

North Korea's Hwanggang Dam Believed to Be Discharging Water; Authorities Move to Protect Border Residents

- Authorities to implement border area emergency response manual if Pilsung Bridge water level reaches 1.0 meters

The Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment (MCEE, Minister Kim Sungwhan) analyzed satellite imagery* of the border area captured at approximately 8:47 p.m. on July 20 and estimated that a partial discharge had taken place from North Korea's Hwanggang Dam.

* The MCEE monitors the border area using satellite imagery two to four times a day.

The discharge is believed to have been carried out in response to forecast heavy rainfall over North Korea's Imjingang River basin from July 20 to 21, following an earlier period of heavy rain from July 17 to 19. As of 9:00 p.m. on July 20, the water level at Pilsung Bridge upstream of Gunnam Dam stood at 0.77 meters, below the 1.0-meter threshold for evacuating recreational visitors. However, the water level is expected to gradually rise due to the discharge from Hwanggang Dam.

Accordingly, if the water level at Pilsung Bridge reaches the threshold for evacuating recreational visitors, the MCEE and relevant agencies will respond in accordance with the border area emergency response manual to ensure the safety of local residents and visitors by patrolling downstream of the dam and directing recreational visitors and anglers to evacuate to safe areas.

Song Ho-seok, Director General for Water Resources Policy Bureau at the MCEE, said, "We will continue to closely monitor the water level at Pilsung Bridge while conducting additional satellite imagery analysis, and work closely with relevant agencies to ensure that residents in the border area are not affected."