

# ***Ramakrishna Mission LP/ UP / SEC School:***

## ***Sohbarpunjee***

***Dist: East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya***

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The School was started in 24th April, 1928 named as a New India School, Sohbar. The School began in a small hut. Later on December, 1929, it came to its new shape with full glory and glamour.

On 7th February, 1931, the Inspector and Deputy Inspector of school came to a surprise visit and were very surprise to see that discipline, order and punctuality of the school were up-to the work.

Soon, after the new India School was upgraded as Middle English School in 1932. Mr. Ilishmohan Roy of shobar was appointed as a teacher on the salary of Rs. 12/- per month. In the same year Mr. Owen Rowee, the DI of schools in Assam visited the school and congratulated the founder that in spite of many hardship and obstacles that stood against the school yet the school processed forward to its name and fame.

In 1938, Class VI was upgraded weaving and spinning classes were introduced to the students. Other cane and bamboo work, embroidery, tailoring were also opened to help the villagers to be self dependent. Every Saturday in the school, after roll call the students were taken to the fields with shovels and pick-axes and engaged them in cutting of jungles and bushes surround the residential areas etc.

Miss Margaret Barr, of the unit rain church after hearing the glamorous work of the school, visited the school and stayed two weeks to render more advice regarding various activities of the school.

The school building was too small and the number of the learners had increased. So, an expert carpenter of sohbar village is Sirdo Singh Dkhar, extended his helping hand to enlarge the building and make other necessary articles and materials without taking single paisa. People from Bholaganj, Balat, Shillong, and sohra donated heartily for the noble venture and Rs. 1500/- was then collected for the school building.

Mohendra Mohan Choudhury, the then president secretary came to visit the school on 17th February, 1947. He was moved by the strong principal and magnificent work of the founder that he immediately sanctioned Rs. 1000/- for construction of new school building through his initiative, the government of Assam sanctioned Rs. 30,000/- for new building.

The foundation stone of the school was laid by Shri B R Medhi the Chief Minister of Assam formerly, accompanied by Shri O K Das, Education Minister and Shri M M Choudhury, the deputy Chief Minister along with many officers on 24th February, 1951.

The new building was inaugurated by the Education Minister Shri O K Das in 1952.

The New India school was affiliated to the board of education, Assam in 1949. Later it was handed over to the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Cherrapunjee (Sohra) in 1959 during the time of Swami Suddhobodhanandaji Maharaj, the then secretary of the Ashrama Sohra. It was then know Ramakrishna School, Sohbar.

Slowly and gradually, under full and efficient management of the Ramakrishna Mission, the school, is magnificently progress in every field of learning activities. The Mission helps the children of the village and other region in Khasi Hills to progress in studies and illiteracy has been removed from the society and its fame and name is echoing too far and near.

### **A unique instrumental person (The founder):**

Late Tarani Kumar Purkayastha, an inhabitant of Sylhet, was the founder of the school Which he named it as New India School later it is known as Ramakrishna Mission School, Sohbar. He was the ideal follower of the Swami Vivekananda whose messages would inspire him in social service. Babu Tarani (as very one used to call him) dedicated his service and enlightened the untrained and dull minds of the villagers and the obscure areas of Khasi Hills. He did sacrifice all his life and worldly comfort and selected the most painful path of life journey. He was encourage by Swami Saradesananda, the then secretary of Ramakrishna Mission Sylhet, to climb up the hills of Khasi Hills and selected a place at Sohbar to started his mission in removing the ignorance and illiteracy of the people there. He founded the New India School, Sohbar along with two hostels, one for boys and another for girls. He was himself a living institution who could infuse knowledge to the common people through his very simple talk, advice and activities 'WORK IS LIFE' his motto and 'SERVICE TO THE HUMANITY' was his aim, which he always showed in action. He preached no other religion of his own but spread the ideals of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

He came in contact with Swami Chandikananda in 1929 and later with Swami Bhuteshananda and Swami Sankarananda whose helped him and influence him in many ways.

He was pioneer who had ploughed and planted the seed of education in the early of the 20th century.

Gradually, his health was deteriorating due to hard work and endless activities that he breathed his last on 11th January, 1987 at Uttar Kashi. He is no more but his works and ideal sprits are immortal.