

Crisis alert as Muda Dam level plunges

GEORGE TOWN: The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) issued a third alert of a looming water crisis in the northern states after Kedah's Muda Dam water level dropped to a critical level of 7.44 per cent yesterday.

PBAPP chief executive officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said the dam could no longer support Sungai Muda during the ongoing dry season, leaving Sungai Muda dependent solely on Beris Dam.

He added that to sustain the Sungai Muda's river level, Beris Dam, which has a capacity of 120 billion litres, was releasing 864 million litres of water per day.

"Yesterday, the Sungai Muda river level at Penang's Lahar Tiang intake was at the alert level of 1.77m. The normal river level is above 2.0m.

"PBAPP is still able to optimise the abstraction of raw water from Sungai Muda for treatment at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP). The Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant produces more

than 80 per cent of the treated water that is supplied in the state.

"If Beris Dam does not have enough water to release and sustain Sungai Muda's river level, there will be a widespread water crisis in Penang and southern Kedah.

"It is important for the Kedah and federal government to formulate a contingency plan to support or protect water supply services in Penang and southern Kedah in case the current dry season is prolonged."

PBAPP issued the first warning last month, urging consumers not to waste water, after water levels at two key dams on the island fell to historic lows.

A total of 14 other Kedah water treatment plants also abstracted water from Sungai Muda daily for water supply.

Since 1973, Sungai Muda had served as Penang's primary raw water resource.

Today, more than 80 per cent of Penang's raw water is abstracted from Sungai Muda.