

30-3-2026

## Water supply from Sungai Muda sufficient for two months, says PBAPP



GEORGE TOWN: Water supply in Penang is expected to remain stable at least until May despite the current hot and dry weather if there is no further large-scale release of water from Sungai Muda, Kedah.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk K.Pathmanathan said the current situation showed that the raw water source from Sungai Muda is still sufficient for about two months.

"The two main dams in Kedah, namely the Muda Dam and the Beris Dam, show a significant trend of capacity reduction since the beginning of this year, following the release of water for agricultural irrigation purposes.

"As of March 28, the capacity of the Muda Dam is at a critical level of 7.19 per cent while the Beris Dam is at 58.06 per cent.

"The Muda Dam is no longer able to release additional water into the Sungai Muda after experiencing a sharp decrease due to the release for the purpose of irrigating rice crops," he said in a statement on Monday (March 30).

He said based on the current rate of reduction, the remaining storage of the Beris Dam, which is decreasing by 0.56 per cent per day, is estimated to be able to last about 68 days before reaching the critical level of 20 per cent around mid or late June.

Pathmanathan said Sungai Muda remains the main source of raw water supply to Penang, which is also shared with Kedah.

He added that PBAPP, on average, abstracts about 1,000 million litres per day (MLD) of raw water from the river to be treated at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP).

He said the treated water was then supplied to about 465,000 consumers throughout the state, including in Seberang Perai and the island.

"To deal with the current situation, PBAPP has activated the Sungai Muda Contingency Plan 2026 (SMCP 2026) since the end of February, which is to abstract the maximum raw water from Sungai Muda every day to support the optimal production of treated water at the Sungai Dua WTP.

"Following this, water will be released strategically from the Enlarged Mengkuang Dam (EMD) in the event of a shortage of raw water supply from Sungai Muda, with the maximum EMD release capacity limited to 600 MLD," he said.

Pathmanathan said the ongoing implementation of the Penang Double Dam Defence Programme (DPI Programme) by pumping about 407 MLD of treated water from the Sungai Dua WTP to the island to ensure that the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam do not dry up.

According to him, SMCP 2026 is expected to help Penang overcome water supply challenges throughout this year, but it is not a comprehensive solution because the maximum EMD discharge capacity is only 600 MLD, while the Sungai Dua WTP requires about 1,000 MLD of raw water to operate optimally.

He also said the status of dams in Penang is still under control, with the Air Itam Dam at 69.38 per cent, the Teluk Bahang Dam at 84.05 per cent and the EMD at 91.24 per cent as of March 28. – Bernama