



MEDIA STATEMENT

DWS sets a revised completion timeline for raising of the Tzaneen Dam Wall project in Limpopo

11 June 2025

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has revised a completion date for the raising of Tzaneen Dam Wall project which was scheduled to be completed in March this year. The overall progress of the project is now 46% complete and the revised completion date of the construction project is now set for March 2026.

The Tzaneen Dam Wall Raising Project was resumed on 06 June 2023 and is part of the Letaba River Water Augmentation Project (GLeWaP). It involves raising the dam wall by 3 metres, which will significantly increase the dam's storage capacity to meet the growing water demands and improve water security in the Limpopo Province. The additional supply of water will assist in households, in the agricultural sector, as well as the industrial sector.

Mr Anthony Bhasopo, from DWS' Water Resource Infrastructure Development has expressed satisfaction in the progress of the project and has highlighted the Department's commitment to ensure that the project is finalised within the stipulated time.

"The Department has made strides since the beginning of the project in 2023, even though there were some unforeseen incidents that hampered with progress to complete it within the stipulated timeline. We have however progressed well and achieved significant milestones of the project, and we are confident that the revised timeline will be met. This project will ensure that the objective to meet the projected growing primary water requirements for the next 20 years in the region is finally realised", said Mr Bhasopo.

The Tzaneen Dam was originally completed in 1977, and it features a mass concrete gravity spillway flanked by earthfill embankments. The existing ogee-type spillway is 91.44 metres long and has a crest level of 723.90 metres above sea level (masl). The non-overspill crest measures 1,063.5 metres with a crest level of 730.60 masl. The embankments are protected by interlocking concrete blocks on both upstream and downstream faces. The upgrade includes replacing the current ogee spillway with a more efficient labyrinth spillway.

The dam's current gross storage capacity is 157.3 million cubic metres (m³) and the project will increase the total storage capacity by 35.7 million m³. Following completion of the project, the new capacity will be 193 million m³.

The construction project that has been carried out includes:

- Demolition of the upper section of the existing ogee spillway.
- Construction of a new labyrinth spillway to increase discharge capacity.
- Strengthening of the earthfill embankments for improved dam stability.

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- Realignment of the permanent access road downstream of the dam.
- Additional supporting and safety-related works.

Up to date, the breakdown of the overall progress is as follows:

- Temporary fencing around the site.
- Temporary access road from Deerpark and river diversion pipeline.
- Realignment of the permanent access road, which is 20 % complete.
- Embankment strengthening, which is 36% complete.
- Tongue wall construction, which is 19 % complete.
- Labyrinth spillway construction, which is 11% complete.

The project enabled 241 people to be employed, which includes the main contractor and sub-contractors. Females count to 76, and the youth count to 108.

END

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