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New Suez Canal boosts Egyptians' confidence during tough times: Sisi

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Egypt President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi announced on Thursday that the New Suez Canal, apart from its expected economic and strategic benefits, has given Egypt a confidence boost during a challenging time.

During his speech in the canal city of Ismailia, where the inauguration of the 35-kilometer long waterway took place, El-Sisi added that, "completing such an achievement within a short period of time is a source of pride for Egyptians."

El-Sisi, who changed into civilian clothes after donning his military uniform earlier in the day, focused some of his speech on the turmoil Egypt has faced over the past two years.

"The Suez Canal wasn't the only achievement by the Egyptians, they also said 'no' to terrorism," the president stated as his words were met with applause.

Egypt has seen a rise in bomb attacks since the 2013 ouster of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi following nationwide protests against his rule. El-Sisi came to power after winning the subsequent 2014 presidential elections.

"We have been fighting terrorism, and will definitely win [the battle]," El-Sisi said assertively.

He also heaped praise on Al-Azhar, Egypt's highest Sunni authority, and its scholars for ideological opposition to religious extremism.

By the end of his speech, El-Sisi gave the go-ahead for the New Suez Canal to operate.