Ben Gurion Canal Project: An alternate to Suez Canal

By IASToppers | 2023-11-11 15:20:00

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Recent Israel's war to destroy Hamas in Gaza has been linked by experts to the "**Ben Gurion Canal Project**".

[ref-haaretz]

About the Ben Gurion Canal Project:

- The Ben Gurion Canal Project was a proposed plan to create a waterway through the Israeli-controlled **Negev Desert** from the tip of the **Gulf of Aqaba** to the **Eastern Mediterranean** coast.
    - The Gulf of Aqaba is an **eastern arm** of the **Red Sea** that lies between the Israel's southern tip and south-western **Jordan**.
- It will act as an alternative to the **Egyptian-controlled Suez Canal** that starts from the **western** arm of the **Red Sea** and passes to the south eastern **Mediterranean** through the northern **Sinai Peninsula**.
- It will take away **Egypt's monopoly** over the **shortest** route between **Europe** and **Asia**.
- It was **first** envisioned by the **US** that aimed to use **nuclear weapons** for its creation.
    - But this plan never progressed.
- It was named after Israel's founding father **David Ben-Gurion** (1886-1973).
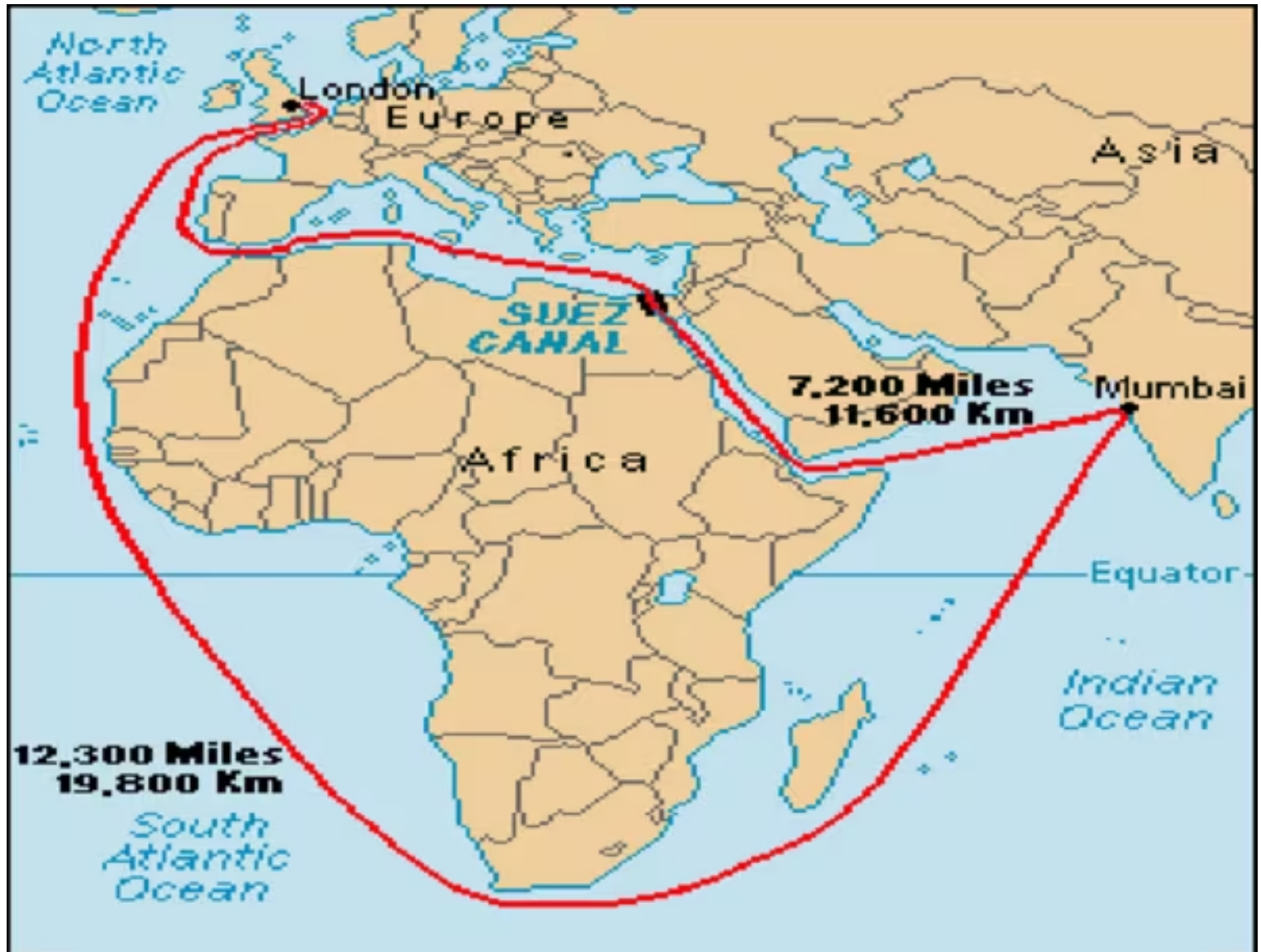
[ref- turkiye newspaper]

About the Suez Canal:

[ref-ISS africa]

- The Suez Canal is an **artificial sea-level waterway** that connects the **Mediterranean** and **Red Seas** through the **Isthmus of Suez**.
- It is **world's biggest shipping** bottleneck that controls most of the world trade.
- It ensured that ships travelling between **Europe** and **Asia** would **not** have to travel the longer way that passes around the **continent** of **Africa**.
- It was launched in **1869**.
- It had reduced the distance between **London** and **Mumbai** by more than **41**%.
- It remains **perennially congested**, despite being **widened** and **deepened** over the years.
- **Egypt** collects all the toll revenue generated, as it has sole authority and control over it.
- It has been focal point of both the **1967** and **1973 Arab-Israeli wars**, and the **1956** war of Egypt with the UK, France, and Israel.

- ○ Every war aimed to gain control over it, due to its strategic location and importance for trade.

[ref-IE]