

SMILE REPORT

RELIEF & REHABILITATION WORK

Nuh, Gurugram | Haryana



August - December

2023



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Incidence Overview

Haryana witnessed a horrific spate of communal violence on July 31, 2023, when a Hindu religious procession turned into a violent confrontation between Hindus and Muslims in Haryana's Nuh district. The violence was reportedly instigated by a cow vigilante Monu Manesar, who posted a video inciting hatred against Muslims.

The violence also spread to the nearby city of Gurugram, where more Muslim properties were targeted. The state government, led by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), failed to prevent or control the situation. The government instead resorted to demolishing Muslim homes and businesses under the pretext of removing illegal encroachments.

An investigation by India Today into the clashes uncovered intelligence oversights and anger against Monu Manesar, as key factors contributing to the violence which was reportedly triggered by a video posted by him. Cow vigilante Manesar is also wanted by the police for an earlier day-light murder of two Muslim men, Nasir and Junaid.

The video, which was circulated on social media, showed Monu Manesar threatening to host a Brajmandal Yatra, an annual pilgrimage organized by the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), a Hindu nationalist organization, in Haryana's Nuh district. The video also contained derogatory and inflammatory remarks against Muslims, and accusations of cow slaughtering.

The Brajmandal Yatra, which was started by the VHP three years ago, aims to revive the sacred Hindu sites in the Nuh district, which is also known as Mewat. Nuh is believed to be home to three ancient Shiva lingas from the time of the Pandavas in the Mahabharata, and is also believed to be the place where Krishna used to graze his cows. The VHP leaders claim that these holy places are under the threat of encroachment by the influential people in the region, who are mostly Muslims. Nuh has a Muslim population of 79.2%, while Hindus constitute only 20.37% of the population, according to the 2011 Census.

The yatra, which entered Nuh from Sohna on Monday morning began with a ceremonial "jal abhishek" (pouring of sacred water) at the Nalhar Mahadev Temple, an ancient temple near the main Nuh town. The yatra then proceeded to the Jhirakeshwar Mahadev and the Radha Krishna Temple in the Shrangar village, and finally to the Shringeshwar Mahadev Temple, where another "jal abhishek" ceremony took place.



The yatra saw the participation of around 25,000 people, including the members of the Gau Raksha Dal and the Bajrang Dal, who carried tableaux and posters of the recently released Anupam Kher's film *The Kashmir Files*, with a catchphrase "Jago Hinduo Jago" (Wake up Hindus, wake up). The yatra also played provocative songs and slogans on loudspeakers, which included calls for violence against Muslims.

The local Muslim community was angered by the announcement that Monu Manesar would be participating in the yatra, as per reports. The Yatra was flagged off in the morning on Monday, July 31, 2023, from Civil Lines in Gurugram by BJP district president, Gargi Kakkar, according to news agency PTI. The Yatra was to reach Ferozepur Jhirka via Nuh.

Afzal Ahmed, an MLA from Nuh, claimed that the incident was a premeditated act of violence. He highlighted that similar yatras had been conducted in the past, but faced no community resistance. Ahmed further pointed out that the current unrest was a post-BJP phenomenon, suggesting a change in the nature of such yatras. Ahmed told *India Today* that previous processions lacked the nuisance and hooliganism seen now, attributing the escalation to intentional provocations like spreading inflammatory videos on social media.

The police, who accompanied the procession failed to prevent the violence that lasted for more than 16 hours. As the news spread, subsequent incidents of communal violence were also reported the next day in Gurugram and Sohna, where several establishments owned by Muslims, including meat shops, hotels, and a few junk dealers' shops, were set on fire.

The violence also targeted a mosque in Gurugram, which was set ablaze by the Hindutva rioters, resulting in the reported death of the Mosque's Imam during the attack. The Mosque hosted around 400 worshippers.

A total of 156 individuals were arrested, and 56 First Information Reports (FIRs) were filed in the aftermath of a week-long violence that led to the unfortunate demise of six individuals, including two police homeguards.

In response to violence, the state government, led by the BJP, and known for its pro-Hindu agenda, took action primarily against the Muslim, demolishing their homes and businesses, alleging illegal encroachments. The government ordered the demolition of over 250 houses, largely of Muslims, in Nuh and Gurugram. The government claimed that the demolitions were done as per the law and the court orders, and that they had nothing to do with the communal violence. However, the Punjab and Haryana High Court issued an immediate order to stop the bulldozer operations in Nuh and Gurugram, asking the government to explain rationale behind such demolitions.



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The Haryana & Punjab High Court expressed reservations about whether the demolition of buildings belonging to a particular community was being carried out under the pretext of maintaining law and order, and whether the state was engaging in an exercise of ethnic cleansing



Intervention by Miles2Smile

Miles2Smile Foundation promptly launched a comprehensive response to aid individuals and families affected by the violence and subsequent demolition of houses. Our team visited Nuh, where many Muslims were compelled to live under the open sky and lost their means of livelihood.

While we acknowledge that the government has to provide compensation and rebuild not only the homes of these people but also their businesses, we also recognize that the court bears the responsibility of delivering justice to those whose houses were unlawfully demolished.

Initiation of fundraisers was with the conviction that individuals who have lost their homes or sources of income should not feel isolated. Our primary goal was to ensure their sustenance and provide them with a sense of security.



Extending Support to the Bengali Settlement

Miles2Smile Foundation, and its team had been deeply involved in relief and rehabilitation efforts to support individuals in Nuh who have suffered from unlawful demolitions.

Similar to our efforts in other areas, we have been actively involved in Gurugram since August 5th, assisting families adversely affected by acts of violence and those who have lost their shops due to demolition drives. We provided them with essential supplies such as rations, tents, and assistance with reconstruction.



Rebuilding Homes in Nagina

During our visit to Dhobi Ghat at Nagina where 17 houses were demolished, we immediately provided for ration, tents and other essentials. In successive visits, we discussed with local authorities and started the construction of few houses.



Situation Assessment and Ration Distribution

In the initial phase of our relief & rehabilitation efforts, our team had been actively engaged in assisting the affected people in Nuh. We interacted with families who were adversely impacted by the acts of violence, as well as people who lost their shops in the aftermath of the demolition drive.

Our team conducted multiple visits to Nuh, engaging with people who bore the brunt of the violence and demolitions.

In Gurugram, our team visited a Bengali settlement where residents had faced attacks and threats. Approximately 70 families, mainly from Bengal, lived in fear and were unable to work, often lacking proper meals.

Miles2Smile distributed rations, sanitary pads, and essential items to these families, providing much needed relief.

Among the impacted individuals, frailed Kallu, a 61-year-old vendor, bore a severe loss after the violence. Kallu's shop, along with seven other Muslim shops in sector 66, was targeted, looted, and reduced to ashes during the violent events.

MilesSmile Foundation successfully rebuilt Kallu's shop, empowering him to regain his livelihood and a sense of security. Generous contributions of 2.64 lakhs played a vital role in helping Kallu start anew.

Nangal: Relief and Rehabilitation Support

Nangal, located approximately 10 km from Nuh town, witnessed the demolition of 16 houses, all belonging to Muslims, by the administration. Notably, Hindu settlements in the area remained untouched.

The local sarpanch arranged for the relocation of these families. Miles2Smile provided tents, tarpaulin sheets, ration, and support for reconstruction.



Our relief efforts were specifically directed towards two groups:

Individuals whose homes were demolished and those whose small shops and businesses were affected.

We personally reached out to these individuals, offering support to help them during their challenging times.

By addressing the immediate needs of those impacted by violence and evictions, our primary goal was to restore a sense of security and normalcy in their lives.

We firmly believe that every contribution, no matter how small, plays a vital role in rebuilding lives, restoring hope, and paving the path towards a better tomorrow.



Sidhrawat: Providing Assistance After Demolitions

During our visit to Sidhrawat, a small village approximately 30 km from Nuh, we observed the aftermath of an extensive demolition drive by the state, which resulted in the bulldozing of 16 houses. These families had been living in this area for more than 30 years. Our team worked preemptively with these families, after providing tents, tarpaulin sheets, and ration, and exploring options for relocation and reconstruction.



Firozpur Jhirka: Rebuilding Lives in DoodhGhati

In Firozpur Jhirka, our team conducted a comprehensive assessment in the Gyasaniyabas and “DoodhGhati” villages, where 106 residential structures were razed to the ground. We identified 15 households in exceptionally vulnerable situations and provided essential supplies like rations to them.



A Helping Hand in Adversity

In the foothills of the mighty Arravalis, where rugged terrain met the azure sky, lived a man named Jamshed. A humble laborer, aged 50, he toiled under the relentless sun, eking out a meager living for his family. Jamshed's world revolved around his home, a modest structure perched on the mountain land.

On the fateful day of August 3, 2023, the tranquility of Jamshed's life was shattered when the municipal authorities, driven by unknown motives, descended upon his home. The air was thick with the dust of despair as the once-sturdy walls crumbled under the relentless force of mighty bulldozers. Jamshed, with his calloused hands and tired eyes, stood amidst the ruins, the remnants of his home scattered like ashes in the wind.

The municipal authorities, oblivious to the damage they had caused, left Jamshed and his family stranded on the uncertainty of life. With a heavy heart, Jamshed gazed at the remnants of his home, now reduced to rubble. The roof that once shielded his family from the harsh sun was gone.

Amidst the ruins, help reached Jamshed and his family through — Miles2Smile Foundation that reached out to Jamshed in the wake of the Nuh demolitions. The foundation, with its unwavering commitment to rebuilding lives, became the guiding light in Jamshed's darkest hour.

Miles2Smile set out to reconstruct two rooms, each measuring 12*14, for his family of seven. Jebuna, Jamshed's wife, who had stood by his side through thick and thin, watched with tearful eyes as the foundation reconstructed their house. With tears of gratitude, Jamshed thanked the foundation for its heartfelt efforts.



SMILE STORIES





“A Sanctuary for the Homeless”

Parvin, a 40-year-old homemaker, had a happy life with her husband Isab, a truck driver, and their three children. Among them are two daughters aged 12 and 10, and an eight year old son. They lived in a modest mud house built on the panchayat land in upparla locality in Nagina Mewat, Haryana. Their children studied at a government school nearby.

But the peace in their lives was shattered on August 3, 2023, when an arbitrary demolition drive began following July 31 violence, erupted in Nuh after a dispute over religious procession.

Parvin and her family were among the thousands of victims of arbitrary demolitions, which continued till five days. Parveen's house was alleged to be located on panchayat land.

To make matters worse, the authorities served them a demolition notice two hours before bulldozing their house, along with several other houses in the area. Parveen and her family were left homeless, with no place to go after complete demolition of their house. They estimated their loss to be around 2-2.5 lakh rupees.

However, Parvin's fate changed when Miles2Smile Foundation, which works for the relief and rehabilitation of the victims of communal violence, came to their rescue. The foundation identified Parveen and her family as one of the most needy and deserving ones, and decided to rebuild their house with its own funds and resources.

The foundation constructed a new house for Parveen and her family. The foundation also provided them with basic amenities, and helped them get their documents and identity cards restored. The foundation also ensured that their children's education was not disrupted, and enrolled them in a nearby school under the Shaagird Program.

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Parvin and her family were grateful to receive their new home built from the support of Miles2Smile Foundation.

A Will To Serve

Aaysha's husband **Akbar**, a 45-year-old vegetable seller, had a hard life with her six children, which included two girls and four boys, aged between 12 to 20. They also had their house built on a government panchayat land in upparla locality in Nagina Mewat, Haryana. Her husband earlier worked as a non-farm laborer to support the family, while her children studied in a madarsa nearby.

Aaysha's life took a devastating turn when communal violence erupted in Nuh, sparked by a dispute over a religious procession, and resulting eventually in an arbitrary demolition drive. Aaysha and her family fell victim to this demolition, as their home was entirely razed by the district authorities. Losing not just her home but all her belongings, Aaysha found refuge in a makeshift camp, grappling with the uncertainty of how she would rebuild her shattered life.

The foundation constructed a new house for Aaysha and her family. Ayesha thanked the foundation for the generosity. "Miles2Smile foundation played a crucial role in supporting me and helping me achieve a life of dignity," she says gratefully.

“The future ahead looked bleak. However, a ray of hope arrived with the shelter provided by Miles2Smile Foundation. The foundation identified Ayesha and her family as the most devastated by demolition and decided immediately to extend support



To facilitate the rehabilitation of all 15 homes, we estimated a funding requirement of **4.5 lakh** rupees



The Right to Home, Land & Progress

Without due legal, formal process of home ownership, many urban poor lack access to basic facilities and face a number of vulnerabilities.

One such family is of Haseena. In the foothills of the Aravallis, Haseena with her husband Rujdaar, 60, struggled for life with their three daughters and a youngest son, barely living on the earnings made from the rearing of goats.

Rujdaar, at the age of 60, had dedicated his entire life tending to his livestock, finding solace in the gentle rhythm of his life.

Haseena, a woman of quiet strength, never imagined that her world would crumble in a matter of moments. Her daughters, Sakoonat, Nusraat, and Samsherra, became unwitting witnesses to the sudden upheaval that had befallen their once peaceful abode.

With no land to call their own, Haseena and Rujdaar found themselves in the depths of despair, as their family's future hung in precarious balance.

In 2021, the Haryana government enacted a landmark legislation, [The Haryana Recovery of Damages to Property During Disturbance to Public Order Bill, 2021](#) which gave immunity to the government to recover any loss incurred to public properties during protests or a public disorder by damaging a person's private properties and auctioning it for financial recovery.

As a livestock rearer, Rujdar and Haseena had no cash reserves to fall back upon. After demolition of their only home, they didn't know where to turn.

It was then the couple had a stroke of luck as they learnt about Miles2Smile foundations' relief efforts in the area. Their financial status was mostly unstable. Nor did they have any piece of land to call their own. Miles2Smile helped Hasina with a temporary shelter, her own smile-home, made of bamboo, and asbestos sheets. However, Rujdar's struggles haven't ended here. As a father of three daughters, he still has a fair share of worries.



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Miles2Smile has been spearheading social change, focusing on addressing the needs of such communities and helping them come out of poverty

Kallu Miyan



Hoping to find better income opportunities in the city, **Kallu** miyan along with his two sons migrated from UP's Moradabad to Gurugram two years back. He started selling mattresses and air-coolers on the roadside, and gradually saved enough money to rent a small shop in Sector 66.

Nurturing and thriving in his small business, he earned the respect of his customers and secured a stable income to sustain his wife, two sons, and daughter, all residing together in a nearby rented residence.

However, on August 1, 2023, his life changed forever. He was at his shop when he heard the sound of gunshots and people's screaming. He looked outside and saw a mob of angry men armed with sticks, stones, and petrol bombs. They were targeting Muslim shops and houses in the area, as a retaliation for the Nuh violence that had erupted a day earlier.

Kallu was terrified and locked himself inside his shop, only to witness the devastation unfold as the mob pillaged and set ablaze his mattress shop entirely. When asked about the extent of his losses, Kallu miyan estimated it to be goods worth three lakhs.

Bewildered at the magnitude of loss, the elderly man sits beneath the shelter of a nearby shed, his gaze fixed upon the smoldering remnants of what once was his shop.

While we were talking to Kallu Mia, he told us that the mob also threatened Muslims living nearby in ten sheds that if they do not leave the city, they will face dire consequences.



Miles2Smile Foundation had launched a crowdfunding campaign to raise funds for Kallu miyan and other affected shopkeepers. We showed him that people from all over the country had donated money for his cause. The campaign had raised 2.64 lakhs for Kallu, which was enough to rebuild his shop and buy new stock.

Kallu miyan was overwhelmed at the affection he received from the donors. To thank almighty Allah, he asked us for a prayer-mat and instantly performed two rakat namaz to express his gratitude.

Aas Mohammad & Hasan Mohaamd

In response to the distressing demolition drive conducted in Nuh, Miles2smile Foundation started a fundraiser to support Aas Mohammad, a 57-year-old security guard, and his brother Hasan Mohammad.

The brothers, who had resided in their sturdy pucca houses since 1996, found themselves abruptly uprooted from the life they had built over the years. In the aftermath of Nuh violence, their residence and a tea shop were razed to the ground, leaving them in a state of shock and upheaval.

“We used to get electricity and water bills. There was never an objection regarding papers to show land ownership,” Aas Mohammad, with a voice heavy with grief, recounted.

Aas Mohammad didn't even have five minutes to salvage their belongings before their world crumbled around them. He received a mere two day notice from local authorities and witnessed the demolition within a few hours of the notice. This sudden upheaval left his family grappling with the loss of their home and livelihood.

The weight of this situation is even more profound as he carries the responsibility of a sizable family. Tragically, the aftermath of this demolition event resulted in the hospitalization of Aas Mohammad's son, who experienced a severe panic attack due to the abrupt loss of their means of earning.

Miles2smile Foundation immediately stepped in to assist during this trying period. In a gesture of immediate support, we transferred Rs 1.5 lakhs to Aas Mohammad's bank account for medical expenses and other urgent needs for his family. We also raised 3 lakhs for him, given that his loss was substantial.

With a generous assistance of 3lakh, Aas Muhammad & Hasan Muhammad started construction of their house in an adjacent plot. Within weeks the construction work was complete and both the family settled happily in their new house.



Watch Video





“I’m a grown woman with tears in my eyes and my heart,” says **Aasiya**

Aasiya

“The team of police personnel came without warning at dawn ten minutes after a man, claiming to be acting on a court order, handed us notices to demolish the houses,” said Aasiya, a 70 year-old woman, who faced an unfortunate situation when her home was demolished following communal violence in Haryana’s Nuh district.

Her family called the Nalhar district their home. They had lived there for three decades. The demolition left them without a roof over their heads, forcing them to sleep out in the open. Asiya lived in a joint family of fifteen.

With a commitment to tangible support, the Miles2smile team visited Aasiya multiple times in the August month. We ensured that essential supplies such as rations and other essentials were provided along with blankets and mattresses but this assistance was not enough to better their plight.

Through a dedicated donation call, we successfully raised a total of 2.56 lakhs for Aasiya. We appreciate how so many people responded with empathy and helped us assist Asiya in rebuilding her house. It was nothing short of heartwarming to see her smile restored. “It means the world to me,” said Asiya, with her teary eyes.



“I asked for 7 days and said, ‘Give me 7 days to take out my belongings,’ but they didn’t even give me 5 minutes. Then, I pleaded with folded hands, ‘Just give me today to pack everything,’ but they destroyed everything,” says **Manisha**

Manisha

Manisha, just 20 years old, found herself in the depths of despair. She had a 1-year-old daughter who was her world, and when we met her, her little one was sick and frail. Life had thrown her a cruel twist.

“Humnien 7 din manga aur bola 7 din dedo saman nikalnedo, lekin unhone 5 minute bhi nahi diya, phir humnien haanth jod k kaha bus aaj bhar ka time dedo lekin sab kuch todd diya unhone”.

Earning a living had become a daily struggle, especially after her husband, who used to work as a laborer, lost his job during a period of violent upheaval that shook their community to its core. To add to their troubles, their home, a place of safety and comfort, was ruthlessly torn apart, leaving Manisha and her little one with nothing but the vast expanse of the open sky for shelter.

However, what truly stood out was Manisha’s unwavering spirit. Despite the weight of her circumstances, she remained unfailingly polite and wore a radiant smile on her face. Her resilience in the face of such adversity was nothing short of remarkable.

During this heart-wrenching situation, the Miles2Smile team emerged as a ray of hope. We swiftly provided the immediate assistance they needed, ensuring the little one received the essential medicine required for her fragile health. In addition, we offered them a sturdy tent, providing a semblance of shelter and security beneath the vast expanse of the night sky. Recognizing the urgency of their situation, we also arranged for rations and other essentials, alleviating the burden of their daily struggles. Looking ahead, we are actively working towards relocating the family to a safer environment, where they can rebuild their lives with dignity and hope for a better future.

Khurshidan



On August 3, 2023, about 20 families of Nalhar in Nuh Haryana woke up to the sight of multiple bulldozers and police vans ready to demolish their homes. This was despite a High Court order staying the eviction and hundreds of residents along with volunteers from the several charitable organizations and local activist groups standing in solidarity in front of the bulldozers. Khurshida, one of the residents of the Nalhar locality, willing to “do or die” to save her home but was forcefully removed as more police officers came to her premise, taking away their men and even children into custody.

Media reports said, several people were beaten up and around 145 people were arrested in the wake of Nuh demolitions.

Miles2smile Foundation has taken a proactive stance to support Khursidan and her family of 15. Kursidan’s home was demolished. However, the extent of the tragedy went beyond their home – their possessions, including furniture, ration, and other essentials, were also obliterated in the aftermath of demolition.

With a resolute determination to help Khursidan and her family rebuild their lives, Miles2smile Foundation launched a fundraising campaign and raised 3 lakh rupees for her. The goal was to provide the necessary resources and support to help them regain stability and security in their lives.

The outpouring of generosity and compassion from the community has paved the way for Khursidan and her family to embark on their journey towards recovery.

With the money received by Khurshidan, She purchased a piece of land so as to settle happily without fear of another demolition. She is hopeful of another assistance by Miles2Smile in Construction of her new home.



Watch Video



A ray of hope arrived with the generous support provided by **Miles2Smile** foundation. He could move to his own pucca house after years of hard work and pain.

Siphat

A quest for better livelihood is what drives many migrants to the cities. Siphat was no different. Along with his wife and a daughter Aatika, and two sons, Siphat traveled far from a remote village to Sakras in Haryana, in search of a better life.

Unfortunately, the cost of living in cities is high, especially renting a house. Failing to find a suitable job, With meager cash reserves and no affordable shelter in sight, Siphat found himself in a far worse situation than he had left behind.

Finding a suitable job was a full-time job in itself. Siphat , who toiled for months, looking for dignified work, soon found a job as a truck driver. Once he had saved enough money, he moved his family into a small mud residence in the hills of Aravali.

Just when it seemed that the tide was turning in their favor, an unexpected tragedy left his family once again in a state of despair. Siphat's house was among the properties that got demolished following Nuh violence on July 31. Working as a truck driver he earned enough money to sustain his family but could not save much to rebuild his demolished property though he had purchased land but had no money to build a house.

Twitter Wall



1 Smile
Project



1209 Smile
Hours

5170 Miles
Covered



855 Smiles
Restored



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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