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A lesson learnt from Baling floods 2 years ago averts Penang water supply cut today



Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan today said yesterday's floods in Baling had washed down debris into Sungai Muda. - NSTP/DANIAL SAAD

GEORGE TOWN: A water supply cut in Penang was averted despite murky water in Sungai Muda due to the floods in Baling, Kedah.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan today said yesterday's floods in Baling had washed down debris into Sungai Muda.

This had caused the river water to become turbid or murky at the corporation's Lahar Tiang intake in Seberang Prai, he added.

"At 5pm yesterday, the river water turbidity level was 400 NTU (nephelometric turbidity units) at Lahar Tiang. The normal level is 200 NTU.

"Following news reports of flash floods and an alert from the National Water Services Commission, we activated our emergency response plan for Sungai Muda.

"We drew down water from the Expanded Mengkuang Dam to 'dilute' the raw water entering the Sungai Dua water treatment plant.

"Up to 1pm today, we have managed to avert a water cut in Penang due to the floods in Baling."

Sungai Muda is Penang's primary raw water resource.

The corporation takes water from this river daily and pumps it to the Sungai Dua water treatment plant, Penang's largest and most important water treatment plant.

The swift action followed a lesson learnt from a previous mishap.

On July 6, 2022, a Baling flood had caused the turbidity of Sungai Muda water to shoot up to 3,000 NTU at Lahar Tiang.

The mishap forced the corporation to reduce raw water removal from Sungai Muda, which, in turn, caused treated water production at the Sungai Dua plant to drop.

This affected about 465,000 consumers.

"Today, however, there was no water cut, 24 hours after the Baling floods yesterday."

"But we'll continue to implement the emergency response plan for the next 48 hours as a precaution."