

18-3-2024

Penang water company urges Penangites to reduce water usage by 10pc amid ongoing dry season



GEORGE TOWN, March 18 — The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) has urged all water consumers in the state to immediately reduce their water consumption by 10 per cent amid the ongoing dry season.

PBAPP chief executive officer K. Pathmanathan said that the estimated water consumption in the state hit 927 million litres per day (MLD) yesterday compared to the daily average of 877 MLD recorded in 2023.

“This represents a sudden 50 MLD surge in water consumption year-on-year. Such a surge in a water-stressed state like Penang is rather unwise and unsustainable because it has caused issues in some areas in the Barat Daya and Seberang Prai Selatan districts,” he said in a statement today.

Pathmanathan also said that the effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam had dropped by 0.8 per cent, from 38.1 per cent on Friday (March 15) to 37.3 per cent yesterday.

As such, he said PBAPP was compelled to draw down more than 11 MLD from the dam and the Air Itam Water Treatment Plant (WTP) had to produce 25 MLD of treated water to meet increased water demand.

“The implementation of the Air Itam Dam Action Plan 2024 (AIDAP 2024) has increased the effective capacity of the dam by 4.5 per cent, from 32.8 per cent on Feb 5 to 37.3 per cent on March 17.

“One of the key factors that will determine the continued success of AIDAP 2024 is moderate

“PBAPP has been pumping 33 MLD of water from the Sungai Dua WTP into the Air Itam water supply service area to gradually increase the effective capacity of the dam,” he said.

Pathmanathan, however, said that if PBAPP is unable to continue pumping 33 MLD of treated water from Seberang Perai to Air Itam due to abnormally high water consumption, AIDAP 2024 would not work.

“Moreover, there will be more widespread water supply issues in the Barat Daya and Seberang Prai Selatan districts,” he said.

Meanwhile, Pathmanathan said that from March 14 to yesterday, the water level of Sungai Muda stood between 1.71m and 1.89m, which was below the “2.0m safe level” for water abstraction at the Lahar Tiang Intake in Seberang Perai.

He said that the level of the 120 billion-litre Muda Dam in Kedah that releases water into Sungai Muda reportedly dropped to 48.6 per cent on Friday (March 15).

Pathmanathan said that the PBAPP will continue to abstract as much raw water as possible from Sungai Muda daily to meet Penang’s water demand.

“PBAPP personnel are on standby to draw down a maximum of 600 MLD from the Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD), as and when we are unable to abstract sufficient water from Sungai Muda,” he added.