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### Revenue from increased water tariffs will go to urgent projects, PBAPP pledges



GEORGE TOWN: The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) will use additional revenue from the increased domestic water tariff rates effective since February for developing urgently-needed infrastructure.

Its chief executive officer K. Pathmanathan said despite the increase, the tariff rate in Penang – which had limited raw water resources – remained among the lowest in the country.

"Penang is a water-stressed state with limited raw water resources and unlimited socio-economic potential," he said in a statement on Friday (April 26).

"PBAPP will generate additional revenue from the 2024 water rates and this additional revenue will primarily be used to help fund... development projects in support of the state government's Penang2030 vision.

"Among them are PBAPP's Water Contingency Plan 2030 (WCP 2030) projects to tap three additional secondary raw water resources – the Expanded Mengkuang Dam, Sungai Kerian and Sungai Perai – as well as to increase water treatment capacity in Seberang Perai and treated water pumping capacity to Penang island.

"Other projects include a new 1,350mm Sungai Perai river-crossing' pipeline; additional 400 million litres per day (MLD) pipelines to boost the drawdown capacity of the Expanded Mengkuang Dam to 1,000 MLD in order to minimise the threats of future Sungai Muda mishaps; and pipeline replacement projects to avoid unscheduled supply interruptions and reduce non-revenue water (NRW) losses."

Pathmanathan added that water consumption in Penang has increased by about 63.6% over 25 years, from 536 MLD in 1999 to 877 MLD last year, and the state would have to focus on ensuring supply sufficiency.

Pathmanathan added that Penang's domestic water rate for the first 35,000 litres per month is the second lowest in the country.

"(It) is RM0.86 per 1,000 litres.

"Data shows that the majority of Penang domestic consumers (77.3%) were billed for 35,000 litres or less per month last year.

"In comparison, the average national domestic rate is RM1.00 per 1,000 litres.

"Every other licensed water supply operator in Peninsular Malaysia bills a higher average domestic rate, with the exception of Terengganu (RM0.69 per 1,000 litres)," he said.

Since February, PBAPP has imposed new domestic water rates in compliance with the new Federal Government regulations.

The new Water Services Industry (Rates for Water Supply Services) (Penang) (Amendment) Regulations stipulated the new water rates for Penang to be 62 sen per 1,000 litres for those who use 20,000 litres and below a month.

Rates for non-domestic water supply services are RM1.57 per 1,000 litres for those who use 35,000 litres and below.