

15.5.2023

PRESS STATEMENT

by YAB TUAN CHOW KON YEOW
 CHIEF MINISTER OF PENANG

**14.5.2023 SUNGAI MUDA RIVER LEVEL INCIDENT:
 PENANG WATER SUPPLY SERVICES “RECOVERED” TO 90%
 LEVEL IN 36 HOURS**

PENANG, Monday, 15.5.2023:

- I have been briefed by PBAPP CEO Ir. Pathmanathan K. on the latest results of PBAPP’s emergency response plan to the Sungai Muda river level incident that occurred at 5.00am yesterday morning.
- The following is a summary of the key facts and figures, as at 11.30am today:

Items	Status
1. Sungai Muda River Level (Lahar Tiang Intake)	1.56m
2. Raw water abstraction operations at Lahar Tiang	83%
3. Water production at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant	100% (about 1,000 MLD)
4. Normalisation of water supply for about 400,000 water consumers	
a. Seberang Perai	90%
b. Penang Island	90%
5. Estimated number of consumers still affected by yesterday’s incident	About 40,000
6. Targeted “full recovery” of water supply	Wednesday – Thursday (17.5.2023 – 18.5.2023)

- Based on these results, I thank and commend the PBAPP Team for a job well done. Yesterday, PBAPP responded quickly to an emergency water supply scenario. Today, the majority of the people of Penang are enjoying the benefits of your work.
- That said, I would like to urge you to keep up the good work until we achieve 100% or full recovery of water supply services in Penang, as targeted or sooner. Please continue to do your best for your customers.

Cause of the 14.5.2023 Mishap in Kedah and Preventive Measures

- Various mass media and online media have quoted the Kedah Menteri Besar as stating that the cause of yesterday's mishap was an "automatic sensor failure" at one of the Sungai Muda barrages that suddenly opened a flood gate, "letting super large quantities of river water to flow out to the sea."
- Firstly, I would like to point out that mishap occurred in Kedah, and not in Penang. Nevertheless, we felt the full impact of it in Penang yesterday.
- Secondly, as Chief Minister of Penang, I would like to suggest for the National Water Services Commission (SPAN) to conduct a full investigation on this mishap. We would like to know for sure because about 400,000 water consumers in Penang suffered as a result of this mishap.
- Thirdly, we would like to avoid a repeat or recurrence in the future. Apparently, a faulty automatic sensor in one Kedah barrage can cause so much "damage" to Penang. So, it would be good for SPAN to get the relevant authorities in Kedah to check all the systems in all the barrages in Kedah to see if there is anything else that needs to be replaced or upgraded. This is called preventive maintenance.
- Finally, I would like to request for the Federal Government to set up our proposed "Ulu Muda Basin Authority" or UMBA to manage the Ulu Muda Basin effectively and professionally. Both Penang and Kedah are highly dependent on the Ulu Muda River Basin, which includes Sungai Muda, for water supply and irrigation. We must not ignore the importance of conserving this river basin properly for the good of our people, our economies and the future of the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER).
- The Penang State Government does not want any more mishaps or accidents to occur at Sungai Muda. We want an UMBA to manage the Ulu Muda Basin so as to avoid mishaps and accidents that will affect water supply for millions of people in Penang and Kedah.

Thank You.
