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Rawal Dam Spillways Closed as Water Levels Stabilize

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The spillways of Rawal Dam, a key water reservoir supplying Islamabad and Rawalpindi, were closed on July 27, 2025, after authorities successfully lowered water levels following a precautionary release. The action, coordinated by the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration, was prompted by recent monsoon rains that had pushed the dam's water level to a near-capacity 1,750 feet.

To mitigate the risk of overflow and potential flooding in downstream areas, the spillways were opened at approximately 6:00 AM. Emergency agencies including Rescue 1122 and the Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) were deployed to monitor bridges, low-lying areas, and local waterways. The release lasted nearly 12 hours, lowering the reservoir level to a safer 1,747 feet before the spillways were shut.

Local officials described the move as part of a routine water management protocol. The Assistant Commissioner of Nilore oversaw field operations, and no flooding incidents were reported. The Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad, Dr. Hassan Waqar Cheema, stated that the successful draining of excess water ensures a steady supply to the twin cities while avoiding unnecessary strain on the Soan River and Korang Nullah, two vulnerable waterways connected to the dam.

Rawal Dam, with a full capacity of 1,752 feet, plays a critical role not only in water supply but also in flood mitigation for the region. Authorities emphasize the importance of closely monitoring weather patterns during Pakistan's increasingly erratic monsoon seasons. Officials have also called for responsible public behavior around reservoirs during rainy periods, urging citizens to stay away from banks and bridges when water releases are in progress.

The event has sparked renewed attention to the state of water infrastructure in the region. Experts argue that while local response was swift and effective, the country's aging water systems require upgrades to withstand extreme weather events. They advocate for expanded storage capacity, improved forecasting systems, and modernized flood control mechanisms.

As Pakistan continues to grapple with climate variability, the ICT administration's timely and coordinated response at Rawal Dam highlights the need for practical, localized strategies. Continued investment in infrastructure and disaster preparedness will be essential to safeguarding both urban and rural communities during future rain and flood events.