

SMILE REPORT

Madarsa Bahrul Uloom | Mehrauli



January - February

2024



Incident Overview

For centuries, what stood as a testament to history was ruthlessly ravaged within a mere hour, posing an important question to those who can't empathize with the narratives that echo inside the walls. A centuries-old mosque, reminiscent of many others in India and whose madrasa had been providing shelter to 25 children, succumbed to recent demolitions.

Akhonji Mosque, believed to have been built 600 years ago, was destroyed by orders from the DDA department, even though it belonged to a time when the DDA itself didn't exist. Allegations of illegal land usage became the catalyst for the destruction of this sacred place, a structure dating back to the time of Raziya Sultan, symbolizing a fragment of our cultural heritage.

The imam and his associates, seized by the police in the morning, had their phones snatched and were discarded at a distance from the mosque. Upon their return, the demolition had already happened.

Amidst the ruins, children stood without any possessions, food, and utensils, their gaze lost in the chill of the morning. Computers and textbooks, painstakingly collected over the years for their education, lay in a mess, religious texts blending with the soil beneath the open sky. The brutality of the event is unfolded in videos captured with great difficulty by those dedicated to the madarsa.

Afzal, a 12-year-old student who was compelled to flee, found himself standing cold and barefoot amidst chaos. He recounted, "The police arrived early in the morning, instructing us to hastily gather our belongings and leave without providing enough time to pack. I departed without my sandals. When I pleaded with them to allow me to get my footwear because my feet were cold, the policeman scared me, threatening to beat me."







Intervention by Miles2Smile



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After the incident, 15 out of 25 children lost hope and hurried back home, leaving behind 10 kids, mostly orphans, who had nowhere else to seek refuge but Madrasa Kala Mahal. Recognizing their immediate needs, we provided them with essential items as all their belongings had been buried during the demolition.

We distributed blankets and jackets to each child and provided bags for them to store their possessions. Additionally, we supplied other essentials such as shoes, socks, and handkerchiefs.

The following day, as we returned to provide further assistance, five of the children who had initially returned home came back. In total, there are now 15 children residing in Kala Mahal, for whom we will be providing monthly rations. We were intrigued to spend the whole day with the children, but half of the day went by in a jiffy. Our team had lunch with those cherishing, enthusiastic kids, which passed in talks, the stories they carry, and uplifting hope.

To our surprise, they were affectionate enough towards us to invite us to play cricket with them, and in return for their kindness, we prepared a surprise for them while they were busy with their daily chores. We gifted them stationery and sports kits.

Thus, the second half went by like a breeze that carries the fragrance of lilies and roses. In return for bringing childhood joy to us, we look forward to providing them with more stationery, books, computers, and additional sports equipment such as badminton sets and carrom boards.



S.No	Items	Quantity
1	Jackets	20
2	Blanket	15
3	Ration	Monthly
4	Indoor Sports Goods	08
5	Kurta Sets	15
6	Bags	21
7	Shoes/Sandals	20
8	Towel	20
9	Handkerchief	20
10	Socks (3 Pairs)	20
11	Keffiyeh	20







Smile Report

Oman



He speaks fondly of his fellow students, considering them all friends, yet he reserves a special place in his heart for his closest companion, Asif, whom he proudly proclaims as his best friend.

Oman is eight years old and lives in East Delhi. Over the last four months, his life has taken a strange turn as he has become accustomed to the atmosphere of the madrasa. Despite his family not being there to support him during this time, Oman's enthusiasm and determination shine through.

Fluent in both Hindi and Urdu and learning basic mathematics, Oman captivated us with his sweet voice while counting to fifty. Such a small act was a huge accomplishment for a young child who had been without family for 4 months. Due to a tragic accident in which his father died, his journey has been marred by tragedy. He has a 12-year-old sister as his elder sibling, and his mother works as a housemaid to support the family.

Not content with just counting numbers, he eagerly embarked on reciting the English alphabet from A to Z until we gently interrupted him midway. He has a sharp memory and remembers the harsh cold that didn't spare his little feet, nor did it soften at the sight of his cold-reddened hands.

To further horrify the morning, the fear of the police shook the soul of the young child. "My older friends asked the police to return our sandals. Instead, they ordered us to leave the area barefoot, showing their lathis," narrated Oman, who was terrified of being beaten by the police. He stood still, witnessing so much destruction at a tender age, where trauma easily takes root and never leaves."

Oman harbors a desire to become a Hafiz one day, despite all the obstacles he must overcome. Although he has not yet begun the process of memorizing the entire Quran, he painstakingly learns the Qaida, which serves as the basis for his goals.

Notwithstanding the difficulties that lay ahead, Oman is a young boy full of resilience, optimism, and a resolve to create a better future for himself, and Miles2Smile aims to make his dream come true.



Asif aspires to overcome his surroundings and become a Hafiz and an Aalimn. He sees Miles2Smile as an ally in his pursuit of knowledge, hoping that with their assistance, his aspirations will come to fruition.

Asif

A ten-year-old boy from Nuh, Haryana, named Asif, lives in a modest home with his huge family of eight. Even at a young age, Asif has taken on responsibilities that surpass his years. Five months ago, he moved into a madarsa to pursue his education, leaving behind the comforts of home.

Asif's parents' employment at the wheat mill helps to ease some of their day-to-day hardships. Every extra set of hands helps in their dire situation, even if it means feeding one less mouth at home.

Asif persists in spite of his difficulties. At the madarsa, he reads the Qaida with dedication and finds solace in the passages he learns. Even in the face of everyday struggles, he finds delight in small pleasures such as rasgulla and Muradabadi biryani. "I'm a big fan of apple juice," Asif mentions. He spends most of his time at the madarsa with Oman, adding that Oman loves mango juice.

Asif expresses gratitude for his new life at the madarsa, but he also feels a pang of sadness for their previous home, which was destroyed, leaving them with nothing. Nevertheless, he remains appreciative of what they still possess.

During the demolition, Asif lost most of his clothes in the demolition, and had nothing warm to put on. After shifting to another madarsa, he is out of sorts and recalls the ease of life at Bahrul Uloom. "We had a contented life in our Madarsa. For me, it was a home, and I was happy with the essentials it offered. I have lost my home, I miss it," Asif declares.

Shoaib



Shoaib’s goals remain unchanged in the face of hardship, which are to become fluent in English, study religion, and eventually become a teacher. “I see myself teaching here in this madarsa,” he says, his eyes gleaming with determination.

Shoaib is a lively 17-year-old from Mathura, a small town. He has been residing in the madrasa’s halls for the past eight years, where his educational journey has taken shape. As he prepares to face his tenth-grade exam, his eyes betray a hint of sadness.

“I’ve attended and handled past examination papers, but now I’m confronted with the challenge of ‘Basic Computing’,” he laments. Recalling the sight of broken computers amidst the rubble of the demolition of his old madarsa, Bahrul Uloom, only adds to his sorrow. “I poured my sweat into creating academic notebooks throughout the year, only to lose everything,” he complains.

Even though Miles2Smiles provided him with notebooks, we were unable to retrieve his lost work. While Shoaib currently faces difficulties preparing for his ‘Basic Computing’ exam due to not having access to a computer, we aspire for other children to not endure similar challenges, thus Our goal is to furnish children with the necessary tools, including computers, to facilitate their education.

Tragedy has marked Shoaib’s journey ever since his father fell victim to a horrific murder soon after Eid in 2016. “I still vividly remember that heart-wrenching day,” he murmurs. His maternal uncle, Zakir Sahab, who served as the Imam of the demolished mosque, Masjid Akhondji, now shoulders the family’s responsibilities and

Despite facing numerous hardships, Shoaib’s spirit remains resilient. As a Quran Hafiz, he has memorized the holy book and mastered the complexities of Tajweed. Proficient in Hindi and Urdu, he harbors a strong desire to learn English. “I love English; I aspire to speak it fluently,” he exclaims passionately.

While Shoaib has a deep affection for Urdu storytelling, his interest in Urdu poetry is limited. He proudly mentions his study of Iqbal’s poetry and the joy it brought him.

Cricket serves as Shoaib’s haven, and he makes time every day to indulge in his favorite sport, reveling in its excitement.



ABOUT ORGANISATION

Miles2Smile was established four 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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