable society. To know more about our work and learn how we earned these smiles, delve deep into the reports and explore more.





SMILE STORIES



The E-Rickshaw That Brought Back Hope to Rafiq's Life



On October 13, 2024, a violent clash during a Durga idol immersion procession in Bahraich resulted in the death of one person and many injuries. The city witnessed widespread arson, vandalism, and destruction, particularly targeting Muslim properties. Among the survivors was Rafiq, a 39-year-old man with a disability, whose E-rickshaw was set on fire during the violence. Rafiq, a widower with three children to care for, had relied on his E-rickshaw as his sole source of income. Fearful for his life, he had abandoned the rickshaw when the violence erupted, only to later discover it had been destroyed.

"My E-rickshaw burned down... I'm not earning anything, there is no ration in my house... my children will die of hunger," Rafiq said, tears streaming down his face. His pain struck deeply, and Miles2Smile promised to replace his E-rickshaw.

Upon returning to Delhi, a fundraiser was launched, and within a month, enough funds were raised to purchase a new E-rickshaw for Rafiq. When Rafiq received the vehicle, he expressed immense joy and gratitude. "Aasif Bhai has fulfilled his promise," he said. Rafiq's smile reminded us of the profound impact of giving hope in times of despair. We wish him a brighter future and remain committed to helping more people like him.

Watch Video 



A Home Rebuilt, A Life Renewed with Miles2Smile



On October 13, 2024, a violent clash during a Durga idol immersion procession in Bahraich led to one death and many injuries. The violence escalated quickly, leaving behind torched properties, destroyed vehicles, and damaged homes. The residents of Bahraich and surrounding areas were left grappling with the aftermath of a tragedy that unfolded without warning.

While the news spread nationwide, the real suffering was faced by innocent people like Wasim (Nankau), 40, from Mauja Chandpur. Nankau's home and ration shop, his only source of income, were set on fire by a mob. He recalled fleeing with his family to escape the violence, only to watch his life's work burn to the ground. Despite the devastation, he managed to rescue his mother from the flames.

Moved by Nankau's plight, Miles2Smile decided to take action. A month later, we returned to Bahraich to help him rebuild. We provided the necessary materials—cement, bricks, and gravel—to reconstruct his house.

"I am very happy, my house is being rebuilt. It feels like life is coming back," Nankau said, his gratitude evident. At Miles2Smile, we are committed to easing the burden of survivors like Nankau, bringing hope and change to their lives.

[Watch Video](#) 

New Hopes, New Beginning and Bundle of *Happiness* Underway

Sabit Ali and his family were at a local fair when they received word of an attack near their home. Fearing for their belongings, they rushed back, only to find everything destroyed. “All we have are the clothes we’re wearing,” Sabit Ali told Miles2Smile, his voice heavy with loss. Their home and everything inside, including their food and drinks, had been burned down.

Sabit Ali shared that their elderly, bedridden mother, Sakina, was lying on a cot when the mob set the house on fire. Thankfully, they managed to rescue her, but the intense flames left her injured.

Moved by their suffering, Miles2Smile promised to help rebuild their lives. A month later, we returned to Bahraich and provided Sabit Ali with a new E-Rickshaw, restoring his livelihood. “I am so thankful to Aasif bhai and Miles2Smile for the E-Rickshaw,” he said, tears of hope and happiness in his eyes.

Beyond the E-Rickshaw, Sabit Ali’s family faced more hardships. His son, Akram Ali, lost his blanket business, and his daughter-in-law, Nisa, lost her cosmetic shop. Miles2Smile helped restore their businesses, bringing hope and smiles back into their lives. We believe in rebuilding lives and spreading kindness to those who need it most.



Watch Video 



[Watch Video](#) 

Shattered Lives, Burnt Homes, Rekindled Happiness, And A New Life

In October 2024, a violent clash broke out during a Durga idol immersion procession in Bahraich, resulting in one death and many injuries. The violence escalated, leaving behind a scene of destruction with torched properties and damaged vehicles. Amidst the chaos, innocent people, especially women like Sufiya, endured unimaginable suffering.

Sufiya shared her heart-wrenching story with Miles2Smile, describing how her home was ransacked by an angry mob. "Everything was destroyed, including my jewelry and my sister-in-law's," she said, her eyes filled with sorrow. Her daughter, traumatized by the events, cried so much that she fainted. Sufiya was left with nothing but her grief, but a glimmer of hope remained in her heart.

Determined to help, Miles2Smile launched a fundraiser to support Sufiya. Within a month, generous contributions enabled them to restore her lost possessions. Returning to Bahraich, they brought new hope and joy to Sufiya's life. She expressed gratitude, saying, "No one has helped us like this before."

With essential items like a refrigerator, bed, and cupboard restored, Sufiya's happiness was renewed. Miles2Smile's efforts to rebuild lives continue, having dedicated 59,899 hours, covered 30,289 miles, and restored 10,213 smiles in the past year.

Shattered Lives, Renewed Hope: The Recovery of Syed Ali and Anwar

Syed Ali (60) and his son Anwar Ali (25) from Maharajganj were among the hardest hit by the recent violence. The father and son lost everything they had saved over the years. Syed Ali, a vegetable vendor, described how a violent mob, armed with swords, knives, and sticks, stormed their area, causing widespread destruction.

Sitting amidst the ruins of their burnt home, surrounded by charred walls and ashes, Syed Ali and Anwar recounted the nightmare. Anwar explained how the mob destroyed his vegetable stock, set his shop on fire, and then forced their way into their home. "First, they destroyed the shop, poured petrol, and set it on fire. Then they set the house ablaze," Anwar said.

Everything they owned was destroyed— their house, two beds, a wooden cot, and all their belongings. The vegetable business, their only source of income, was wiped out.

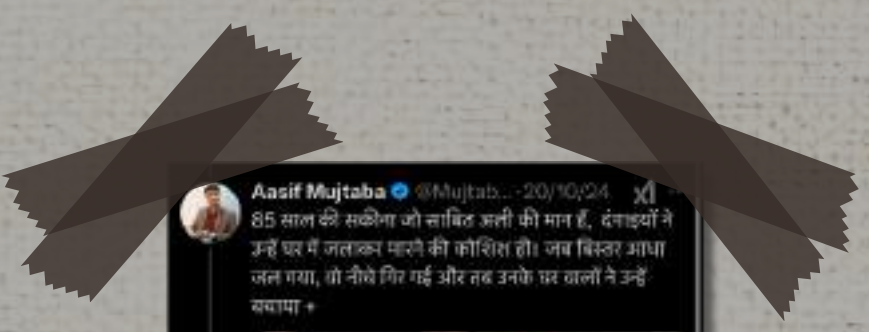
"We are very distressed and poor; we have nothing left. What should we do now?" Syed Ali asked, overwhelmed by grief.

Understanding their dire situation, Miles2Smile provided immediate financial aid. Upon returning to Delhi, a fundraiser was launched to rebuild their home. With the generous support of donors, construction has begun and will soon be completed, offering them hope and a fresh start.



Watch Video 

Twitter Wall



Aasif Mujtaba @MujtabaAasif · 20/10/24

85 साल की सखीया को साबित जमी की मान है, देवाइयों ने उन्हें घर में जलाकर मारने की कोशिश की। जब बिस्तर आधा जल गया, वो नीचे गिर गई और तब उनके घर वालों ने उन्हें बचाया +



Aasif Mujtaba @MujtabaAasif

बनौय, दंगा वाली जगह से लगभग 3 किलोमीटर दूर नौजा बाँदपुर में अपने परिवार के साथ रहते थे। दंगाइयों ने उनकी दुकान जिनको दसोंय ने बूटी गाँव के जलाकर मारने की कोशिश की। आप उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार से #Bharaich के इन दंगाइयों में कितनी की



Aasif Mujtaba @MujtabaAasif · 22/10/24

On October 13, 2024, a wave of targeted violence swept through **Bharaich**, leaving a community shattered. As a Durga Puja procession passed through the Jama Masjid, communal anger played, escalating tensions that led to brutal clashes.

For Sabit Ali, a [Show more](#)



Aasif Mujtaba @MujtabaAasif · 20/10/24

बहराइच के दंगों में, मुसलमानों में हुए खून कोई भी महिला दिखाने को तैयार नहीं। कल मैं 3 परिवार से मिला जिनके घर के सदस्यों को जलाकर मारने की कोशिश की गई। 4 साल की शिफा कलीम की बेटी है। दंगाई ने उसे फाड़कर जलती हुई बाढ़क में डालने कि कोशिश की जिन्हे बचा रहते कलीम ने बचा लिया +



Aasif Mujtaba @MujtabaAasif · 20/10/24

On October 13, 2024, **Bharaich** in Uttar Pradesh witnessed a heartbreaking wave of anti-Muslim violence. A Durga Puja procession spiraled into chaos, leaving over 50 Muslim homes and businesses looted and burned. Among those affected was Sabit Ali, whose entire livelihood was [Show more](#)



Aasif Mujtaba @MujtabaAasif · 25/10/24

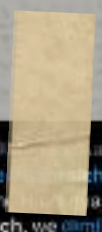
#FundraiseUpdate #Bharaich

Dear Donors, at @miles2smile, we believe in 100% transparency in utilisation of funds. For the past 4 years, every single rupee raised for a particular cause has been utilised for the intended purpose only. For the recent **#Bharaich** relief works, on [Show more](#)



Aasif Mujtaba @MujtabaAasif · 20/10/24

Muslims of **#Bharaich** suffered a huge loss in the violence that erupted after news of the death of Ram Gopal spread. I met around 30 families that suffered losses due to looting, vandalism & arson. We met the family of Akram Ali* at DandePurva in Nautla some 5 kms away from [Show more](#)



Aasif Mujtaba @MujtabaAasif · 30/11/24

#FundraiseUpdate #Bharaich

Last month, after the **Bharaich** violence & Police atrocities in **Bharaich**, we @miles2smile visited the area to meet the affected families. We immediately provided financial assistance to almost 14 such families & started a fundraiser to rebuild the lost [Show more](#)

1 Smile Project

Smile Hours 432

1640 Miles Covers

Smile Restored 125



ABOUT ORGANISATION

Miles2Smile was established five years back as a not-for-profit organization, based in Delhi. The organization works primarily in relief activities and brings smiles to the faces of victims looming over penury and distress. Livelihood creation, healthcare and educational empowerment are also some core areas of work by the organization. In the past two years, the organization has made commendable service in delivering solace to the people languishing in the heap of despair. The organization is on an assiduous mission to revive happiness to the people ripped after communal tensions.



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