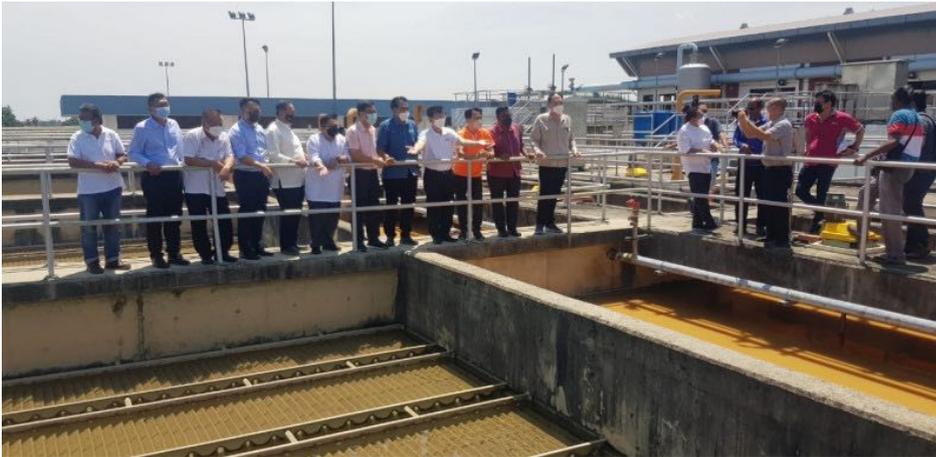


Penang water issues to continue over next few days: PBAPP

Water company says situation unstable due to weather, ability of Kedah state authorities

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The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) team shows how the water supply looks before being treated (right pool) and after being treated (left pool). – IAN MCINTRYE/The Vibes pic,

BUTTERWORTH – Consumers in Penang must be prepared to experience low pressure or no supply at all for the next few days. It will take longer than expected to resume normal water supply to some 1.8 million people here.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa clarified the present situation is quite unstable owing to several factors, including the weather and the ability of Kedah water authorities to resume normal supply.

The state's water supply was hit by an inflow of muddied waters, which clogged the treatment system yesterday following the tragic flooding upstream of Gunung Inas forest reserve in Baling, Kedah last Sunday.



Mud sediments clogging up the treatment system. – IAN MCINTRYE/The Vibes pic, July 7, 2022



Treatment panels are left with stains due to the weather conditions and mud floods. – IAN MCINTRYE/The Vibes pic, July 7, 2022

It is learnt that the turbidity level of the raw water entering the plant here has skyrocketed to three times more than normal levels.

While normal water supply was expected to resume back to normal as of noon today, in a media briefing around 1.30pm here, Jaseni explained that the main treatment intake plant at Sg Dua here is only expected to be operating at full capacity by 10pm tonight.

He also urged inhouse contractors and high-rise building management operators to ensure their internal system was functioning to cope with the surge in pressure when supply is restored in stages.

The PBAPP needs to build up the pressure along the submarine cables before restarting treatment and pump stations at Bukit Dumbar on the island and Bukit Minyak on the mainland to ensure the remaining affected households get back their supply.

In light of the new developments, Jaseni is hopeful that all households will receive their normal supply by the Hari Raya Adil Adha, which falls on Sunday. “We also have to be wary if another severe thunderstorm may trigger more floods in the Baling (Kedah) area and we may be facing a recurrence.

“We need to be watchful.”

“The only alternative is for Kedah to quickly gazette the Ulu Muda catchment area as a fully protected forest reserve boundary. “This prevents encroachment or inland clearing,” Jaseni said.

He urged consumers to monitor updates from PBAPP, which will be uploaded on its official Facebook account.

Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow made an impromptu visit to the treatment plant here, where he observed the round-the-clock efforts to restore normal water supply. He said another approach is to revive the negotiations to import raw water from Perak, saying that it is a win-win situation for both neighbours.

In its latest statement, PBAPP said that water supply services for 50% of the consumers who were affected yesterday had been restored as of noon today. Further recovery will be done in stages, it said.

As of 6pm, the localities mostly affected by the water cuts include Butterworth, Bayan Baru, Jelutong, Seri Delima and parts of George Town.

Unaffected areas are presently getting their water supply from the Air Itam and Teluk Bahang dams while on the mainland, those covered by Penang’s largest dam Mengkuang were spared from the agony of no supply.

Penang Hindu Sangam chairman P. Murugiah said that there are some orphanage homes that have no supply of water in Bayan Lepas and Gelugor and are appealing for drinking water and food. Murugiah identified the homes as Penang Agape Welfare Organisation and Rumah Seri Cahaya Punitha.