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News / Business / Global trade disruptions leading to rising temperatures: UNCTAD

Global trade disruptions leading to rising temperatures: UNCTAD

This assumes significance as India is witnessing extreme heat waves with the national capital recording its highest ever temperature of 49.9°C on Wednesday.

Written by [Ravi Dutta Mishra](#)

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In India, cities such as Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Hyderabad are also experiencing worsening heat stress with temperatures surpassing 50°C in several parts of the country.
Representational/Express archive

Amid the ongoing Red Sea shipping crisis that has forced global shipping lines to take longer routes, United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has said that global trade disruptions are causing ships to spend more days at sea causing a surge in the emission of greenhouse gases.

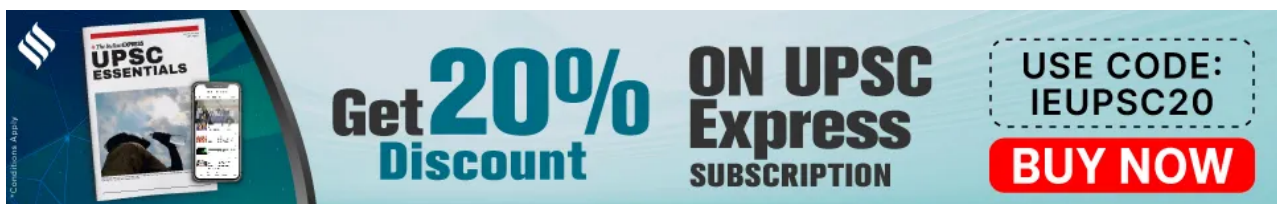
Since the attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebel forces began in the Suez Canal last year in October, hundreds of ships have been diverted around the Cape of Good Hope, adding about 10 to 15 days of voyage time resulting in higher emission. Reuters reported that more than 600 vessels have been rerouted since the attacks began in October.

A large container ship's journey from China to Germany, for example, emits 38 per cent more carbon dioxide, or 4.32 million kilograms, if it goes around Africa instead of through the Suez Canal, according to Reuters.

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“Global disruptions are causing ships to spend more days at sea and emit higher levels of greenhouse gases, highlighting the growing unreliability and uncertainty of our interconnected world. Against this backdrop, UN Trade and Development Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan spotlighted the urgent need to make global production and distribution networks more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient,” the UNCTAD report said.

As per UNCTAD, transits passing the Suez Canal in the Red Sea area decreased by 42 per cent by February this year compared to its peak. The Suez Canal is one of the most important links for global trade and enables a more direct route for shipping between Europe and Asia.



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Due to blocking of the crucial trade route, global shipping lines are forced to take longer routes via the Cape of Good Hope that adds extra days, higher fuel consumption and higher greenhouse gas emission. By the first half of February 2024, 586 container vessels had been rerouted, while container tonnage crossing the canal fell by 82 per cent as per the UNCTAD.

The report said that for the first time, the world faces simultaneous disruptions in two major global maritime trade waterways, with far-reaching implications for [inflation](#) and food and energy security. Since November 2023, escalating attacks on ships in the Red Sea have been compounding disruptions in the Black Sea caused by the war in [Ukraine](#) and in the Panama Canal due to climate-induced droughts.

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