

Engineers Day

15 SEPTEMBER



The day is the birthday of Mokshagundam Visvesvarayya, an eminent Indian engineer and statesman. He served as the chief engineer during construction of Krishna Raja Sagara dam on river Kaveri River near Mysore. He also built many dams in present day Maharashtra (previously Bombay presidency). The dams built by him are still functional even today. A testimony of his brilliance, skill, honesty and dedication.

Mokshagundam Visvesvarayya

Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvarayya was an eminent Indian engineer and statesman. He is a recipient of the Indian republic's highest honour, the Bharat Ratna, in 1955. He was also knighted by the British for his myriad contributions to the public good. Every year, 15th September is celebrated as the Engineer's Day in India in his

memory.

Sir M. V. was born to Srinivasa Sastry and Venkatalakshamma at Muddenahalli village, Chikballapur Taluk in the Kolar District of present-day Karnataka, in what was then the princely state of Mysore. His father Srinivasa Sastry was a Sanskrit scholar and an authority on the Hindu scriptures, besides being an Ayurvedic practitioner. Sir M.V.'s ancestors actually hailed from the village of Mokshagundam near Giddalur in the Prakasam District of present-day Andhra Pradesh; they had migrated to Mysore state perhaps three centuries ago. family name, "Mokshagundam", preserves the memory of this distant association.

The young Visvesvarayya lost his father at the age of 15. The family was resident at Kurnool when this calamity befell them; they moved back to Muddenahalli immediately thereafter. Sir M. V. attended primary school at Chikballapur and high school at Bangalore. He earned his B.A. from Madras University in 1881 and later studied civil engineering at the College of Science, Pune, now known as the College of Engineering, Pune (COEP).

Upon graduating as an engineer, Visvesvarayya took up a job with the Public Works Department (PWD) of Bombay now known as Mumbai, and was later invited to join the Indian Irrigation Commission. He implemented an extremely intricate system of irrigation in the Deccan area. He also designed and patented a system of automatic weir water floodgates, which were first installed in 1903, at the Khadakvasla reservoir near Pune. These gates were employed to raise the flood supply level of storage in the reservoir to the highest level likely to be attained by its flood, without causing any damage to the dam. Based on the success of these gates, the same system was installed at the Tigris dam in Gwalior and the Krishnaraja Sagara (KRS) dam in Mysore.

Visvesvarayya achieved celebrity status when he designed a flood protection system to protect the city of Hyderabad from floods. He was also instrumental in developing a system to protect Visakhapatnam port from sea erosion.

Sir M. V. supervised the construction of the KRS dam across the Kaveri River from concept to inauguration. This dam created the biggest reservoir in Asia at the time it was built. Sir MV was rightly called the "Father of modern Mysore state" (now Karnataka): he was responsible for building the very first electricity generation plant in Asia at Shivanasamudram near Mysore in 1894. During his period of service with the Government of Mysore state, he was responsible for founding, under the aegis of that government, of the Mysore Soap factory, the Parasitoid laboratory, the Bhadravati Steel factory, the SJP Polytechnic Institute, the Bangalore Agricultural University, the State Bank of Mysore, the Mysore sugar mills and numerous other industrial ventures. He also encouraged private investment in industry during his tenure as Diwan of Mysore. He was known for sincerity, time management and dedication to the cause. He was also instrumental in charting out the plan for road construction between Thirumala and Tirupati.

After taking voluntary retirement in 1908, Visvesvarayya was appointed Diwan, or First Minister, of the princely state of Mysore, one of the largest and most important in India. With the support of Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV, Maharaja of Mysore, Visvesvarayya made an arguably unprecedented contribution as Diwan to the all-round development of the State. Not only the Krishnaraja Sagara dam and reservoir, but also the hydroelectric projects at Shivanasamudram, the steel mills at Bhadravathi, the Sri Jayachamarajendra Polytechnic Institute (SJP) at Bangalore, the University of Mysore and many other industries and public works owe their inception or active nurture to him. He was instrumental in the founding of the "Government Engineering College" at Bangalore in 1917, one of the first engineering institutes in India. This institution was later named the "University Visvesvarayya College of Engineering" (UVCE) after its founder; it remains one of the most reputed institutes of engineering in Karnataka.

While he was Diwan of Mysore, Visvesvarayya was knighted by the British for his myriad contributions to the public good. After India attained independence, Sir M. Visvesvarayya was given the nation's highest honour, the Bharat Ratna, in 1955.

Sir M.V. was honoured with honorary membership of London Institution of Civil Engineers C.I.E. (Companion of Indian Empire); was made a Knight Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire etc.,. He was awarded several honorary doctoral degrees like D.Sc, LL.D., D.Litt., from various Universities in India and fellowship of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. He was president of the 1923 session of the Indian Science Congress.

Source Link: http://www.bharatwiki.com/index.php?title=Mokshagundam_Visvesvarayya