

6.4.2024

Media Release

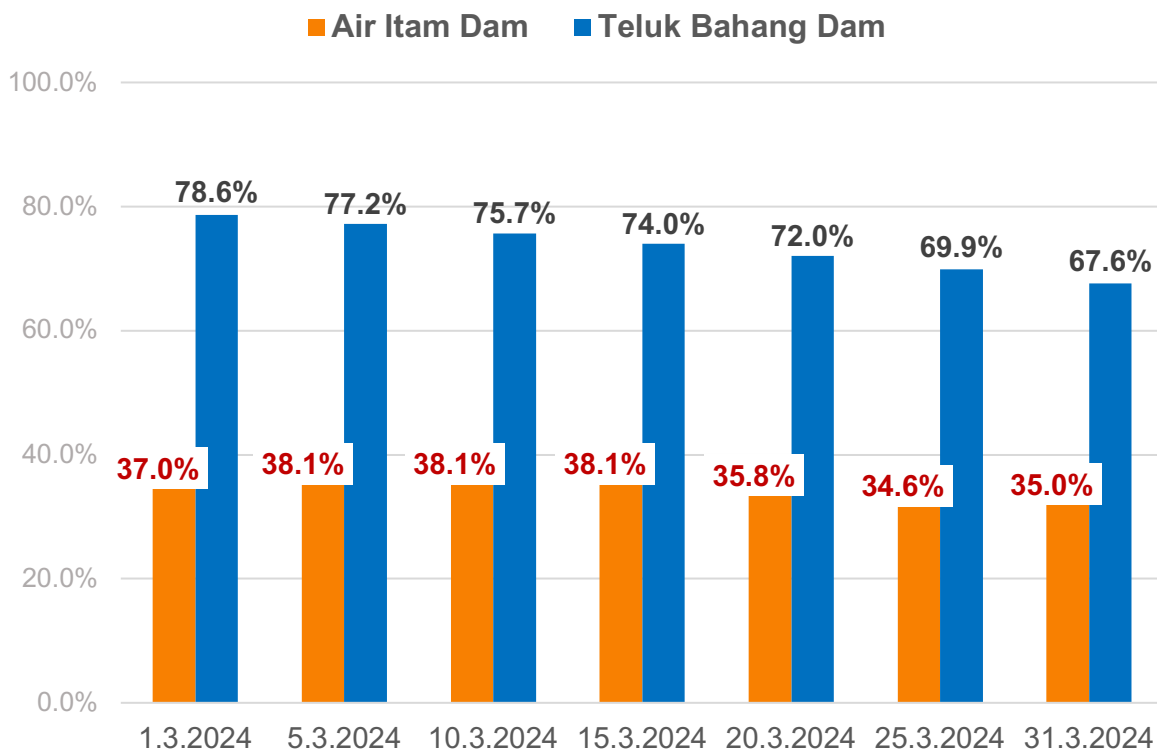
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AIR ITAM DAM: 66.5MM OF RAINFALL IN MARCH 2024. PLEASE USE WATER WISELY UNTIL MORE RAIN REFILLS THE DAM.

- In February 2024, the average water consumption in Penang was 927 million litres per day (MLD), as compared to 877 MLD annual average for 2023.

PENANG, Saturday, 6.4.2024: PBAPP would like to remind Penang water consumers to use water wisely until rainfall arrives to replenish the raw water reserves of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam.

The following chart traces the effective capacities of these two dams in March 2024:



In March 2024, PBAPP recorded 66.5mm of rainfall in the water catchment area (WCA) of the Air Itam Dam. PBAPP has strived to “stabilise” the effective capacity of this dam through the implementation of the Air Itam Dam Action Plan 2024 (AIDAP 2024). The dam’s effective capacity dropped by 2.0% over 31 days.

Meanwhile, the effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam dropped by 11.0% in the corresponding period. In March 2024, the rainfall recorded in the WCA of the Teluk Bahang Dam was 133.0mm.

Please note that the maximum effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam is 18,240 million litres (ML) while the effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam is 2,160 ML. As such, a 1.0% drop in the effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam is roughly equivalent to an 8.4% drop in the effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam.

3 key factors

The following are the 3 key factors that affect and explain the status of the Air Itam Dam and the Teluk Bahang Dam in March 2024:

1. **AIDAP 2024:** Under the AIDAP 2024, PBAPP has been pumping 33 million litres of treated water per day (MLD) from the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP) into the Air Itam service area to “defend” the low effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam.
2. **Climate Change and Rainfall:** About 133.0mm of rainfall was recorded in the Teluk Bahang Dam WCA, as compared to 66.5mm in the Air Itam WCA. However, the effective capacity of the dam dropped by about 11.0% in March 2024.
3. **High Water Consumption:** The average daily water consumption in Penang for the month of February 2024 was 927 MLD, in comparison to the annual average of 877 MLD for 2023. This reflects an increase of 50 MLD.

Reduce water consumption

Based on following facts and figures, the best and most rational way to ensure water supply sufficiency in Penang in 2024 is to reduce water consumption by 10%:

- The Air Itam Dam was commissioned in 1963 and Teluk Bahang Dam was officially opened in 1999. Both dams were designed to be refilled by rainfall in their respective WCAs. Unlike the Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD) in Seberang Perai, these dams on Penang Island cannot be refilled by pumping raw water from a river.



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- It is not viable for PBAPP to implement another action plan (like the AIDAP 2024) to defend the effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam in 2024. The Sungai Dua WTP is already operating at optimal levels to meet high water demand and pump 33 MLD of treated water to the Air Itam service area.
- International weather forecasts state that the hot and dry El Niño phenomenon in the first quarter of 2024 is likely to give way to a wet and rainy La Niña phenomenon that will commence from May, June or July 2024. METMalaysia is forecasting “moderate” rainfall for Penang (200 – 250mm) in April, May, June and July 2024. However, these are forecasts. We cannot be certain that the actual rainfall will be sufficient to increase the effective capacities of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam significantly.
- The river level of Sungai Muda, Penang’s primary raw water resource, dropped below the 2.0m “safe level” at PBAPP’s Lahar Tiang Intake for 8 days in March 2024. On 31.3.2024, this river level reading “recovered” to 2.11m. However, it should be noted that the capacity of the Muda Dam was 40.0% on 29.3.2024 while the capacity of the Beris Dam was 89.2% on 26.3.2024. These are the two dams in Kedah that are built to release water into Sungai Muda during dry seasons.

As such, in the interest of ensuring “water supply safety” for Penang, I would like to re-appeal to all water consumers to kindly reduce water consumption by 10% in April, May and June 2024.

Your “10% water savings” will go a long way to ensure water supply sufficiency for all of us this year. For domestic water savings tips, please visit: www.pba.com.my

Thank You.

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