

28-10-2025

Heavy rains push Air Itam Dam to near full capacity for first time in four years



The Air Itam Dam effective capacity at 99.4% on 27.10.2025. © PBAPP 2025

GEORGE TOWN, Oct 28 — Penang's Air Itam Dam is nearly full for the first time in four years, reaching 99.4 per cent effective capacity following continuous rains over the past few days.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said the dam, which has a capacity of 2,159 million litres (ML), recorded 99.4 per cent effective capacity on October 26 and 27.

"The most recent previous high point was 93.4 per cent on December 2, 2021," he said in a statement today.

"PBAPP recorded a total of 526.5mm of rain in the Air Itam water catchment areas (WCA) over about two months (September 1 to October 27)," he added.

He said PBAPP is maximising raw water drawdowns from the Air Itam Dam for treated water production at the nearby Air Itam Water Treatment Plant.

"We will increase drawdowns from the normal 22 million litres per day (MLD) up to a maximum of 65 MLD, as and when required," he said.

He added that maximising drawdowns is necessary to avoid excess water being discharged from the dam through drains and rivers into the sea.

"PBAPP will not discharge water from the dam during storms or rainy days when tides are high, to minimise the risk of flooding in nearby low-lying areas," he said.

The Air Itam Dam remains temporarily closed to the public due to recent landslides caused by storms and will only reopen when it is safe to do so.

Pathmanathan said rainfall over the past two months has helped refill Penang's dams to comfortable levels, with more rain expected in November.

He said the Teluk Bahang Dam is now at 72.8 per cent effective capacity, while the Expanded Mengkuang Dam stands at 91.3 per cent.

PBAPP aims to achieve 80 to 85 per cent effective capacity for Teluk Bahang Dam by January 1 next year, before the start of the dry season.

He added that PBAPP will continue to optimise raw water abstraction from Sungai Muda.

"Following heavy rains in Kedah, the river level has been very high since October 24, ranging from 3.16m to 4.74m at the Lahar Tiang Intake in Seberang Perai Utara (SPU)," he said.