

30-3-2026

Penang says water supply secure for two months amid dry spell



28.3.2026 | Kapasiti efektif Empangan Muda @ 7.19% | Effective capacity of Muda Dam @ 7.19%.

PBAPP chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said the Muda Dam capacity has dropped to a critical 7.19 per cent as of March 28 and can no longer release water into Sungai Muda after significant drawdowns earlier this year for irrigation. — Picture courtesy of PBAPP



28.3.2026 | Kapasiti efektif Empangan Beris @ 58.06% | Effective capacity of Beris Dam @ 58.06%.

The capacity of the 122,400 ML Beris Dam was at 100 per cent on January 1 and its capacity has dropped to 58.06 per cent as of March 28. — Picture courtesy of PBAPP

GEORGE TOWN, March 30 — Penang’s water supply is expected to remain stable over the next two months despite the prolonged hot and dry weather.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said the current reserves in the Muda Dam and Beris Dam in Kedah are sufficient to support water supply through April and May.

He said the Muda Dam capacity has dropped to a critical 7.19 per cent as of March 28 and can no longer release water into Sungai Muda after significant drawdowns earlier this year for irrigation.

The capacity of the 122,400 ML Beris Dam was at 100 per cent on January 1 and its capacity has dropped to 58.06 per cent as of March 28.

“In the period from February 20 to March 28, its capacity was reduced from 78.1 per cent to 58.06 per cent in 36 days,” he said in a statement issued today.

He said this reflects an average dip of 0.56 per cent per day (685MLD).

“At this dipping level of 685 MLD, the remaining reserves of the Beris Dam (71,065ML) should be able to last for about 68 days until the 20 per cent critical level is reached in mid-or late June,” he said.

The capacity of the 122,400 ML Beris Dam was at 100 per cent on January 1 and its capacity has dropped to 58.06 per cent as of March 28. — Picture courtesy of PBAPP

As such, he said Penang is not under immediate threat, but this also depends on avoiding further heavy drawdowns that could deplete Beris Dam prematurely, he added.

Sungai Muda is Penang's primary raw water source, from which PBAPP abstracts about 1,000 million litres per day (MLD), supplying water to some 465,000 consumers statewide.

Following the drop in Muda Dam levels, PBAPP has activated its Sungai Muda Contingency Plan 2026, including maximising river abstraction, drawing from the Expanded Mengkuang Dam, and maintaining water transfers to Penang Island.

Pathmanathan said these measures are helping to stabilise supply but they are not a complete solution as the Sungai Dua water treatment plant requires about 1,000 MLD of raw water daily.

He said PBAPP is carefully managing the effective capacities of Penang's three key dams to avoid water shortages.

As of March 28, the effective capacities of Air Itam Dam is at 69.38 per cent, Teluk Bahang Dam at 84.05 per cent, and the Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD) at 91.24 per cent.

He called on consumers to use water wisely until the next rainy season.

"Due to climate change, we are uncertain when the next rainy season will arrive to "recharge" the reserves of the key dams in Penang and Kedah to safe levels," he said.

He said domestic water consumption accounted for about 55.7 per cent (482 MLD) of the total consumption of water in Penang (865 MLD) last year.