



water & sanitation

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Water and Sanitation
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INTERNET ARTICLE

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DWS shuts all five sluice gates opened at the Vaal Dam

Three weeks after opening the five sluice gates at the Vaal Dam, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has recently closed the last of the five sluice gates that were opened at the dam following the desired reduction in water inflows into the dam.

The Department released water from the Vaal Dam on Thursday, 11 February 2021, in anticipation of rainfalls expected over the Orange River System.

These rains were as a result of the weather pattern that was building up in the Mozambican Channel, which was expected to bring rains that would impact on the Orange River System. The upshot of the flows from these rains were anticipated to raise the levels of Integrated Vaal River System (IVRS) and the Vaal Dam in particular.

Three gates were opened on 11 February 2021 and another two on the 12th February to raise the outflows out of the dam following rapid increases in its levels to above 100%.

Departmental spokesperson, Sputnik Ratau, said there was a need to accommodate the expected rains that would have an impact on the Orange River System, as well as adding onto the already rising water levels in the system.

He said the closure of the last gate was after a decision by the Vaal Orange River System (VORS) Extreme Flood Management Committee, which has been monitoring the dam on a daily basis.

Ratau said the assessment by the VORS on 04 March 2021 determined that sufficient water outflow from the Vaal Dam had taken place to allow the closure of the fifth and last gate.

The other four gates were closed over the last two weeks, guided by the dam's levels, as well as the amounts of inflows and outflows.

"We are pleased to say the release of the water has taken place safely, with no incidents of flooding or damage to property being reported. This is testimony to the fact that the Department adheres to the highest safety standards when carrying out work such as this", said Ratau.

The sluice gates were previously opened in 2017, 2015 and 2012.

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