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Media Release

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PENANG WATER ALERT: AIR ITAM DAM CAPACITY IS LOW AND WATER DEMAND IS HIGH

- **Air Itam Dam: 38.5% on 31.3.2022.**
- **Bukit Dumbar treated water reservoir levels are low.**
- **Water treatment operations at 9 water treatment plants have been optimised to meet high water demand.**

PENANG, Saturday, 2.4.2022: Perbadanan Bekalan Air Pulau Pinang Sdn Bhd (PBAPP) is seeking the cooperation of Penang water consumers to use water wisely in April and May 2022.

AIR ITAM DAM RAW WATER RESERVES LOW

As at 31.3.2022, the effective capacities of Penang's 3 key dams are as follows:

Dam	Effective capacity 1.1.2022	Effective capacity 31.3.2022
1. Air Itam Dam	89.3%	38.5%
2. Teluk Bahang Dam	87.8%	73.5%
3. Mengkuang Dam	93.2%	91.4%

Since 1.1.2022, the effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam has dropped by 50.8% to an "Alert Level" of 38.5%. The primary cause is low rainfall in this dam's water catchment area (WCA).

In the period 1.1.2022 – 31.3.2022, PBAPP recorded abnormally low rainfall amounting to 250mm of rainfall in the Air Itam Dam WCA. In comparison, the amount of rainfall recorded in the Teluk Bahang Dam WCA was 366mm while the rainfall at the Mengkuang Dam WCA amounted to 1,128mm.

The secondary cause is high daily water demand in the Air Itam township and surrounding areas.

Kindly note that the only way to replenish the reserves of the Air Itam Dam is to wait for seasonal rainfall or to induce rainfall (via cloud seeding) in its WCA.

BUKIT DUMBAR RESERVOIRS TREATED WATER LEVELS LOW

PBAPP has also been recording consistently high water consumption in the State of Penang over the past 3 months while striving to implement dry weather controls to “defend” the effective capacities of Penang’s dams.

On 31.3.2022, metered water consumption was almost 900 million litres per day (MLD), as compared to the average of 860 MLD in 2021.

Treated water pumped from the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Seberang Perai to the Bukit Dumbar Reservoirs on Penang Island daily (via 3 sets of twin submarine pipelines) is being drawn down fast. Water demand in the southern areas of Penang Island is significantly high.

As such, the treated water levels in the Bukit Dumbar reservoirs are low. Since the treated water levels are low, PBAPP cannot pump water at adequate pressures to all end-of-line (EOL) and higher ground areas. The water pumps will trip or shut down automatically and may possibly be damaged.

PBAPP’S SHORT-TERM ACTIONS TO ADDRESS WATER ISSUES

PBAPP is implementing various short-term solutions to address complaints of “no water supply” or “low water pressure” in several areas in Seberang Perai Selatan (SPS), in the Air Itam hillside areas and at a few blocks of 5-storey apartments at Bukit Gedung.

These solutions include:

- Ramping up treated water production at all 9 water treatments plants in Penang to meet daily high water demand.
- Increasing treated water production at the Air Itam WTP, Guillemard WTP and Batu Ferringhi WTP to support a gradual build-up of treated water reserves in the Bukit Dumbar reservoirs.

- At Bukit Gedung, PBAPP has installed taps at fire hydrants to provide water supply to the residents of affected apartment blocks. Due to low water pressure, water supply can now only reach the ground floor and first floor of several apartment blocks.
- Advising building management corporations (including the management corporation of the Bukit Gedung apartments) to install residential pumping systems at EOL or higher ground areas to mitigate issues of low water pressure during dry seasons.

The long-term solution to water supply issues in the EOL and higher ground areas in SPS, Air Itam and Bukit Gedong is the timely implementation of PBAPP's Raw Water Contingency Plan 2030 (RWCP 2030). The targeted yield of the RWCP 2030 projects is 569 MLD, and the availability of this additional volume of water should help to minimise water issues throughout Penang during future dry seasons.

SAVE WATER, USE IT WISELY

For now, water consumers are advised to kindly use water wisely until the inter-monsoon season in April/May brings rainfall to the dam WCAs.

Please do not use a hose unnecessarily to wash your vehicle, water your plants/gardens or clean your house/compound. For more water saving tips, please visit www.pba.com.my.

Thank You.

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31.3.2022: Air Itam Dam effective capacity at 38.5% (Penang Water Supply Alert 2022)