

Suez Canal reopens after stranded ship is freed

31st March, 2021



Creative Commons 2.0
via chris lovelock on flickr.com

The Suez Canal is finally open again after the giant vessel that had blocked it for a week is refloated. The 220,000-ton Ever Given container ship managed to get wedged between both sides of the strategic

waterway last week. The subsequent blockage disrupted global trade and international markets. Analysts forecast it has cost Egypt \$100 million in lost revenue. The week-long jam means there is a backlog of ships waiting to sail through the canal. More than 450 ships are anchored in the Red Sea or in the Mediterranean near both ends of the canal. Authorities say they will try and double the daily average of 50 ships to pass through the channel to around 90 to 100 vessels.

There has been a monumental effort over the past week to free the 400-metre-long Ever Given. Dredgers have been clearing sand underneath it in an attempt to refloat it, and a flotilla of 30 tug boats worked to pull it away from the canal's banks. They were helped by a high tide in the final hours of the salvage operation. Egypt's President Abdel Fattah El Sisi thanked everyone who took part in the effort to refloat the ship. On social media, he said the refloating was successful despite there being "massive technical complexity". He added: "The world can now rest assured about the passage of goods through this pivotal shipping route. Egyptians today proved that they are always up to the challenge."

Sources: thenationalnews.com / voanews.com / aljazeera.com

Writing

Shipping is the best way to transport goods. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

canal / vessel / container / waterway / global trade / revenue / backlog / average / dredger / sand / banks / effort / social media / technical / complexity / shipping

True / False

- a) The Suez Canal was blocked for over 10 days. T / F
- b) The container ship weighed over a quarter of a million tons. T / F
- c) Egypt lost over \$100 billion because the ship got stuck. T / F
- d) Over 450 ships are waiting to pass through the Suez Canal. T / F
- e) A flotilla of 30 tug boats helped to shift the container ship. T / F
- f) A low tide helped the boats to refloat the container ship. T / F
- g) Egypt's leader said the operation involved massive technical complexity. T / F
- h) Egypt's leader said Egyptians are always ready for a challenge. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. blocked | a. passage |
| 2. wedged | b. pileup |
| 3. forecast | c. crucial |
| 4. backlog | d. stuck |
| 5. channel | e. huge |
| 6. monumental | f. difficulty |
| 7. salvage | g. obstructed |
| 8. complexity | h. showed |
| 9. pivotal | i. predicted |
| 10. proved | j. rescue |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) How important are canals?
- c) What are the differences between canals and rivers?
- d) What canals are there in your country?
- e) What do you think of Egypt?
- f) What technical complexities would refloating the ship have?
- g) How up to a challenge are you?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the ship's captain?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. the giant vessel that had | a. tide |
| 2. get wedged between both sides of the | b. disrupted global trade |
| 3. The subsequent blockage | c. over the past week |
| 4. The week-long jam means there | d. average of 50 ships |
| 5. double the daily | e. shipping route |
| 6. There has been a monumental effort | f. strategic waterway |
| 7. a flotilla of | g. to the challenge |
| 8. They were helped by a high | h. is a backlog of ships |
| 9. through this pivotal | i. 30 tug boats |
| 10. they are always up | j. blocked it for a week |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about the Suez Canal?
- What are the good and bad things about container ships?
- How might the blockage disrupt international markets?
- How could the ship have got stuck?
- What harm does shipping do to the environment?
- What would life be like as a sailor on a container ship?
- What three adjectives best describe this story?
- How important is the Suez Canal?

Spelling

- the giant seelsv that had blocked it
- The 220,000-ton Ever Given cnnoatrei ship
- geewdd between both sides
- The usuqensebt blockage
- \$100 million in lost rnueeev
- ndhrocae in the Red Sea
- There has been a ntmlnuomea effort
- a lltfiloa of 30 tug boats
- the glvseaa operation
- massive technical ipmyxolcte
- rest deurssa
- through this avtpiol shipping route

Answers – Synonym Match

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

Role Play

Role A – Container Ships

You think container ships are the most important vessels. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their vessels. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): cruise ships, oil tankers or aircraft carriers.

Role B – Cruise Ships

You think cruise ships are the most important vessels. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their vessels. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): container ships, oil tankers or aircraft carriers.

Role C – Oil Tankers

You think oil tankers are the most important vessels. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their vessels. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): cruise ships, container ships or aircraft carriers.

Role D – Aircraft Carriers

You think aircraft carriers are the most important vessels. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their vessels. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): cruise ships, oil tankers or container ships.

Speaking – Vessels

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

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| • Container ships | • Ferries |
| • Cruise ships | • Oil tankers |
| • Fishing boats | • Speed boats |
| • Yachts | • Aircraft carriers |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.