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PRESS RELEASE

PENANG AGREES TO HANDOVER OF THE MENGGUANG DAM EXPANSION PROJECT.

- **Handing over ceremony for Phases 1 and 2A of the Mengkuang Dam Expansion Project (MDEP) will be held soon.**
- **Ministry of Environment and Water (KASA) has stated that land acquisition for Phase 2B is at the final stages. The consultants for the feasibility studies of Phase 2C has been appointed and the construction of a new barrage at Rantau Panjang will be discussed with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) in the Prime Minister’s Department for implementation.**

PENANG, Wednesday, 30.9.2020: The Penang State Government has agreed to “take back” the expanded Mengkuang Dam from the Federal Government soon.

Penang Chief Minister YAB Tuan Chow Kon Yeow said Penang agreed to the handover of Phase 1 and Phase 2A of the Mengkuang Dam Expansion Project (MDEP) on 24.9.2020, during a meeting with Environment and Water (KASA) Minister YB Dato’ Sri Tuan Ibrahim bin Tuan Man in Putrajaya.

“It was a productive meeting and we are looking forward to the timely implementation of Phases 2B and 2C of the MDEP, as well as the construction of a new barrage at Rantau Panjang in Penang,” he said.

The following table outlines the latest status of the different phases of the MDEP:

Phases	Status
1 Mengkuang Dam expansion and associated works, to increase the maximum raw water storage capacity from 22,300 million litres (ML) to 73,500 ML.	Completed (10.4.2017)

Phases		Status
2A	Upgrading of the Mak Sulong Pumping Station and associated works to increase raw water pumping capacity (from 200 million litres per day, or MLD, to 400 MLD). This pumping station was built to pump raw water from Sungai Kulim to fill the Mengkuang Dam.	Completed. (28.9.2017)
2B	Laying of 7km of 1.6m diameter mild steel pipelines from the Mak Sulong Pumping Station to the Sungai Dua Canal to upgrade raw water delivery capacity from 300 MLD to 600 MLD. This phase is critical to enable the drawdown of more raw water from the dam to the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) during droughts.	Pending. Land acquisition in the final stages.
2C	Construction of 440 MLD Lahar Yooi Pumping Station and associated works. This phase is important to expedite filling/refilling the dam, by pumping raw water from a second raw water resource: Sungai Muda.	Pending. Subject to feasibility study and discussions with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) for implementation.

“We were told by the KASA Minister on 24.9.2020 that land acquisition is in the final stages for the implementation of Phase 2B,” YAB Tuan Chow said.

“The Minister also informed us that studies on Phase 2C and the construction of a new barrage at Rantau Panjang will be discussed with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) in the Prime Minister’s Department for implementation.

“Since KASA has stated its intent to complete Phases 2B and 2C of the MDEP, Penang agreed to the handover. An official ceremony will be held on 26th October 2020 at the Mengkuang Dam grounds,” he added.

Meanwhile, PBAPP and PBA Holdings Bhd CEO Dato' Ir. Jaseni Maidinsa categorised the MDEP as a critical strategic drought project for Penang. "The MDEP is a Federal Government project financed by a Federal grant. Its implementation was one of the key conditions that was agreed upon when Penang migrated to the National Water Services Re-structuring Initiative (NWSRI) in 2011," he said.

"Today, the MDEP is not fully functional yet. However, it is prudent for us to re-assume management of the Mengkuang Dam. Due to abnormally low rainfall resulting from climate change since 2019, the effective capacities of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam on Penang Island are abnormally low.

"We will need full access to the raw water reserves of the Mengkuang Dam to manage continuous water supply services during the next dry season, which is expected to commence from January 2021," he said. "As such, the primary rationale for the handover of the MDEP is risk management."

The Penang State government also urged the Federal Government to expedite the implementation of the two remaining phases of the MDEP.

"Without the Phase 2B pipeline, the maximum volume of water that may be drawn down from the dam is limited to 300 million litres per day (MLD). In 2019, Penang's average daily water consumption was 843 MLD. As such, a maximum drawdown 300 MLD is insufficient to meet Penang's treated water needs during an emergency drought scenario.

"Without the Phase 2C Lahar Yooi Pumping Station, we cannot pump raw water from Sungai Muda to re-fill the Mengkuang Dam quickly during the annual wet seasons" he said.

"Penang needs a fully functional MDEP as soon as possible because we are a water-stressed state that is facing significant raw water risks in this age of climate change," he added.

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MENKCUANG DAM, SEBERANG PRAI, PENANG.