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### PBAPP activates crisis management plan to keep taps running in Penang



GEORGE TOWN: The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) has initiated Phase 1 of its Crisis Management Plan to ensure sufficient water supply until September.

Its chief executive officer K. Pathmanathan said on Friday (July 26) that the actions taken include optimising water production at the Batu Ferringhi and Guillemard water treatment plants (WTP) without overly compromising the effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam.

He said this allows PBAPP to deliver as much treated water as possible to the service areas of the Waterfall and Sungai Pinang WTPs.

Others include stepping up production of treated water at the Air Itam WTP; controlling valves and pumping operations to deliver as much treated water as possible into the service areas of the Waterfall WTP and Sungai Pinang WTP to make up for the shortfall; deploying tankers and static tanks to affected areas to provide water during high-demand periods; controlling pumping operations during off-peak hours on weekends to optimise the refilling of three key reservoirs at Bukit Dumbar, Bukit Gedung and Teluk Kumbar; and managing abstraction from Sungai Muda for irrigation.

He said the state will also request cloud-seeding operations by the National Disaster Management Agency (Nadma) and Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF).

Pathmanathan said the current scenario of dry weather was causing temporary water supply issues in Penang.

"Abnormally low rainfall is causing water supply issues that are affecting about 7,400 consumers on Penang island.

"Low rainfall in the water catchment areas (WCAs) of the Penang Waterfall and Sungai Pinang WTPs, the nearest to the Titi Kerawang intake, has reduced the water available from these "traditional" raw water resources.

"In July, Penang Waterfall recorded a rainfall of 100.5mm while Sungai Pinang recorded 54mm.

"As a result, treated output from the Waterfall WTP has dropped by about 42.9%, from 14 million litres per day (MLD) to 8 MLD.

"Meanwhile, treated output from the Sungai Pinang WTP (which is dependent on the Titi Kerawang Intake) has dropped by 33.33%, from 7.2 MLD to 4.8 MLD.

"There is a resulting shortfall in water supplied to the following neighbourhoods, namely George Town, Air Itam, Mount Erskine, Balik Pulau, Lebuh raya Thean Teik, Tanjung Bungah, Pulau Betong and Bayan Lepas," he said in a statement.

He further added that PBAPP is defending the reserves of the Air Itam Dam under its Air Itam Dam Action Plan 2024 (AIDAP 2024), and also carefully managing supply in the service areas of the Teluk Bahang Dam and Batu Ferringhi WTP.

"Kedah is releasing water into Sungai Muda.

"However, the river level at PBAPP's Lahar Tiang Intake has dipped below the 2m safe level for 15 consecutive days since July 11.

"Accordingly, PBAPP is drawing down on the reserves of the Expanded Mengkuang Dam daily to supplement raw water abstraction from Sungai Muda," he said.