Sir Visvesvaraya - Engineer's Day

Why in news?

September 15 is observed as Engineer's Day in India to mark the birth anniversary of Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya (1861-1962), a civil engineer and statesman.

Who is Sir Visvesvaraya?

- Born in 1861 Sir MV, as Sir Visvesvaraya is also known, made contributions to several technical projects in his career in Hyderabad, Mysore, Maharashtra and Orissa.
- He completed his engineering from the Poona College of Science.
- Soon after this, he accepted an offer to work as an Assistant Engineer in the Public Works Department of the Government of Bombay.
- He was 22 at that time and one of his first projects was to construct a pipe syphon across one of Panjra river's (in Maharashtra) channels.
- In November 1909, he joined the Mysore service as Chief Engineer, ultimately assuming the position of the 19th Dewan of Mysore.
- He took voluntary retirement in 1918 because he did not agree with the proposal to set aside state jobs for "non-brahmin" community.
- After his retirement, he presided as chairman or became a member of various committees.
- While outside India, he fully intended to observe how the industrialised countries of America and Europe worked.
- In 1955, he was awarded the Bharat Ratna.

What were his key contributions?

- **Institute** - He established the Sir Jayachamarajendra Occupational Institute in Bangalore in 1943.
- It was later renamed to Sir Jayachamarajendra Polytechnic.
- It was meant to impart special training to technicians keeping in mind the impending industrial development of India.
- **Books** - His works, "Reconstructing India" and "Planned Economy of India" were published in 1920 and 1934, respectively.
- **Education** - His "Memoirs of Working Life" was published in 1951.
- In that, he noted that while in Japan there were some 1.5 million girls in

school, there were only over 400,000 of them in Indian schools.
- This was despite the vastly greater population in India than in Japan.
- During his three-month visit to Japan in 1898, Visvesvaraya realised that education largely determines the health of an economy.
- Visvesvaraya was instrumental in the setting up of the University of Mysore in July 1916, as he was the Dewan of Mysore at the time.
- He believed that the aim of an educational institution should be in line with the "state of the country's civilisation and of its material prosperity."
- He also asserted that the conditions inside a university should not be very different from the ones a student has to encounter in real life.
- **Technical** - Some of his significant works include the introduction of the block system of irrigation in the Deccan canals in 1899.
- This solved the problem of the "muddy and discoloured" water in the city of Sukkur located on the banks of the Indus river.
- He also invented automatic gates meant to regulate the flow of water in reservoirs, which is patented.
- The Krishnaraja Sagar Dam in Karnataka was the first to install these gates in the 1920s.
- He was called upon to deal with an "engineering problem" in the wake of the destructive floods that struck Hyderabad in September 1908.
- He spent some time in examining engineering developments in water-supply, dams, drainage, irrigation.
- In Italy, he studied for two months the soil erosion problem and their irrigation and drainage works.

Source: Indian Express

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering