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Media Release

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SUNGAI MUDA RIVER LEVEL: PBAPP WILL DRAW DOWN WATER FROM THE EXPANDED MENGGUANG DAM WHEN NEEDED

- In Kedah, Syarikat Air Darul Aman (SADA) has announced that there is a risk of water supply interruptions in Kuala Muda if the level of Sungai Muda continues to drop due to dry weather.
- In Penang, PBAPP will draw down a maximum of 600 million litres of raw water per day (MLD) from the Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD) if it cannot abstract sufficient raw water from Sungai Muda.

PENANG, Thursday, 18.4.2024: Perbadanan Bekalan Air Pulau Pinang Sdn Bhd (PBAPP) is on stand-by to draw down the strategic drought reserve of the Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD) if it cannot abstract sufficient raw water from Sungai Muda.

On 16.4.2024, the level of Sungai Muda at PBAPP’s Lahar Tiang Intake in Seberang Perai dropped to 1.72m, which is below the “2.0m safe level”. In Kedah, SADA announced that Lembaga Sumber Air Negeri Kedah (LSANK) and Pejabat Lembangan Sungai Muda (PLSM) have increased the volume of water released from the Beris Dam into Sungai Muda, from 864 MLD (10 cumec) to 1,296 MLD (15 cumec).

On 17.4.2024, the Sungai Muda river level fell to 1.61m at Lahar Tiang. PBAPP continued to abstract sufficient raw water from the river without tapping the EMD. However, PBAPP also conducted a successful EMD drawdown trial run in preparation for a “worse case” scenario.

Effective Capacities of Kedah Dams that release water into Sungai Muda

	Maximum Capacity (million litres – ML)	Effective Capacity
Muda Dam (Kedah)	160,000	35.69% (17.4.2024)
Beris Dam (Kedah)	120,000	80.19% (16.4.2024)

Effective Capacity of the EMD in Penang

	Maximum Capacity (million litres – ML)	Effective Capacity
Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD)	86,400	89.7% (17.4.2024)

The EMD serves as a “back-up” dry weather resource which may be tapped if PBAPP cannot abstract sufficient water from Sungai Muda.

Presently, PBAPP abstracts about 1,200 MLD from Sungai Muda for the optimal production of treated water at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP). This WTP produces about 85% of the treated water that is distributed in Penang daily.

The maximum drawdown capacity from the EMD is 600 MLD, or about 50% of the raw water required by the Sungai Dua WTP to operate optimally.

As such, so long as PBAPP is able to abstract 600 MLD of raw water from Sungai Muda and draw down 600 MLD from the EMD, there should be no unscheduled water supply interruption in Penang.

No immediate threat but PBAPP operating on “high alert” status

As of today, there is no immediate threat to water supply in Penang in relation to the Sungai Muda river level, due to the following 6 key considerations:

1. On 17.4.2024, when the river level was 1.61m, PBAPP managed to abstract about 1,200 MLD from Sungai Muda to support optimal treated water production at the Sungai Dua WTP.
2. SADA has announced that more water is being released from the Beris Dam to “defend” the Sungai Muda river level.
3. The effective capacity of the Beris Dam was 80.19% on 16.4.2024.
4. The effective capacity of the Muda Dam, which may also release water into Sungai Muda, was 35.69% on 17.4.2024.
5. PBAPP may draw down a maximum of 600 MLD from the EMD if it is not able to abstract sufficient raw water from Sungai Muda.
6. The effective capacity of the EMD was 89.7% on 17.4.2024.

Nevertheless, PBAPP is now operating on “high alert” status because Sungai Muda is Penang’s primary raw water resource.

PBAPP will monitor the river level carefully. We will provide public updates, as and when the Sungai Muda scenario improves or worsens.

Thank You.

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