

not  
the end



# the beginning

Cherrapunjee, or Sohra as it is called locally, a subdivisional town in the East Khasi Hills district in Meghalaya holds two Guinness world records for the maximum amount of rainfall in a single year.

Meghalaya ~ the abode of clouds ... is rightly nicknamed the "Scotland of the East" by British imperial authorities. So much beauty abounds it that it's hard to describe in words. And there so much of pain that exists side-by-side here, that is almost inexplicable.

The 'green blades of grass', the chirpy and cheerful children that look up to some sun when the clouds clear away are the focus of our story.

Inspired by the clarion call of Swami Vivekananda to serve the Nation, Swami Prabhananda *ji*, popularly known as Ketaki Maharaj started his pioneering philanthropic activities in 1924 among the Khasi tribal



people of Shellapunjee, 47 kilometres from Cherrapunjee. He materialised Swami Vivekananda's vision of "Let new India arise ... from groves and forests, hills and mountains" by starting basic educational services among the underprivileged, uneducated tribal and poor people of that locality upholding the greatness of their own culture, customs, ways of life and language.

This pioneering venture had far reaching effects for the whole of North-East as it initiated the involvement of the Ramakrishna Mission in the area.

Unimaginable amount of walking and climbing the hills took its toll on him as he passed away when he was just 38 establishing 11 schools by then.

Today the Mission runs 77 Lower Primary, Upper Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary schools catering to about 10,000 tribal students located all over Khasi-Jaintia and Garo Hills. It also runs two hostels, one charitable dispensary, two mobile medical units, one knitting-tailoring-weaving training-cum-production centre, one audiovisual unit, one computer training centre in addition to various other services like free medical camps, eye camps, health awareness camps by specialists, relief activities, daily milk feeding programmes, blankets and garments distribution programmes and vocational training programmes.

All of these made possible by aids and grants from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.





# the problem

A couple of years back, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India announced that they will not be funding any school below the Secondary or Higher Secondary level. Which means, the 57 Lower Primary and Upper Primary schools run by the Ramakrishna Mission will have to close down putting the future of thousands of students into darkness.

The Ramakrishna Mission Cherrapunjee is able to provide education to the tribal sisters and brothers in remotest corners of Meghalaya only because they receive a recurring grant of around Rupees 11 crores from both Central and State governments. Without this grant around 10,000 economically weak children will not get the benefit of education.

The Ramakrishna Mission Cherrapunjee is able to provide these services through its network of 77 schools. These schools are mostly Primary and Upper primary institutions. This noble venture of carrying the light of education to these remote corners is under great threat due to the resolve of the Central government to cut-off all funding if these schools are not upgraded to Secondary or Higher secondary levels within a short span of 2 to 3 years. This is a Herculean task that involves a huge funding of about Rupees 50 to 60 crores to be completed.

## Immediate contingency short-term plan

The mission will undertake to upgrade the schools in 12 critical locations as these cater to around 30 Lower Primary, Upper Primary and Secondary schools. A bare minimum construction is required to integrate and/or upgrade the schools in these 30 locations. Each year one extra class will be added in these schools and hence around one or two extra rooms need to be constructed to accommodate these classes. For example, in some LP schools (schools up to class V) they have already started classes VI and in some UP schools (schools up to class VIII) IX in the academic year 2017–18.

So, by next year these students will move up to classes VII and X respectively. Such schools will need a minimum of one to two additional classrooms to hold these classes. Though, in practice, this may not translate exactly into two or four rooms but will mean one floor of the proposed building due to technical considerations.

In some places one floor may accommodate four rooms and in another may be five or six depending on the availability of ground space.



Adding extra classes each year means that construction of additional minimum rooms must keep pace with graduation of students to the next level.

The proposed locations for construction in the first phase (short term) are given below along with the budget requirement for each area in the following page.



## Description and approximate amount to sustain the first phase of construction (in lakhs)

Name of School	Schools to benefit	Amount required
• Integrated Higher Secondary School at Laitlyngkot	7	75
• Integrated Higher Secondary School at Lummawskhen	5	75
• Integrated& Upgraded Higher Secondary School at Swer	2	75
• Integrated & Upgraded Higher Secondary School at Rengua	2	40
• Upgraded Secondary School at Kalibari	2	40
• Upgraded Secondary School at Laitlyndop	1	50-60
• Upgraded Secondary School at Kalatek	1	30
• Upgraded Higher Secondary School at Mawrah	2	40
• Upgraded Higher Secondary School at Rudu'B'	1	40
• Upgraded Higher Secondary School at Zakabari	2	40
• Upgraded Higher Secondary School at Sohbarpunjee	4	50-60
• Upgraded Secondary School at Mawsmmai	1	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>575-595</b>

## The short term plan

Construction in the above-mentioned schools in twelve locations is most important to weed out the possibility of stoppage of grants from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India. This this will affect 10,000 children studying in the schools.

The construction must be completed within March 2019 by raising around Rs 6 crores. With funding from some wellwishers, they have already initiated work in many locations as detailed in the annexure but they will still need around Rupees 2.6 crores to be raised within remaining months.

## The long term plan

To upgrade all the schools to Secondary and Higher Secondary level meeting the standard of infrastructure as stipulated by the NCTE (National Council of Teacher Education) and the MBOSE (Meghalaya Board of School Education) within next 5 to 7 years at the most.

As mentioned earlier, this involves a huge funding, around Rupees 50 to 60 crores to complete. They have received sanction to fund six schools by a government agency amounting to around Rupees 6 crores for some of the schools that are not included in the list of above-mentioned twelve locations.



For this amount, they wish to approach and appeal for help to all philanthropic minded individuals and institutions.

## the misperception

Contrary to a widespread misperception that the Ramakrishna Mission is possibly the wealthiest NGO and therefore does not need help from people like you and me, such endeavours and the sudden stop of grants from the government makes them vulnerable today and throws the future of thousands of villagers and children into an unknown darkness.





# the appeal

The cost of a child's education at Ramakrishna Mission is Rupees 29,500.

They need your help to survive and grow.  
Please act now to contribute generously.

Save their future.  
If you wish. You can.

To visit or find out how you could help, call

**Swami Anuraganada**

Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Sohra  
(Cherrapunjee) Meghalaya

at +91 84160 83487 or +91 94363 10959

or send a mail to [sohra@rkmm.org](mailto:sohra@rkmm.org)

*This brochure, the film on the problem and engineering drawings of building construction plans are also available at <http://www.rkmasohra.org>*



