Khunti SDA Senior Secondary Boarding School

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The Khunti Seventh-day Adventist Senior Secondary School is a co-educational boarding and day school operated by the Northern India Union at Khunti, Jharkhand.

The foundation of the Seventh-day Adventist Senior Secondary School, Khunti, Jharkhand was laid in 1929, when Pastor J. E. Saundar and Pastor William Bryan Votaw purchased seven and half acres of land for the mission at Khunti about 26 miles away from Ranchi. A mission bungalow was completed in 1930. There was no school of course, and the Saunders advertised for a tutor for their own three children aged 6-9. More land was purchased and by 1944 the campus stretched to thirty acres. At present the school property consists of about 63 acres of land with a farm, a small dam, an administrative building, an elementary school building, a multipurpose building constructed recently by Maranatha, a high school building, a boys hostel, a girls hostel, a dining hall, an auditorium, a small printing press, play fields and a few teachers quarters.

Beginning of the School

The actual beginning date of the school is controverted. The 2018 Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook states 1937 as the date of establishment. The school appears in the Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook starting in 1943. The first time that a date of establishment is given is in the 1946 Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook when the date of establishment is given as 1940, which is the time the mission started subsidizing the school. In the 1950s and 1960s the Seventh-day Adventist Yearbooks give the date of establishment as 1941, which is when the Division regularized the school and provided an appropriation for it.

Frank H. Loasby, president of the Northeast Union reported in February 1939 that he hoped there would be a school in Khunti soon. William B. Votaw, the second principal who took over in 1941 states quite clearly that Jenson had started the school in 1939 and operated it for the first year at his own expense. In December 1939 Loasby described the beginning as “few months ago,” when hopeful students and some parents approached Pastor Jenson with a plea to open a school.

The students they admitted had no finances to pay fees but promised to bring rice for six months and offered to build huts for the boys to live in and another one for classes. Jenson could not refuse. Parents hauled crude wooden beams from the forest forty miles away. The school opened with 4 boys and one teacher. In January 1940 the Northeast Union Committee took note of the operation of this unauthorized school and referred the matter to the Bihar Mission Committee for study. The report came back to the Union that the school should be continued, that more such schools should be encouraged, and that C. J. Jenson ought to be reimbursed for his own money spent. The Union reimbursed Jenson Rs 500 (probably what he paid the teacher), and in January 1941 the Union recommended to the Division that the school be regularized and also be provided an operating budget.

Development

In the first few years no girls were admitted, as there was no place to house them, but in 1943 it was felt that the little dispensary could be used for housing girls and fourteen of them were admitted that year. Juhi Soren was appointed as the matron. The girls relieved the boys who had been doing the cooking.

Till 1961 the school was listed in the Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook as “Khunti Elementary Boarding School.” For the next five years it was known as the “East India School.” From 1967 when it taught up to the sixth standard it went by the name “Khunti Middle School”. In 1971 action was taken by the East India Section to upgrade the school by two grades, seventh standard that year, and eighth the following year, after which it was called the Khunti Junior High School. In 1984 the school was upgraded further and called the “Khunti High School.” In 1985 it was affiliated to the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination, New Delhi, for the tenth standard. Later in 2002 it was upgraded to the twelfth standard leading to the ISC examination. From then the institution has been called the “Khunti SDA Senior Secondary School.”

Principals


SOURCES

Eastern Tidings, February 1930.
“Khunti Boarding School.” Minutes of the Northeast Union Executive Committee, January 23-28, 1940.
“Khunti Boarding School.” Minutes of the Northeast Union Executive Committee.
Lakra, H. “Khunti Primary Boarding School Opens.” July 15, 1943.
Minutes of the Northeast Union Executive Committee, February 10, 1971.
Minutes of the Northeast Union Executive Committee, January 6, 1941.
Votaw W. B. “Khunti Boarding School.” Eastern Tidings, October 1, 1941.

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2. Eastern Tidings, February 1930, 8.
7. “Khunti Boarding School,” Minutes of the Northeast Union Executive Committee, # 2484.
8. Minutes of the Northeast Union Executive Committee, January 6, 1941, #2544.
9. H. Lakra, “Khunti Primary Boarding School Opens,” July 15, 1943, 7 reports that at the beginning of the school year they had 32 boys and 8 girls.
10. Minutes of the Northeast Union Executive Committee, February 10, 1971. The action was to upgrade to Std 7 in 1971 and Std 8 in 1972.