The Suez Canal

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Egypt was the first country to dig a man-made canal across its lands to connect the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea via the branches of the River Nile. 9 Fascinating Facts About the Suez Canal - History in the Headlines

The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway in Egypt, connecting the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. Construction started in 1859 and was completed in 1869. The canal is 162.5 km (101 miles) long and has a waterway width of 35 m (115 ft) and a depth of 15 m (49 ft).

The canal was constructed to shorten the distance between Europe and Asia, reducing the sailing time from 21 to 10 days. It was a major engineering feat of the 19th century, with huge losses of life and property. The canal was nationalized in 1956 by President Gamal Abdel Nasser, who declared it an Egyptian asset.

Today, the Suez Canal is one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, with thousands of vessels passing through it annually. The canal plays a crucial role in global trade, connecting Europe, Asia, and Africa, and is a vital link for international shipping.

The canal is owned and maintained by the Suez Canal Authority (SCA) of Egypt. Under the Convention of Constantinople, it may be used in time of war as in peace. Its importance as a strategic waterway has been reaffirmed by the construction of the New Suez Canal, which was inaugurated in 2015.