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## PM's 'green light' for Perak water supply: One of the best news for Penang in 51 years, says PBAPP



GEORGE TOWN: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's announcement that Perak will supply treated water to Penang is one of the "best water news for Penang" in the past five decades, says Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP).

On Sunday, Anwar announced that Sultan of Perak, Sultan Nazrin Shah, and the Perak government under Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad, agreed to provide water supply to Penang through the Kerian Integrated Green Industrial Park.

According to PBAPP chief executive officer K. Pathmanathan, Penang needs to urgently tap a second major water resource to meet its water needs and drive further socioeconomic progress by 2030.

He said the last major water supply project that was implemented by the federal government for Penang was the Muda River (Sungai Muda) Water Scheme.

It was opened by the second prime minister, the late Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, in 1973.

"Over the last 51 years, Penang has become highly dependent on Sungai Muda as its one and only raw water resource.

"The Perak - Penang water project is expected to benefit Penang with seven key considerations in mind.

"PBAPP would like to express its sincere gratitude to (Datuk Seri) Anwar for his landmark announcement. We need his kind leadership to guide us towards realising the Perak - Penang water project by 2030," he said today.

Pathmanathan said one of the key considerations was water supply sufficiency beyond 2030.

He said, in February this year, Penang's water consumption was 927 million litres per day (MLD).

"Water demand is projected to reach 1,532 MLD by 2030 and 1,844 MLD by 2040.

"PBAPP is implementing its Water Contingency Plan 2030 (WCP 2030) to ensure water supply sufficiency until 2030. Beyond 2030, Penang needs the Perak - Penang water project and/or strategic desalination and wastewater recycling projects.

"Another key consideration is an increased water supply capacity to support further socioeconomic progress. Penang's phenomenal GDP growth since the 1970s proves that it is a state with unlimited socioeconomic potential. However, due to its limited land area, Penang's water resources are limited.

"Accordingly, to progress further over the next 20 years, Penang needs to tap a second major water resource like the Perak -Penang water project," he said.

Another key consideration, Pathmanathan noted, was direct supply to water consumers in the Seberang Prai Selatan (SPS) district.

He said the water from Perak would be pumped into the southern area of the mainland.

"As such, the Perak - Penang water project will improve and stabilise water supply for about 79,956 consumers in SPS. In 2023, water consumption in SPS was estimated to be 182 MLD. Water demand in this district is projected to reach 285 MLD by 2030.

"Moreover, there will also be more water for other water consumers in the Seberang Prai Utara (SPU), Seberang Prai Tengah (SPT) and Penang island.

"When the Perak - Penang water project comes online, it will supply water directly to SPS. It is likely that PBAPP need not pump water from the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in SPU to SPS.

"A higher volume of treated water from the Sungai Dua WTP may then be redirected to about 491,153 water consumers in SPU, SPT and Penang island. Hence, water consumers in districts other than SPS will also enjoy indirect benefits," he added.

Pathmanathan also pointed to reduction of climate change risks, noting that in recent years, climate change had altered the rainfall patterns in Penang's water catchment areas (WCAs).

He said, on Monday, the Air Itam Dam's effective capacity was 37.3 per cent while the Teluk Bahang Dam's effective capacity was 54.7 per cent.