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Penang's Air Itam Dam filled to overflowing for first time in four years



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

GEORGE TOWN: The Air Itam Dam is on the verge of overflowing for the first time in four years.

Thanks to the rainfall over the past two months, Penang's dams have filled to comfortable levels, says the Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP).

Its chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said the effective capacity of the dam was recorded at 99.4% on Sunday and Monday (Oct 26 and 27), surpassing the previous high point of 93.4% on Dec 2, 2021.

"The primary cause is recent heavy rainfall in the dam's water catchment areas (WCAs).

"PBAPP recorded a total of 526.5mm of rain in the Air Itam WCAs in about two months between Sept 1 and Oct 27," he said in a statement on Tuesday (Oct 28).

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

He said PBAPP will increase drawdown from the normal 22 million litres per day (MLD) up to a maximum of 65 MLD, as and when required.

He said maximising drawdowns helps PBAPP avoid excess water discharges from the dam through drains and rivers into the sea at all costs.

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

He said the other two main dams in Penang recorded a positive increase in capacity, with the Teluk Bahang Dam currently at 72.9% and the Mengkuang Dam at 91.3%.

He said weather forecasts indicate that Penang can expect more rainfall in November.

He also said the Air Itam Dam's recreational areas remain closed to the public until further notice following landslides triggered by the recent storms.

He said the closure is a temporary public safety measure.

"PBAPP will reopen the dam for public recreation when it is safe," he added.