

Baling floods force shut down of Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant



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GEORGE TOWN, July 6 (Bernama) -- Operations at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) had to be halted due to the high levels of raw water turbidity (Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU)) as a result of the floods and water surge phenomenon in Baling Kedah on Monday.

Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow said the WTP was shut down from 8 am to 12 pm today, causing water supply disruptions in several areas in the state.

“The muddy and murky raw water from Sungai Muda, Kedah has made it difficult for the WTP to function well,” he told reporters after attending the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony with the International Advertising Association World Congress, here today.

Chow said as an immediate measure, the Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) had channelled water from the Mengkuang Dam to the Sungai Dua WTP and a nearby plant so that clean water could be supplied to consumers.

“PBAPP only on rare occasions draws water from the Mengkuang Dam which can last for up to 100 days to distribute water to 85 per cent of consumers in the state,” he said.

Meanwhile, PBAPP chief executive officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa, in a statement today said the water pressure in all pipelines throughout Penang was expected to be restored by 12 pm tomorrow.

He said PBAPP had initiated emergency response engineering work after the turbidity levels of raw water pumped from Sungai Muda through the Sungai Dua Canal to the Sungai Dua WTP reached 3,000 NTU at 6 am today.

According to him, the Sungai Dua WTP produced more than 80 per cent of the treated water that was supplied throughout the Penang daily and the sharp increase in the turbidity of raw water from Sungai Muda was beyond PBAPP’s control.

“However, PBAPP has responded to this crisis situation in a timely and appropriate manner,” he said.

Jaseni said PBAPP would continue to monitor the turbidity of water abstracted from Sungai Muda and draw water from the Mengkuang Dam to ensure a safe level of turbidity of raw water for the Sungai Dua WTP.

The 4 pm disaster claimed three lives while more than 1,400 residents had to be evacuated to three relief centres. Seven houses were washed away by strong currents and about 70 other houses damaged.