



AUTOMATIC DAM SHUTTER OPENING AND FLOOD DETECTION SYSTEM

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Abstract: Dams play a very important role to hold and conserve water for optimal usage based on seasonal needs. Water Management plays a very important role in mitigating the current issues of water distribution and utilization. As there are lot of hazards related with the existence of the dams, it has become a necessity to develop a proper monitoring system regarding the opening of the dam gate to retain a safe water level in dams. Exploring usage of Embedded System for improving the safe utilization of dams, water flow and prevention of dam gate corrosion. This project intends to use microcontroller for monitoring and controlling the water distribution management by usage of various sensors, control valves, automatically & proactively manage outflow during crisis by using statistical data of the environment. This project report describes the design and construction of Automatic Dam Gates Opening and Flood monitoring system using a water level detector and rain drop sensor. The system is capable of continuously monitoring the water level in the reservoir, moisture in the catchment area and opens or close the dam gates based on the conditions in the environment. Additionally, it gives early warning about the flood conditions. Moreover, raindrop sensors detect precipitation intensity, aiding in the assessment of flood risk and the implementation of timely interventions. The system is made up of simple components, including an ESP8266, a water level detector, moisture sensor and a raindrop sensor. The servo motors are used for opening and closing of the gates. To measure the water flow released from the reservoir, flow sensor is used near the gates. The ESP8266 is used as a controller to programmed the system components.

Key Words -Dam Gate Control, Embedded System, Flood Monitoring, ESP8266.

I. INTRODUCTION

Effective water management has become increasingly important due to the limited availability of usable water resources. Unpredictable weather events such as intense rainfall, sudden tidal changes, and other natural phenomena often result in natural disasters, leading to higher mortality rates, contamination of drinking water, agricultural challenges, and potential negative impacts on a nation's economy. The construction of dams helps in addressing these issues by creating water reservoirs for future use, safeguarding water from pollution, and reducing conflicts and overuse. As a result, dams play a crucial role in the sustainable management of water resources.

1.1 Purpose of Project:

Dams serve as a major source of water supply for urban areas and also play a vital role in supporting agricultural activities. Despite technological advancements, traditional methods are still commonly used for managing and monitoring dam gates and for measuring water levels and other critical parameters. Several factors can lead to dam failure, with overtopping caused by excessive flooding being one of the most frequent. To mitigate such risks and ensure continuous monitoring of water levels, the Internet of Things (IoT) has emerged as a valuable solution. IoT enables real-time data acquisition on dam conditions, allowing authorities to make timely and informed decisions to prevent disasters. Maintaining an optimal water level in dams is crucial to prevent operational and environmental issues. Traditionally, this task has been performed manually, requiring constant supervision by multiple operators. Manual operation often leads to inaccurate control of water release, resulting in water wastage and inefficiencies due to the lack of real-time data on water levels and inflow rates. The proposed system integrates water level sensors with an Arduino platform. These sensors continuously monitor water levels and transmit the information to a web server via an IoT module linked to the Arduino. Authorized personnel can access this data remotely over the internet, enabling them to make swift decisions regarding dam gate operations to avoid emergencies. The foundation of this project lies in the integration of Embedded Systems and IoT technologies. Real-time monitoring is achieved by interconnecting physical sensors to the web. Water level sensors are strategically installed in the dam and linked to an ESP8266 module, which processes and uploads water level data to an online platform. Every fluctuation in water level is communicated instantly to the control room through the internet, using the Blynk application, enabling prompt alerts to nearby residents and thus minimizing risks to human life and property. Additionally, rain sensors and moisture sensors are

incorporated into the system to provide supplementary information about environmental conditions near the dam, enhancing flood prevention capabilities.

1.2 Problem Statement

The goal of this project is to design and implement an automated system for dam gate operation and flood detection, utilizing a microcontroller integrated with various sensors and actuators to ensure safe and efficient water management.

1.3 Objective

The main objective of the automatic dam shutter control system is to promote efficient, safe, and timely regulation of water levels in dams by automating the opening and closing of gates based on real-time sensor data.

The specific objectives include:

- Enhancing public safety and reducing potential risks associated with flooding.
- Optimizing the management and distribution of water resources.
- Improving the monitoring of dam structural health through continuous observation.
- Strengthening disaster preparedness by providing early warnings and proactive control mechanisms.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Project

1.4.1 Scope:

- Continuous real-time water level monitoring through sensor networks to enable early flood detection.
- Automated dam gate control, dynamically adjusting shutter positions based on detected water levels to mitigate flood risks.
- Alerts and notifications sent via GSM or IoT modules to inform authorities and local communities about rising water levels.
- Cloud-based data storage facilitating long-term analysis, trend monitoring, and predictive modeling.
- Remote monitoring and control capabilities through integration with mobile applications or web platforms.

1.4.2 Limitations:

- Sensors operating in harsh environmental conditions require frequent calibration and maintenance to maintain accuracy.
- The system's effectiveness may be compromised in remote regions lacking internet connectivity or during power failures.
- Mechanical malfunctions in dam shutters could result in improper water release, potentially increasing the risk of flooding.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

Water scarcity remains a pressing concern in India, largely due to ineffective dam operations and insufficient water conservation strategies. A key challenge lies in the manual management of dam gates, which becomes especially problematic during unpredictable events such as floods or heavy rainfall. Manual interventions during emergencies are not only time-consuming but also pose serious risks.

Numerous studies have focused on monitoring water levels and automating dam gate control. Some of the notable contributions are summarized below:

2.1 IoT Based Water Supply Monitoring and Controlling System:

Water conservation is essential for human survival, yet due to insufficient monitoring, water wastage through tank overflows and pipeline damage is common. This paper presents a survey conducted in Aurangabad city, highlighting issues like water overflow, pipeline leakage, and inefficient manual management. The study stresses the need for technological intervention to enhance water distribution and minimize wastage. [1]

2.2 Automatic Gate Control and Water Level Reservoir Using GSM Technology:

This research focuses on continuous monitoring of dam water levels to prevent dam gate collapse caused by excessive water accumulation. It emphasizes the importance of monitoring water quality parameters such as temperature and pH. A PIC16F877A Microcontroller was employed to automate water level monitoring and flood warnings, promoting better water conservation practices. [2]

2.3 Wireless Disaster Monitoring and Management System for Dams:

This paper proposes a real-time communication architecture for monitoring dam water levels and flow density to improve disaster management. Highlighting the devastation caused by heavy rainfall and cloudbursts in June 2013, the study attributes significant property and life losses to poor inter-dam communication and lack of timely updates on dam conditions. [3]

2.4 Dam Gate Level Monitoring and Control Using IoT:

The main goal of this study was to implement water level monitoring and dam gate control using IoT technologies. The authors developed a monitoring and control system, validated through simulations using the Proteus platform, to ensure efficient performance under various scenarios. The project is centered around real-time IoT-based methodologies for optimal dam management. [4]

2.5 Arduino-Based Automatic Dam Monitoring and Alert System:

This work addresses the automation of dam river systems, treating them as cascaded single-input single-output (SISO) systems or as a single-input multiple-output (SIMO) system. The researchers employed an internal model controller (IMC) design to ensure robust control despite nonlinear system dynamics. The project showcases simulation results using a nonlinear river model, emphasizing the need for engineering solutions to streamline control and automation processes. [5]

2.6 IoT Based Water Level Monitoring System for Lakes:

This paper introduces a water level monitoring and management system for lakes, using Raspberry Pi as the central controller. Designed for village water storage management, the system operates in both wired and wireless environments and incorporates GSM technology for communication. The authors highlight the increasing feasibility of using smartphones with advanced computational and graphical capabilities for such applications. [6]

III. SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

3.1 System Description:

This system utilizes an ESP8266 microcontroller to actively monitor and manage flood conditions. It integrates an ultrasonic sensor and a flow sensor to measure water levels, along with a rain sensor to assess rainfall intensity. These sensors continuously provide real-time data to the ESP8266. Upon detecting elevated water levels or intense rainfall, the ESP8266 can automatically trigger a motor to adjust or open the dam shutters, effectively managing water discharge to minimize flood risks. Additionally, the system is capable of sending immediate alerts to authorities or residents, enhancing flood preparedness and safety.

The flood monitoring system operates by persistently observing reservoir water levels and surrounding weather conditions. The step-by-step procedure for implementing this system is as follows:

- **Component Installation:** The ultrasonic sensor and rain sensor are strategically positioned in flood-prone regions and connected to the ESP8266 microcontroller.
- **Microcontroller Programming:** The ESP8266 is programmed to collect and process data from both sensors.
- **Blynk App Integration:** A Blynk account is set up, a project is created, and an authentication token is generated to link the microcontroller with the mobile application.
- **Continuous Data Monitoring:** The ESP8266 reads and transmits sensor data in real time, which is displayed on the Blynk app interface.
- **Flood Detection and Notification:** If the measured water level surpasses the specified threshold, the system triggers instant alert notifications via the Blynk app to the responsible authorities. Rainfall alerts are also sent to users.

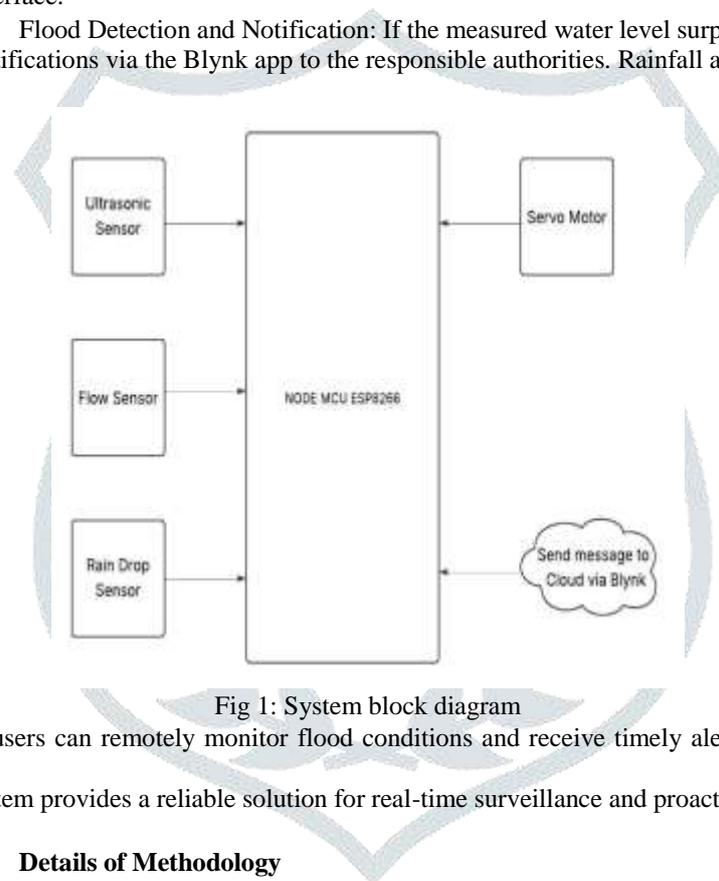


Fig 1: System block diagram

Through the Blynk platform, users can remotely monitor flood conditions and receive timely alerts from anywhere with internet connectivity.

Thus, the flood monitoring system provides a reliable solution for real-time surveillance and proactive flood risk management.

3.2 Details of Methodology

3.2.1 ESP8266 Microcontroller:

- The ESP8266 is a Wi-Fi-enabled microcontroller that functions as the core processing unit of the system.
- It collects data from the attached sensors and processes this information to monitor water levels and rainfall intensity.
- Based on the data collected, it determines whether to automatically open the dam shutter or send alerts.
- Additionally, it has internet connectivity, allowing for remote monitoring and notifications via the Internet of Things (IoT).

3.2.1 Ultrasonic Sensor:

- The ultrasonic sensor is a device used for measuring distances by emitting ultrasonic waves to determine the water level in the dam.
- It continuously measures the distance between the sensor and the water surface to track changes in water levels accurately.
- When the water level exceeds a set threshold, the sensor triggers the system to either activate the dam shutter or send out flood alerts.

3.2.2 Rain Sensor:

- The rain sensor detects rainfall presence and its intensity.

- It features a sensing pad that activates when raindrops make contact, converting these signals into digital or analog data.
- By evaluating rainfall intensity, the system can predict rising water levels and take proactive measures.
- This input is crucial for determining whether the dam shutters need to be opened in response to heavy rainfall, which can rapidly increase water levels.

3.2.3 Flow Sensor:
 This sensor measures the rate of water flow through the dam, providing real-time data on water discharge.

The ESP8266 processes the flow data to ensure that the water release rate is sufficient to reduce reservoir levels without causing flooding downstream.
 The sensor is key in calculating the volume of water being discharged, which is vital for accurate flood management.

3.2.4 Servo Motor:
 The servo motor is integrated with the dam shutter mechanism and is controlled by the ESP8266. It allows precise adjustments to the shutter's position, enabling either partial or full opening depending on real-time water levels and flow rates.
 Unlike a basic motor, the servo motor offers controlled movement, allowing the ESP8266 to set specific shutter angles, making the system more adaptive to changing conditions.

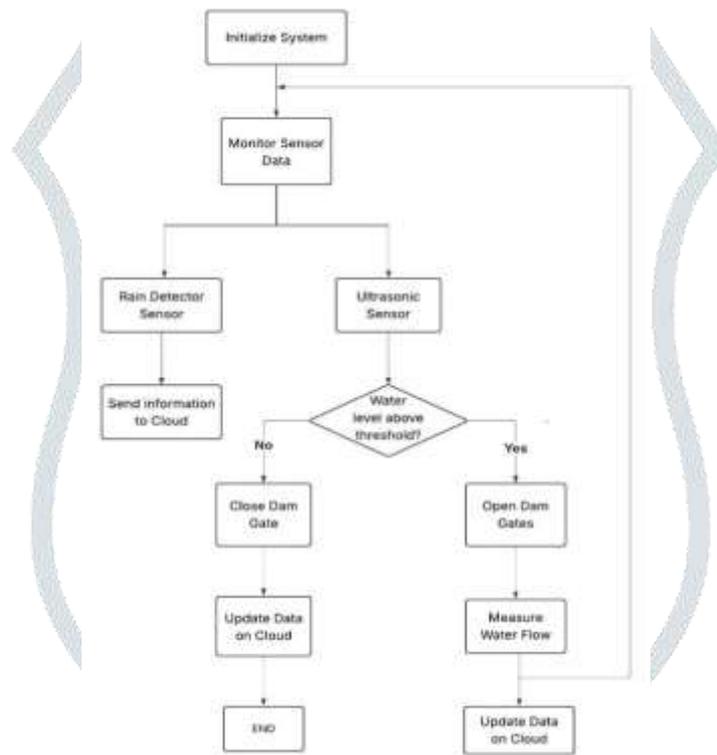


Fig 2: Methodology of the project

3.3 System Workflow:

3.3.1 Normal Operation:

In normal conditions, the system continuously tracks water levels, rainfall, and flow rates, ensuring the shutter remains closed when necessary.

3.3.2 Automated Shutter Adjustment during High Water Levels:

When the water level exceeds a critical threshold, the ESP8266 commands the servo motor to slowly open the shutter, allowing controlled water release.

The flow sensor provides real-time feedback, helping the system maintain the discharge rate within safe parameters.

3.3.3 Alert and Notification Activation:

If high water levels, sustained rainfall, or dangerous flow rates continue, the system triggers alerts to local authorities and nearby residents.

These alerts provide essential information, such as water levels, flow rates, rainfall data, and the actions taken by the system, ensuring a timely response.

3.3.4 Continuous Monitoring and Real-Time Data:

The system continuously tracks rainfall, water levels, and flow rates in real-time using its sensors.

Real-time data is transmitted to the Blynk App, allowing users to monitor environmental conditions remotely.

- All sensor readings, including rainfall detection, are updated live, providing users with up-to-date and valuable information.
- This data facilitates early decision-making and improves system transparency via IoT-based monitoring.

IV. HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE ARE COMPONENTS

4.1 Hardware components:

4.1.1 ESP8266 (NodeMCU):

The NodeMCU is an open-source platform that combines both hardware and software, centered around the affordable ESP8266 System-on-a-Chip (SoC). Developed by inexpensive Systems, the ESP8266 integrates key computer components like a CPU, RAM, Wi-Fi connectivity, and a modern operating system along with a software development kit (SDK). Its versatility makes it a popular choice for a wide range of Internet of Things (IoT) applications.

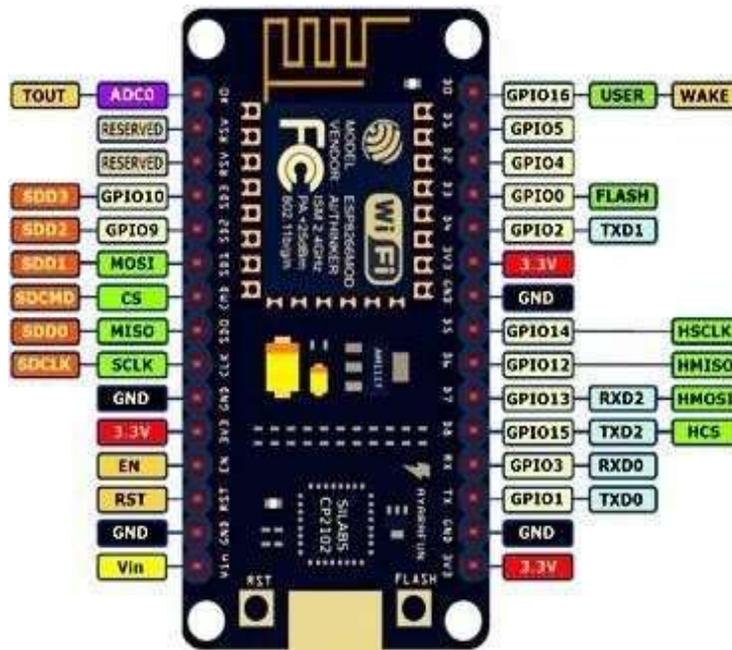


Fig 3: ESP8266 Node MCU

4.1.2 Ultrasonic Sensor:

In automated dam gate systems, ultrasonic sensors are employed to measure water levels. They emit ultrasonic waves and determine water depth by measuring the time it takes for the sound waves to bounce back. This information enables the system to operate the dam gates automatically and issue alerts when water levels cross predetermined limits.

4.1.2.1 Specifications:

- Operating Voltage: 5V DC
- Operating Current: 15 mA
- Measuring Range: 2 cm to 400 cm (0.02 m to 4 m)
- Accuracy: ±3 mm
- Frequency: 40 kHz
- Interface: 4 Pins (VCC, Trig, Echo, GND)
- Trigger Pulse Width: 10 μs
- Response Time: <50 ms

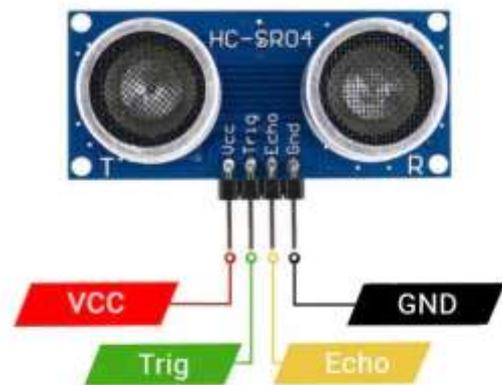


Fig 4: Ultrasonic Sensor

4.1.3 Rain Drop Sensor:

A raindrop sensor is designed to detect the presence of rain. It consists of a rain detection board and a control module that processes the analog signal and converts it into a digital output. These sensors find applications in various fields such as automatic windshield wiper systems in vehicles, agricultural irrigation control, and smart home automation systems.

4.1.3.1 Specifications

- Operating Voltage: 3.3~5Vdc.
- Output:
 - Digital (D0) – TTL switching signal output.
 - Analog (A0) – Analog output signal.
- Raindrop Sensor Board Area: 40 x 50 mm.
- Double sided FR4.
- Sensor Dimensions: 31x14 mm.
- Fixing Screw Hole: 4x M3.
- On board LED sensor status indicator.



Fig 5: Rain Drop Sensor

4.1.4 Flow Sensor:

The flow sensor measures the rate at which water flows through the dam. This information is crucial for managing the discharge rate, ensuring that water is released at a controlled pace to prevent reservoir depletion or downstream flooding.

Specifications

- Operating Voltage: 5V – 18V dc.
- Flow Range: 1 - 30 liters per minute (varies by model)
- Output Pulse Frequency: Flow Rate is proportional to the frequency of output pulses (typically around 4.5 pulses per liter for the YF-S201 model).
- Output Type: Digital signal (pulses per second), typically a Hall effect sensor generates pulses when water flows through the sensor.
- Maximum Pressure: 1.75 MPa
- Connector: 3-pin (VCC, GND, Signal)

4.1.5 Servo Motor:

A servo motor is used to precisely adjust the dam shutter by positioning it at specific angles. This controlled movement allows the system to manage water release accurately based on real-time conditions.

4.1.5.1 Specifications:

- Operating Voltage: 4.8V - 6V
- DC
- Torque: For SG90 (small servo): ~1.8 kg.cm at 4.8V
- Rotation Range: 0° - 180° (can be set to intermediate angles for partial opening of the shutter)
- Operating Speed: ~0.1s per 60° at 4.8V (may vary by model)
- Signal Type: PWM (Pulse Width Modulation) control signal
- Size: SG90: 23mm × 12.2mm × 29mm

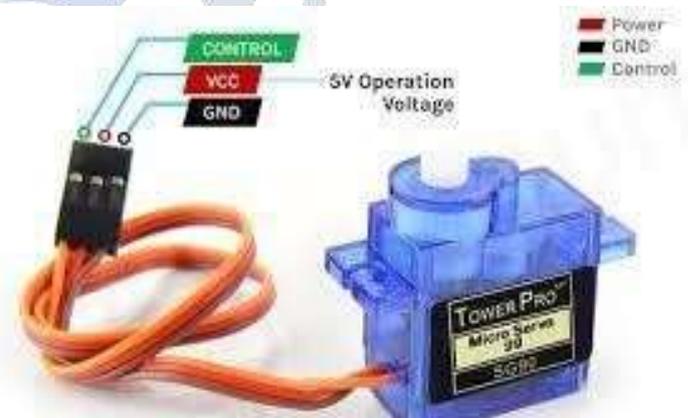


Fig 7: Servo Motor

4.2

Software Components:

4.2.1

Blynk App Integration:

- Blynk is an Internet of Things (IoT) platform that enables developers to design mobile applications for monitoring and controlling IoT devices via smartphones.
- In this project, integrating the Blynk app allows remote monitoring of water levels, flow rates, rainfall, and the operation of the dam shutter.

4.2.1.1

Purpose of Blynk in the Project:

- **Real-Time Monitoring:** Offers a live dashboard displaying data from the water level sensor, rain and flow sensor.
- **Remote Control:** Facilitates remote operation of the servo motor that controls the dam shutter.
- **Alerts and Notifications:** Sends alerts to users' smartphones when critical water levels, flow rates, or rainfall intensities are detected.

4.2.1.2

Software Requirement:

- **ESP8266:** Must be programmed to connect to Blynk's cloud servers over Wi-Fi.

- **Blynk Mobile App:** Available on Android and iOS, where users can create an account and build a project dashboard with various widgets for monitoring and control.

- **Blynk Library:** The Arduino code for the ESP8266 must include the Blynk library to establish communication between the microcontroller and the mobile app.

4.2.1.3 Key Features of Blynk Integration

- Use of Gauge or Label Widgets to display real-time readings for water level, flow rate, and rainfall intensity.

- LED Widgets to indicate system status.

- The ESP8266 transmits live data (water level, flow rate, rainfall) to the Blynk app through virtual pins.

- Users can conveniently monitor dam conditions anytime, anywhere via their smartphones with internet access.

4.2.2 Steps for Implementing Blynk Integration:

4.2.2.1 Create a Blynk Account and Set Up a Project:

- Download the Blynk app and register an account.

- Start a new project by selecting ESP8266 as the hardware model and save the provided Authentication Token (this token links your ESP8266 with the Blynk app in the code).

4.2.2.2 Configure the Dashboard with Widgets:

- Add necessary widgets to monitor sensor outputs (like water level and flow rate) and to control the servo motor.

- Assign virtual pins to each widget (e.g., V1 for water level, V2 for flow rate, V3 for rain detection).

4.2.2.3 Program the ESP8266 with Blynk Integration Code:

- Install the Blynk library into the Arduino IDE and include it in the project code.

- Program the ESP8266 using Auth Token, Wi-Fi creds, and assigned virtual pins to connect with the cloud server.

- Write code to send sensor data to Blynk and to receive servo motor control signals from the app.

4.2.2.4 Testing and Calibration:

- After uploading the code to the ESP8266, verify the system through the Blynk app to ensure that real-time data updates and remote control are functioning correctly.

- Test notification features to ensure alerts are triggered when thresholds are exceeded.

Blynk integration brings several benefits to the Automatic Dam Shutter Opening and Flood Detection System, making it more efficient, accessible, and responsive. Users can remotely manage and monitor the dam's operations, enhancing safety and convenience.

V. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

5.1

Project Hardware Setup

- This project presents a functional prototype of an Automatic Dam Shutter Control and Flood Detection System.

- The setup includes a water tank simulating a dam reservoir, a servo motor-driven gate, a flow sensor, and a rain sensor.

- Sensors continuously monitor the water level and pressure, with all data being transmitted in real-time to the Blynk app through the NodeMCU (ESP8266).

- When water levels exceed a critical threshold, the system automatically triggers the dam gate to open.

- The prototype effectively showcases the application of IoT and automation technologies in intelligent dam management.



Fig 8: Model image-1

Fig 9: Model image-2

5.2 Software Outputs and System Operation



Fig 10: Blynk Display-1



Fig 11: Blynk Display-2

- The system effectively oversees and manages dam operations by utilizing real-time data transmitted to the Blynk app.
- It provides live updates on water level, pressure, rainfall detection, gate position, and emergency alerts.
- When the water level falls below 8 cm, a danger alert is triggered, and the servo motor automatically opens the dam gate.
- As water is discharged, the flow sensor detects a corresponding rise in water pressure.
- Updates regarding gate movement and rain detection are reflected instantly on the monitoring dashboard.
- Overall, the system supports prompt flood mitigation and promotes efficient water regulation through the integration of automation and IoT technologies.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.1 Blynk App Integration:

The system sends real-time data to Blynk app showing:

- Water Level (cm)
- Water Pressure (L/min or arbitrary units)
- Gate Status (Open/Close)
- Rain Status (Rain Present/No Rain)
- Danger Alert (ON/OFF)

6.2 Water level Indication:

- Ultrasonic sensor measures the distance between sensor and water surface.
- If distance is < 8 cm, the Danger alert turns ON.
- Critical levels:
 - < 7 cm → Danger alert triggered.
 - 7–8 cm → System commands gate to open.
 - 8cm to 15 cm → Considered safe.

6.3 Gate Operation

- When critical water level is reached, the ESP8266 commands servo motor to open the gate.

- Gate status is shown on Blynk as a colour change (e.g., pink for open).

- When the gate opens:
 - LED blinks to indicate gate activity.

Display Result

- Water level reduces gradually (e.g., 8 cm → 7 cm → ... → 1 cm).



Fig 12: Blynk

6.4 Water Pressure Indication

- Flow sensor detects water discharge from the gate.
- Water pressure is displayed as numeric value (0–30).
- When gate is open, the pressure value starts increasing from 0 upward.

6.5 Danger Alert

- Shown as a red LED when water level < 8 cm.
- As water discharges and level reduces below danger threshold, the alert turns off automatically.

6.6 Rain Status Monitoring

- Rain sensor detects rainfall.
- Blynk app shows "Rain Present" status when detected.
- Helps indicate rising water level risk during rainfall events

6.7 System Behavior

- Real-time environmental feedback allows automated and safe control of dam gate.
- Reduces flood risk by maintaining optimal water level and providing early alerts.
- Visual indicators on Blynk app make system transparent and user-friendly.

VII. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

7.1 Conclusion

The Automatic Dam Shutter Opening and Flood Detection System successfully integrates IoT and embedded technologies to enhance flood management by automating dam gate operations. By utilizing sensors to track water levels, flow rates, and rainfall, the system ensures real-time control of the dam shutters, minimizing the need for manual operation and increasing overall safety. The integration with the Blynk app allows for remote monitoring and management, delivering timely alerts to authorities for swift action. This project offers a dependable and cost-efficient solution ideal for flood-prone regions, showcasing how technology can be effectively used in environmental monitoring and disaster mitigation. Looking ahead, future upgrades could involve implementing predictive analytics through machine learning and expanding sensor networks to support broader water management applications.

7.2 Future Scope

- **Predictive Flood Forecasting:** Introduce machine learning algorithms to analyse historical and real-time sensor data, enabling more accurate flood predictions and proactive dam shutter control.
- **Broader Sensor Integration:** Incorporate additional sensors to capture more comprehensive data, such as water quality parameters and external weather conditions, enhancing the system's decision-making capabilities.
- **Robust Power Backup Solutions:** Implement a solar-powered system paired with battery backups to maintain uninterrupted operation during electricity failures, ensuring system reliability.
- **Advanced Alert Mechanisms:** Upgrade the notification system to include SMS alerts and automated voice calls, providing quicker and broader dissemination of critical warnings to authorities and local communities.
- **Cloud-Based Data Management:** Utilize cloud storage for logging sensor data, enabling long-term historical analysis and supporting better water resource management and flood mitigation strategies.

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