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5,500 consumers still without water after outage shuts down Sungai Dua plant



GEORGE TOWN: About 5,500 consumers in Penang remain without water after a power outage shut down the Sungai Dua water treatment plant, disrupting supply to 130,790 consumers.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said supply had been restored to 125,290 consumers, or 96 per cent of those affected, as of 4.30pm.

The remaining 5,500 consumers were expected to have their supply restored by midnight as personnel worked to normalise services, he said.

The outage occurred at 11.17pm yesterday following a major power supply disruption involving Tenaga Nasional Bhd. It halted pumping, water treatment and chemical dosing operations at the plant in Seberang Prai Utara.

"The backup power generators could not be deployed in time to prevent the shutdown.

"We immediately activated the emergency response plan to restore supply to affected consumers in various districts on the mainland and Penang island," he said in a statement.

Pathmanathan said restoring supply after a treatment plant shutdown took time because treatment units and pumps had to be restarted in sequence.

Chemical dosing operations also had to resume, trapped air had to be released from pipelines and water pressure gradually rebuilt before normal supply could be restored, he said.

The incident was the fourth reported power outage to affect the Sungai Dua plant.

"We are now assessing alternative backup power options to prevent similar disruptions, including battery energy storage systems and hydrogen-based power generation.

"Battery systems could potentially maintain critical plant operations during short power interruptions and the transition to backup power, while hydrogen-based generation is being assessed for its feasibility as an alternative electricity source," he added.

Pathmanathan apologised for the inconvenience and sought the patience and understanding of affected consumers.

Consumers can check the latest restoration updates on PBAPP's Facebook page.