

Egypt's big dig

Egypt is banking on its multi-billion-dollar expansion of the Suez Canal to boost the economy and raise employment; hoping that a doubling of shipping traffic will fill the government's coffers. The government hopes the lure of faster transit times will attract more shipping, but some analysts have questioned Cairo's lofty forecasts.



- Existing canal
- Proposed canal and western bypasses
- The canal's own land

THE NEW CANAL

Cost: US\$8.5 billion (\$\$11.5 billion)

Time to build: 12 months

Length: 72km

Traffic: Doubling of average of transiting vessels to 97 ships by 2023, up from 49 ships now

Completion date: Aug 6

- Built in 1869
- Connects the Mediterranean and the Red seas
- Allows ships to go between Asia and Europe without travelling around Africa
- Canal length: 193.3km
- Ships per year: 18,000, forecast to double by 2023
- Distance from Singapore to Rotterdam via Africa: 11,755 nautical miles
- Distance from Singapore to Rotterdam via Suez Canal: 8,288 nautical miles

