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THURSDAY JANUARY 18, 2024  
RAJAB 6, 1445

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## Student in Dubai loses 70kg, beats diabetes

**DUBAI**  
BY ANJANA KUMAR  
Senior Reporter

As a child, Vatsal Shah, now 17, grappled with obesity, hypertension and diabetes. He used to weigh around 140kg when he was just 13.

Today, the Indian student in Dubai has overcome those challenges – and he did it in just 18 months, dropping around 70kg in the process. He now nudges the scales at a relatively light 73kg.

The transformation from an overweight, ailing boy to a healthy and confident youth was not easy.

### Will to succeed

“There were times I lacked the will power... But I would quickly get back on the journey. I failed countless times, but I lifted myself to get back onto my path of good health and well-being,” he told Gulf News.

The sacrifices bore fruit and Vatsal saw his health and self-confidence improve.

To motivate other children struggling with weight issues, he shared videos of his journey on his Instagram account, launched a website with workout videos, presented a TEDx talk at school, and published a book.

**SEE ALSO P3**

# Red Sea attacks choke global trade as regional tensions grow

US RELISTS HOUTHIS AS TERRORISTS; DAVOS FORUM MULLS ECONOMIC FALLOUT

**DUBAI**  
BY JUSTIN VARGHESE  
Your Money Editor

Top executives of international corporations have flagged a bleaker outlook on how the Red Sea crisis will impact global trade.

Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Vincent Clerc, CEO of Danish transport giant Maersk, cautioned that the disruption to global shipping caused by the attacks on vessels in the Red Sea will probably last at least a few months.

Echoing similar concerns at the forum, the CEO of Saudi oil giant Aramco Amin Nasser said that prolonged attacks by the Houthis on ships would lead to a shortage of tankers due to longer voyages and a supply delay – hurting prospects of the sector even further.

### Diversion of sea routes

The latest comments come as a wave of missile and drone strikes on ships in the Red Sea continue to force many companies to re-direct their cargoes around Africa.

Maersk and other large shipping lines have instructed hundreds of commercial vessels to stay clear of the Red Sea, sending vessels on the longer route around Africa in response to attacks on shipping by Houthi militants.

### TROUBLE ON HIGH SEAS

Attacks by Al Houthis on ships plying the Red Sea continue to cause what is now considered among industry experts as the biggest disruption to global trade since the pandemic.

2,000

ships forced to divert routes since November to avoid attacks

20% of global trade transits through Bab Al Mandab Strait

29

vessels have been attacked by Al Houthis since November

The alternative route around South Africa's Cape of Good Hope adds 10-14 days to the journey.

Aramco can bypass the Bab Al Mandab strait near Yemen, from where the Houthis launch attacks, via a pipeline connecting its eastern oil facilities with its western coast and giving it quicker access to the Suez Canal, Nasser said.

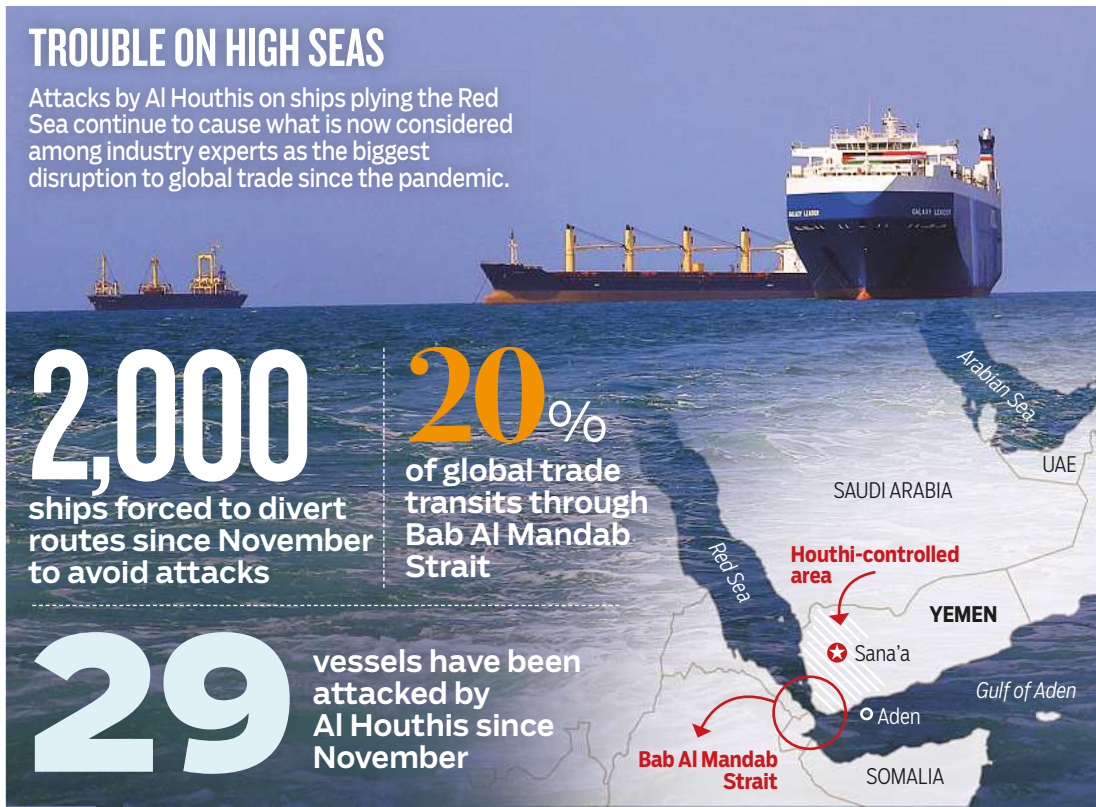
### Back on terror list

Meanwhile, the Biden administration yesterday returned the Houthi militants to a list of terrorist groups, US officials said, in the latest attempt by Washington to stem attacks on international shipping.

Officials said the ‘Specially Designated Global Terrorist’ (SDGT) designation, which hits the group with sanctions, was

aimed at cutting off funding and weapons the Houthis have used to attack or hijack ships in vital Red Sea shipping lanes. “These attacks fit the textbook definition of terrorism,” said one of three administration officials who briefed reporters ahead of the announcement on condition of anonymity.

— With input from agencies  
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