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Media Release

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MENGKUANG DAM: NOTHING WRONG, PENANG IS AWAITING FULL COMPLETION OF EXPANSION PROJECT

- **No issues with dam age, storage, siltation or structure to date.**
- **The Federal Government handed back the EMD to Penang in October 2020.**
- **Penang is eagerly awaiting full completion of the Mengkuang Dam Expansion Project (MDEP) by the Federal Government.**

PENANG, Tuesday, 24.10.2023: Perbadanan Bekalan Air Pulau Pinang Sdn Bhd (PBAPP) would like to clarify that there is nothing wrong with the 86.4 billion litre Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD) which is Penang's largest dam.

In fact, we are eagerly awaiting the full completion of the RM1.2 billion Mengkuang Dam Expansion Project (MDEP) by the Federal Government. The following phases of the MDEP have not been completed:

Uncompleted Phases:		
1.	Phase 2B	Laying of a pipeline to upgrade the drawdown capacity to 600 million litres per day (MLD).
2.	Phase 2C	Construction of a new 440 MLD pumping station at Sungai Muda to enable efficient refilling of the EMD during wet seasons.
3.	New Sungai Muda barrage	To support additional abstraction of raw water from the river during wet seasons to refill the EMD.

On 23.10.2023, several mass media reported that the Mengkuang Dam was one of 7 "high risk dams" in Malaysia, according to the National Water Services Commission (SPAN).

PBAPP cannot comment on the other 6 dams mentioned in the news reports. However, we may point out that the EMD is definitely not a high risk dam.

Only 3 years old and proving its worth to Penang

The EMD was handed back to the Penang State Government in October 2020, about 3 years ago, after its maximum storage capacity was expanded from 22 billion litres to 86.4 billion litres.

The EMD has more than proven its worth to Penang in 2022 and 2023 when its raw water reserves were drawn down during PBAPP's emergency responses to 3 major unscheduled water supply interruptions arising from 3 mishaps in Kedah:

- “Baling Flood Waters 1” incident in July 2022;
- “Sudden Drop in Sungai Muda River Level” incident in May 2023; and
- “Baling Flood Waters 2” incident in September 2023.

Without the EMD, the impact of these incidents would have been worse for the majority of Penang water consumers. Moreover, the time frame for the normalisation of water supply services after these mishaps would have been significantly longer.

As such, the decision of the Penang State Government to take back the EMD in September 2020, before the full completion of the MDEP, has been proven to be the correct strategic decision.

Drawdown capacity to be increased from 300 MLD to 600 MLD in 2024

The “main issue” with the EMD is its limited maximum drawdown capacity of 300 MLD.

As such, the EMD cannot fully “back-up” Sungai Muda as an emergency raw water resource for the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) yet. The Sungai Dua WTP needs about 1,100 MLD of raw water to produce sufficient treated water for 465,000 water consumers in its service area.

The re-scheduled completion of Phase 2B of the MDEP in 2024 will boost the EMD's maximum drawdown capacity to 600 MLD.

PBAPP is proposing to undertake a separate project to lay more pipelines to further ramp up the MDEP's maximum drawdown capacity to 1,000 MLD to reduce the risks of another major water supply disruption in Penang whenever another “Sungai Muda Incident” occurs in the future.

Meanwhile, we are also seeking the kind cooperation of the Federal Government to complete Phase 2C of the MDEP and the new barrage at Sungai Muda. These two missing components are also important because the EMD must be efficiently refilled with as much water as possible during every wet season to serve as a “stand-by” raw water resource for the Sungai Dua WTP.

In conclusion, please allow me to reiterate that there is nothing wrong with the EMD. On the contrary, the dam is currently serving its purpose as a strategic drought reserve for Penang as well as a useful emergency raw water resource that lessens the impact of mishaps related to Sungai Muda.

Thank You.

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Empangan Mengkuang yang Diperbesarkan (EMD): Tiada isu yang membimbangkan, Pulau Pinang tunggu projek pembesaran siap sepenuhnya.

Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD): No major issue, Penang is eagerly awaiting the full completion of the expansion project.