

Egypt opens extension of Suez Canal

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Egypt's President Abdelfattah el-Sisi attended a ceremony yesterday to unveil a major extension of the Suez Canal. The original canal was completed in 1869 and took 10 years

to build. The new, \$8.5 billion canal was constructed in just under 12 months, beating all predictions by industry experts that it would take five years. The canal provides a passageway between the Mediterranean and Red Seas. President Sisi sailed up the canal in his presidential yacht, the El Mahrousa, wearing military fatigues to attend the inauguration. The El Mahrousa was officially the first ship to officially sail through the original canal nearly a century-and-a-half ago. President Sisi described the new canal as Egypt's "gift to the world".

Egypt's government hopes the new canal will provide a much-needed boost for the country's economy. The head of the Suez Canal Authority, Mohab Mamish, said the new canal was important to ensure Egypt earns revenues from its waterways in the future. He told reporters: "If I can't handle this and turn it into revenue for the Egyptian treasury, alternative routes will emerge." He hopes revenues will increase from the current annual \$5.3 billion to \$13.2 billion by 2023. That means shipping traffic would need to grow from 49 per day at present to 97 by 2023. This would entail a nine per cent increase in global trade. Some economists have cast doubt on whether these figures can be met.

Sources: telegraph.co.uk / DailyNewsEgypt / albawaba.com

Writing

Compare and contrast travel by ship and airplane. Which do you prefer? Why?

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

ceremony / extension / original / predictions / industry / experts / sailed / yacht / gift / government / boost / economy / important / revenues / alternative / annual / figures

True / False

- The first Suez Canal was built in 1869. T / F
- The latest extension to the canal took 12 years to complete. T / F
- Industry experts said the canal extension would take 5 years to build. T / F
- The ship Egypt's president sailed in is at least 150 years old. T / F
- Egypt's president doubts the canal will help the economy. T / F
- A canal spokesperson warned of competition for the canal. T / F
- The spokesman hopes canal revenues will increase to \$5.3bn a year. T / F
- Global trade must increase by 90% for the canal to meet its targets. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. attended | a. guarantee |
| 2. major | b. forecasts |
| 3. predictions | c. other |
| 4. inauguration | d. significant |
| 5. original | e. manage |
| 6. boost | f. first |
| 7. ensure | g. was present at |
| 8. handle | h. uncertainty |
| 9. alternative | i. launch |
| 10. doubt | j. lift |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- How important are the waterways in your country?
- What do you know about the Suez Canal?
- How did Egypt build the canal 4 years earlier than experts predicted?
- What are the most important recent construction projects in your country?
- How important are canals?
- What are the differences between canals and rivers?
- To what degree is the new canal a 'gift to the world'?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- attended a
- unveil a major extension
- constructed in just
- beating all predictions
- nearly a century-and-
- provide a much-needed boost
- ensure Egypt earns
- alternative routes
- This would entail a nine per cent
- cast
- revenues
- under 12 months
- will emerge
- for the country's economy
- ceremony
- increase in global trade
- a-half ago
- of the Suez Canal
- doubt on
- by industry experts

Discussion – Student B

- In which areas does your country need a boost?
- How important do you think Suez is to world trade?
- In what other ways do you think Egypt makes money?
- How do shipping and air freight compare?
- What do you think will happen to world trade by 2023?
- Would you like to sail through the canal?
- Why do you think some economists doubt the canal's success?
- What questions would you like to ask President Sisi?

Spelling

- attended a rconyeme
- ivleun a major extension
- beating all rntiopedcs
- industry psxrete
- cylofiial sail through the original canal
- nearly a yuetncr-and-a-half ago
- provide a much-needed otobs
- turn it into vreeenu
- tnvearlaite routes
- the current lunana \$5.3 billion
- Some osenimotcs
- cast otbdu on

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. b	4. i	5. f
6. j	7. a	8. e	9. c	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Suez Canal

You think the Suez Canal is the greatest gift to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): the International Space Station, Disneyland or Big Ben.

Role B – The International Space Station

You think the International Space Station is the greatest gift to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): the Suez Canal, Disneyland or Big Ben.

Role C – Disneyland

You think Disneyland is the greatest gift to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): the International Space Station, the Suez Canal or Big Ben.

Role D – Big Ben

You think Big Ben is the greatest gift to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): the International Space Station, Disneyland or the Suez Canal.

Speaking – Gifts to the world

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Suez Canal
- Great Wall of China
- International Space Station
- Sydney Opera House
- Burj Khalifa
- Big Ben
- Disneyland
- Panama Canal

Answers – True False

a T	b F	c T	d T	e F	f T	g F	h F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.