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Water Levels At Two Penang Dams Remain Low - PBAPP



GEORGE TOWN, Aug 20 (Bernama) -- The current storage of raw water at two main dams in Penang remains low due to the abnormally dry weather that has persisted since the last quarter of last year 2023, said Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP).

Its chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said that as of yesterday, the effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam was at 27.6 per cent, while the Teluk Bahang Dam stood at 25.2 per cent.

“This phenomenon is not only affecting dams in Penang but also those in neighbouring Kedah and Perak. As of yesterday, the Muda Dam and the Beris Dam in Kedah had effective capacities of 7.8 per cent and 53.9 per cent, respectively, while the Bukit Merah Dam in Perak recorded 33 per cent.

“The Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD) in Seberang Perai, however, is not affected by the situation. This is because the dam is refilled through a pumped storage scheme that draws water from Sungai Kulim during wet seasons,” he said in a statement today.

In addition, he said that as of yesterday, the Sungai Muda river level at Penang’s Lahar Tiang Intake was 3.06 metres, which is more than 1.0 metre above the “2.0-metre safe level”.

Pathmanathan added that PBAPP is extracting raw water from this river daily for use at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Seberang Perai Utara (SPU).

He said that the Sungai Dua WTP produces about 1,026 million litres per day (MLD) of treated water with its service area covering the majority of areas in SPU, Seberang Perai Tengah (SPT) and Seberang Perai Selatan (SPS) as well as the highly populated areas in the Barat Daya district and some areas in Timur Laut district on Penang Island, including the Bayan Lepas Free Industrial Zone.

The Sungai Dua WTP serves approximately 465,000 consumers, which accounts for about 66.7 per cent of Penang’s water consumers, according to PBAPP data as per June 2024.

Pathmanathan also said that PBAPP has implemented several mitigation measures to protect the remaining dam reserves through the Air Itam Dam Action Plan 2024 (AIDAP 2024).

These measures include minimising drawdowns from the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam without inadvertently causing major water issues and tapping rainwater from two additional water catchment areas (WCAs), namely the Batu Ferringhi WCA and the Sungai Pinang WCA to refill the Teluk Bahang Dam during rainfall.

PBAPP has also taken steps to control pumps and valves in strategic areas to ensure water supply sufficiency during peak hours and minimise supply during off-peak hours, while working with the Penang government to request to the National Disaster Management Agency (Nadma) to conduct cloud seeding operations.

Pathmanathan once again seeks the kind support and cooperation from water consumers in the state to reduce daily water consumption to help prevent possible water supply issues.

He said that from Aug 1 to yesterday, the WCAs of the Air Itam Dam recorded 91 millimetres (mm) of rain, while the Teluk Bahang Dam recorded 164 mm.

However, he noted that the effective capacities of these dams have not increased because PBAPP has been drawing more water daily to meet the demands in Air Itam, Farlim, Teluk Bahang, Batu Ferringhi, Tanjung Bungah, and nearby areas.