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Penang asks for federal funding to complete mega water projects

State water provider says it is trying to reduce dependence on Sungai Muda, especially after the river went almost dry last month after a barrage malfunction upstream.

Bernamea



PBAPP chief executive officer K Pathmanathan has urged the federal government to complete the Mengkuang dam expansion project. (File pic)

GEORGE TOWN: Penang needs the support of the federal government to complete the Mengkuang dam expansion project and implement the Sungai Perak raw water distribution scheme.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) CEO K Pathmanathan said these projects were needed to offset any risk of a major water cut.

He said the Sungai Muda barrage incident last month, during which water almost dried up in the river due to a barrage malfunction upstream, had caused hardship for 454,000 consumers in Penang.

“If another Sungai Muda water disruption occurs, it will badly affect the water supply to Penang.

“This will affect multinational manufacturing companies in the Bayan Lepas free trade zone, Batu Kawan industrial park and Bukit Minyak industrial area,” he said in a statement today.

Pathmanathan said Penang’s main source of water was Sungai Muda, even though it also draws raw water from the river at Lahar Tiang in Seberang Perai.

He said part of Sungai Muda is in Kedah. The Ulu Muda forest complex catchment area is also outside the jurisdiction of the Penang government and PBAPP.

“The development of raw water resources for Penang is the responsibility of the federal government. Water supply services come under the Water Services Industry Act 2006 and National Water Services Commission Act 2006.

“Only the federal government has the funds, administrative authority and resources to enable interstate raw water distribution. This includes the Sungai Perak raw water distribution scheme.”

Pathmanathan appealed to the federal government to intervene and ensure a stable water supply for Penang as soon as possible.