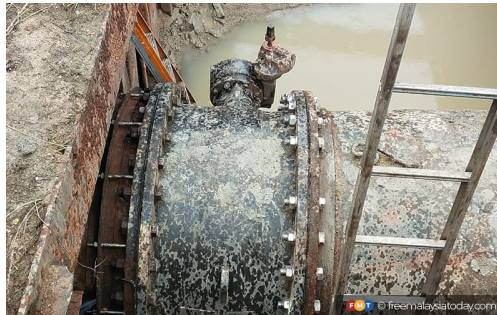


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Delay in maintenance work due to funds shortage, says Penang water company

The Penang Water Supply Corporation says RM180 million in funds to replace old infrastructure was only received recently.



TASEK GELUGOR: The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) could not replace its 50-year-old control valves earlier as it did not have sufficient funds, its CEO K Pathmanathan revealed.

He said the state water company “needed a lot of funds” to replace the ageing infrastructure.

“Recently, PBAPP’s new directors approved RM180 million for replacement works alone. This is the largest amount of funds we ever received,” he said when asked about the delay in replacing the valves.

He was speaking to reporters after visiting the Sungai Dua water treatment plant here with chief minister Chow Kon Yeow.

The old control valve.

Penang is bracing for a four-day-long scheduled water cut from tomorrow until Jan 14.

Pathmanathan said control valves could last 30 to 50 years, depending on several factors such as environmental conditions and vibrations caused by nearby traffic.

Meanwhile, Chow said he instructed PBAPP to “stick to its schedule” in carrying out the replacement work, adding that the latter had announced the water cuts a month ago.

“The people of Penang are now watching to see if we can complete this task according to the plan and schedule. (There should be) no room for mistakes.”

He went on to outline the three things PBAPP must accomplish, the first being replacing the valves and other infrastructure in 22 locations around the state in the first 24 hours.

Secondly, PBAPP must stick to its target of restoring water supply to 33% of 590,000 consumers, mainly in Seberang Perai, by 6am on Friday.

Water supply should be fully restored to the remaining consumers in Seberang Perai and Penang island between 6am on Saturday and 6am the following day.

And the last item, he said, was for PBAPP to provide constant updates on the repair work by posting at least three updates on its social media accounts daily.