

Star Metro

THE STAR, WEDNESDAY 23 APRIL 2025

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Be prepared for changing weather patterns during this year's monsoon season in Johor >5



Vast and rugged terrain make air transport most viable option in Mulu >8



Perak's Kinta district biggest producer of sweet corn in Malaysia >9



Pipeline to progress

A total 23 projects will roll out simultaneously during Penang's scheduled water cut starting Friday. Residents are stockpiling containers or seizing the chance to travel over the weekend. >2&3

New facility: The Sungai Perai River-Crossing Pipeline is mounted on its own supporting structure in Mak Mandin, Butterworth. — LO TERN CHERN/The Star



STAR METRO WATCH

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Befrienders Ipoh in Perak is looking for hotline volunteers. Those interested can register before April 23. Training will be provided. For details, call or WhatsApp 012-534 0063.

JOB FAIR

Looking for a job? Head to myStarJob Fair on May 24 and 25, 11am-7pm at Mid Valley Exhibition Centre, Kuala Lumpur. For details, call 03-7967 1388 ext 1039 or 012-639 3994 or email events@thestar.com.my

E-SPORTS TOURNEY

Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) will have a PS5 FC25 tournament on May 25 at Padang Perbandaran MPAJ Pandan Indah during its car-free day. Registration fee is RM30. Register at <https://shorturl.at/r1BaM> or call 013-337 0961 for details.

MPBJ MATTERS

Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ) invites qualified companies to participate in Invitation to Offers for the installation of solar panels at several locations owned by the council: MBPJ Stadium, Kelana Jaya Sports Complex, Innovation Centre, MBPJ Library and BU3 community hall. Closing date is May 8. For details, email pengurusan_tenaga@mbpj.gov.my or call 03-7956 3544 ext 256. >PJ SEED (Social, Environment & Economy Development) community grant by MBPJ is accepting applications until May 30. For details, go to <https://rb.gy/d22yfh>

TRAFFIC MATTERS

The exit for heavy vehicles on the left lane at Seafield toll plaza on the North-South Expressway will be closed until midnight April 27 to facilitate pavement rehabilitation works. PLUS Malaysia Bhd is advising heavy vehicle users with a width limit to utilise the alternative route via the USJ toll plaza and Ebor toll plaza (southbound) throughout the duration.

ZONE EXPANSION

Rapid Bus Sdn Bhd is introducing two new zones and expanding the coverage of one existing zone for its on-demand service starting today. The two new zones are Terminal Puchong Utama – Puchong Prima and MRT Bandar Tun Hussein Onn–Taman Desa Baiduri. The existing Asia Jaya zone will be rebranded as PJ Sentral–Sections 7 and 17. This replaces the T786B route (LRT Asia Jaya – MRT Phileo Damansara). For details, visit www.myrapid.com.my

OPEN DAY

Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology (TAR UMT) is having an Open Day on April 26 and 27 from 10am-5pm across all TAR UMT campuses in Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Perak, Johor, Pahang and Sabah. For details, call 03-4145 0100 ext 3354 or visit www.tar.edu.my

CHARITY ART SHOW

Women's Centre for Change is organising a nine-day WCC Charity Art Exhibition Sale until April 27 at the Penang State Assembly Exhibition Hall from 10am to 4pm as part of their 40th anniversary celebration this year. It features over 70 pieces donated by both artists and collectors to raise funds towards supporting WCC's work to end violence against women and children. For details, call 016-448 0342 or 016-418 7535 (Karen).



Residents in Sri Bayu Apartment, Bayan Lepas, getting supply from a water tanker during a supply cut in January last year. — Filepic



Vijay (right) checking out the large buckets on sale at Yong's shop in Kampung Benggali, Butterworth. He plans to store enough water to last for at least three days.



Workers dismantling the temporary platform for the construction of the RM8.7mil Sungai Perai River-Crossing Pipeline (SP-RCP) in Mak Mandin, Butterworth. — ZHAFARAN NASIB/The Star

Penang braces for water supply interruption

Residents seem more prepared for 60-hour scheduled cut this time

By LO TERN CHERN
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DRINKS seller Mariah Mohd Darus considered disposing of her two large water containers after using them during the major water interruption in December 2023.

Luckily, she didn't because from this Friday, most of Penang will face another water cut. "The containers were taking up a lot of space, but fortunately I kept them."

"They'll come in handy again as each container can hold enough water to last a day," she said when met at her stall in Ampang Jajar, at Butterworth, Penang.

Each container, with a capacity of over 100 litres, will help Mariah continue her cooking and washing activities at the stall without major disruption to her business.

She recalled that during the previous water cut, the containers, which were filled in advance, helped her stay operational.

"During the last interruption, I stored water in these bins for cooking and washing. "When they ran low, I refilled

them using water supplied through tankers, since the cut lasted several days," she said.

Businessman N. Vijay, was among residents spotted shopping for a large water container to prepare for the scheduled water supply interruption.

"I am looking for something large enough to sustain the daily water needs of five people in my household."

"During the previous water cut, I did not store enough and water in my tank ran out. It was a struggle," said Vijay from Taman Riang, Butterworth.

I have learned from that experience. Now, I plan to store enough water to last at least three days, just in case the situation drags on.

"Not having water previously disrupted our daily routine - from cooking to bathing. I want to avoid going through the same stress again," he said.

Back-up plans

In Kampung Benggali, Butterworth, a plasticware seller identified only as Yong, has seen a steady stream of customers in recent days.

He said most of them were looking for storage containers ahead of the scheduled water supply interruption.

"During the last water cut, people were buying buckets in a panic."

"Some came in at the last minute and grabbed whatever sizes were left."

"I sold over 100 buckets of various sizes within just a few days," he recalled.

Yong believes that many of those customers are now better prepared and likely reusing the containers they had bought previously.

"This time around, although the rush is not as intense, I still have customers coming in every day. People seem more prepared," he said, adding that there was no panic-buying this time around.

Yong said bucket prices were based on capacity, with a 45-litre container priced at RM21, and larger 215-litre drums going for as much as RM250.

"People usually go for the mid-sized ones, big enough to store water for a family but small enough to carry or move around," he said, adding that

sales are expected to pick up as the date approaches.

While many residents are busy filling up buckets and containers, others have opted to go on holiday.

One of them is bank manager Loke Wei Lynn, who plans to travel to Hatyai, Thailand, with her husband and their five-year-old daughter.

"The timing actually works out well since it falls on a weekend, so we thought, why not turn it into a short family getaway?"

The family said they welcome the chance to unwind and spend time together.

"It's a good opportunity as Hatyai is nearby and easy to get to," she added.

Affected accounts

A total of 341,708 consumer accounts across all five districts in Penang will be affected by the scheduled water supply interruption from 10pm on April 25 to 10am on April 28.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) will undertake 23 major waterwork projects at nine locations across the state during this period.



Pathmanathan says this will be the only scheduled water disruption in Penang this year.



Chow (second from right) checking the progress of work on the pipeline diverted across the Ampang Jajar bridge on the river surface of Sungai Perai in Butteworth. — Courtesy of Buletin Mutiara

The planned works include the final connection of the RM8.7mil Sungai Perai River-Crossing Pipeline (SP-RCP) in Mak Mandin, repair of a leaking 700mm pipeline and six pump house upgrading works at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) as well as the replacement of a faulty 1.2m valve at a pipeline in Jalan Pengkalan Tambang.

The waterworks projects, aimed for completion within a span of 24 to 60 hours, will involve 800 PBAPP staff and 200 additional personnel from the Fire and Rescue Department, volunteers and local service centres.

During this period, PBAPP will mobilise 80 mobile water tankers and 182 static water tanks at key locations.

There will be 39 tankers and 95 tanks on the mainland, and 41 tankers and 87 tanks on the island.

Priority will be given to 12 hospitals and 20 dialysis centres across the state.

Infrastructure upgrades

PBAPP chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said the SP-RCP pipeline, with a 1.35m

diameter, had the potential to channel 290% more treated water across the river than the two existing 600mm pipelines mounted on the bridge across Sungai Perai in Ampang Jajar.

“The two existing 600mm pipelines spanning Sungai Perai are mounted on the bridge. This bridge is built to safely bear the load of regular vehicular traffic and not the additional load of water pipelines. The SP-RCP is mounted on its own supporting structure, about 3.31m above the high water level of Sungai Perai,” he said, adding that Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow had gone for a site inspection on Saturday.

Pathmanathan said the works were part of a broader plan to upgrade water services for 465,000 consumers connected to the Sungai Dua WTP.

“In 2024, PBAPP invested RM31mil to upgrade the maximum water treatment capacity of the Sungai Dua WTP to 1,342 million litres per day (MLD). Now, PBAPP is investing an additional RM25mil into projects to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of supplying water from the

Sungai Dua WTP.

“The successful completion of these projects will allow PBAPP to pump more water at higher pressure to 66% of its customers in Penang. These projects will also provide a more stable water supply and pressure, as well as facilitate faster water supply recovery from future scheduled and unscheduled water supply interruptions arising from mishaps in Penang.” he said.

Pathmanathan said this would be the only planned water supply interruption by PBAPP in 2025.

Scale of interruption

According to PBAPP, the scale of water supply interruption will vary by location.

A total of 43 areas in north-east district (DTL), two in south-west district (DBD), 54 in north Seberang Perai district (SPU) and 233 in central Seberang Perai district (SPT) will experience water supply interruption for 24 hours.

Water supply for 27 areas in DBD and 221 areas in south Seberang Perai district (SPS) is expected to be restored within

Scheduled water cut in Penang

Seberang Perai Utara (SPU)

Areas in the vicinity of the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP), Bagan Dalam, Bagan Jermal and Butterworth, as well as the southern-most reaches of Permatang Berangan, Sungai Puyu and Sungai Dua

Not affected

Bertam, Kepala Batas, Penaga, Pinang Tunggai, Tasek Gelugor and Telok Air Tawar, as well as most areas north of the Sungai Dua WTP in Sungai Dua, Sungai Puyu and Permatang Berangan

Seberang Perai Tengah (SPT)

Alma, Berapit, Bukit Minyak, Bukit Tengah, Machang Bubok, Padang Lallang, Penanti, Perai, Permatang Pasir, Permatang Pauh and Seberang Jaya

Not affected

Bukit Mertajam and nearby areas

Seberang Perai Selatan (SPS)

Batu Kawan Industrial Areas, Bukit Tambun, Jawi, Nibong Tebal (northern neighbourhoods), Simpang Ampat, Sungai Bakap (northern areas) and Valdor

Not affected

Southern-most areas of Nibong Tebal, Sungai Acheh and Sungai Bakap (service areas of the Bukit Panchor WTP)

Daerah Timur Laut (DTL), Penang Island

Batu Lanchang, Gelugor, George Town, Green Lane, Gurney Drive, Island Glades, Island Park, Jelutong, Komtar, Minden Heights, Sungai Dua and USM as well as a few neighbourhoods in Dato’ Keramat, Farlim and Pulau Tikus

Not affected

Air Itam, Farlim (north), Paya Terubong, Penang Hill, Pulau Tikus (majority of neighbourhoods), Waterfall, Mount Erskine, Taman Jesselton, Tanjung Tokong, Tanjung Bungah and Batu Ferringhi

Daerah Barat Daya (DBD), Penang Island

Balik Pulau (southern neighbourhoods), Batu Maung, Batu Uban, Bayan Baru, Bayan Lepas (including the Free Trade Zone areas), Bukit Jambul, Bukit Penara, Gertak Sanggul, Kampung Terang, Pantai Jerejak, Permatang Damar Laut, Pulau Betong, Taman Relau, Sungai Ara, Sungai Batu and Teluk Kumbar

Not affected

Balik Pulau (northern neighbourhoods) Sungai Pinang and Teluk Bahang

Timetable: water supply recovery in affected areas

Date	Time	Events
April 25 (Friday)	10pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partial shutdown of water supply operations at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Scheduled water supply interruption for 431,708 water consumers in 5 districts of Penang Commencement of 23 scheduled waterworks projects in 26 locations
April 26 (Saturday)	4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of all waterworks projects Commencement of water supply recovery operations
	10pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40% water supply recovery Seberang Perai: All areas in SPU and SPT Penang Island: All areas in DTL
April 27 (Sunday)	10pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 88% water supply recovery Seberang Perai: All areas in SPS except Kampung Sungai Baong, Kampung Wellesey, Taman Seruling Emas, Taman Widuri, Sungai Duri and Penang Prison Quarters Penang Island: All areas in DBD except Balik Pulau (southern neighbourhoods), Gertak Sanggul, Kampung Terang, Pulau Betong and Sungai Ara.
	10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full water supply recovery

Source: Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP)



48 hours.

The remaining 16 areas in DBD and 13 areas in SPS will have their water supply restored fully within 60 hours.

The duration of each area’s supply disruption will depend on its distance from the Sungai Dua WTP and its location within the water distribution network.

Areas nearer to the plant will experience fewer days of water cut compared to those living in elevated or remote areas, particularly in SPS and DBD.

Key industrial zones such as Bayan Lepas, Perai, Bukit Minyak, Batu Kawan and Penang International Airport are expected to have their water supply restored between 24 and 28 hours.

PBAPP estimated that 40% (136,683 consumers) will have their supply restored within 24 hours, 88% (300,185 consumers) within 48 hours and all 341,708 consumers within 60 hours.

For more information, see chart above, visit the PBAPP Facebook page or go to www.pba.com.my

Previous water woes

On Dec 19, 2023, Penang was struck by an unscheduled water supply disruption, affecting about 200,000 consumers due to a burst underwater pipeline measuring 1.35m in diameter at the bottom of Sungai Perai.

The leak sent water gushing on the surface of the river. Divers spent days fixing it.

After three failed attempts to patch the leak until the end of January last year, it was decided that the pipe could not be repaired.

A new 900mm pipe was constructed along the Ampang Jajar bridge to temporarily divert water across Sungai Perai.

The mishap served as a catalyst for the SP-RCP project.

From Jan 10 to 14 last year, about 590,000 consumers in Penang faced a water disruption due to urgent maintenance at the Sungai Dua WTP involving replacement of two leaking 1,200mm control valves.

The shutdown also facilitated ancillary works at 22 other locations statewide.