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## Perak-Penang water project comes to fruition: PBAPP



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GEORGE TOWN: The Perak-Penang water project, which was announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim last May, is finally coming to fruition.

The Energy Transition and Water Transformation Ministry's Water Supply Department has issued a public tender for the appointment of a consultant for physical works for the project.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said the ministry's public tender exercise to appoint the consultant for physical works clearly showed that the federal government is committed to implementing this project by 2030.

"The Penang government and PBAPP would like to thank (Datuk Seri) Anwar and the ministry for their strong support to realise the biggest water supply project for Penang in the past 51 years, since the opening of the Muda River Water Scheme in 1973.

"Our primary objectives are to sustain continuous good water supply, minimise water risks and ensure water supply sufficiency for a better future.

"We are working to further improve water supply services in Penang," he said today.

During the closing of the northern region Madani Rakyat 2024 programme on May 4 last year, Anwar said that the Sultan of Perak, Sultan Nazrin Shah, and the Perak government under Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad, had agreed to provide water supply to Penang.

He had said that the water supply would flow through the Kerian Integrated Green Industrial Park to Seberang Prai.

Under the first phase, the water supply would reach Seberang Prai, including Nibong Tebal and Sungai Bakap.

Pathmanathan said the Perak-Penang water project, driven by the prime minister himself, would present five key benefits to Penang particularly access to a second major water resource from the south (besides Sungai Muda in the north), lower risks of a water crisis during future prolonged dry seasons and water supply sufficiency for Penang beyond 2030.

He said it would also increase the water supply to support future economic progress in Seberang Prai Selatan (a targeted high-growth area) and a more stable and evenly distributed treated water supply in the entire state of Penang.

The federal allocation for the Perak-Penang water project is reportedly about RM1.7 billion.

The Sungai Perak Raw Water Transfer Scheme (SPRWTS), which it was originally known, was part of the Penang Water Supply Initiative 2050 (PWSI 2050) to mitigate Penang's raw water risks until 2030.

It was proposed following an independent masterplan study commissioned by PBAPP in 2009.

According to PBAPP, Sungai Perak was the best option as its raw water resource was presently underutilised.

As such, the Penang government and PBAPP have sought to tap Sungai Perak as the second or alternative raw water resource for the state since 2011.

In November 2023, the Perak government had agreed to sell treated water to Penang following a unanimous agreement between the state secretaries.

In a related development, Pathmanathan said PBAPP would start work on four Water Contingency Plan 2030 (WCP 2030) projects this year, with a total projected investment of RM824 million.

"This is in response to increasing water consumption driven by socioeconomic growth as well as climate change.

"The state government and PBAPP are working to expedite and implement these multi-billion ringgit water projects for Penang," he added.

The four projects are the new 13.0km x 1.8m treated water pipeline from the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) to Butterworth, the new 3.9km x 1.8m treated water pipeline from the Macallum Area to Bukit Dumbar, the new 114 million litres per day (MLD) Mengkuang Dam WTP and the new 114 million litres per day (MLD) Sungai Kerian WTP.