

PBAPP to draw water from Mengkuang Dam if Sg Muda water level continues to drop



18 April 2024 | BERNAMA

GEORGE TOWN (April 18): Perbadanan Bekalan Air Pulau Pinang (PBAPP) will drawdown the strategic drought reserve of the Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD) if it cannot abstract sufficient raw water from Sungai Muda.

Its chief executive officer K Pathmanathan said a maximum of 600 million litres of raw water per day (MLD) would be drawn from the Mengkuang Dam if Sungai Muda continues to shrink due to dry and hot weather.

“As of Tuesday [April 16], the water level of Sungai Muda at the intake of the Lahar Tiang PBAPP in Seberang Perai dropped to 1.72 metres (m), which is below the safe level of 2m and yesterday [Wednesday] the water level of Sungai Muda dropped to 1.61m at Lahar Tiang.

“PBAPP continues to abstract sufficient raw water from the river without using EMD, however, PBAPP also successfully conducted a drawdown trial run from EMD in preparation for a worst-case scenario,” he said in a statement on Thursday.

Currently, PBAPP abstracts about 1,200 MLD from Sungai Muda for optimal production of treated water at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (LRA) and the LRA produces 85% of the treated water distributed in Penang daily, he said.

Pathmanathan said the maximum discharge capacity from the Mengkuang Dam is 600 MLD or about 50% of the raw water required by the Sungai Dua LRA to operate optimally.

He said as long as PBAPP can abstract 600 MLD of raw water from Sungai Muda and release 600 MLD from the Mengkuang Dam it will not cause unscheduled water supply disruptions in the state.

However, he said PBAPP is now on standby because Sungai Muda is Penang's main raw water source and it will monitor the river water level closely.

On Tuesday, Syarikat Air Darul Aman Sdn Bhd (SADA) said that the water level of the Sungai Muda showed a downward trend and there was a risk of water supply disruption in the Kuala Muda district due to the ongoing dry and hot weather.

On Wednesday, Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow said the water supply in the state was not affected thus far even though the water level of Sungai Muda which involves the operation of Sungai Petani and Pinang Tunggal LRA showed a downward trend.