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PRESS RELEASE:

## **PENANG WATER CATCHMENTS ARE CLOSELY MONITORED**

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PENANG, Friday, (23/9/2016): Perbadanan Bekalan Air Pulau Pinang Sdn Bhd (PBAPP) shares the concern of Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) on development projects in Penang's water catchment areas.

We would like to clarify that we know of only one project approved by the Penang State Government in a catchment area in Penang - the "Boulder Valley Glamping Resort" in Teluk Bahang, a premium camping site project.

As the water supply operator that serves Penang, PBAPP is concerned about the impact of this project in the forestlands that capture water for the Teluk Bahang Dam.

We have expressed our concerns to the *Badan Kawal Selia Air Pulau Pinang* (BKSA), the *Majlis Bandaraya Pulau Pinang* (MBPP) and the State Land and Mines Office. These organisations wield the power to regulate development projects in Penang.

We have been informed that this glamping project is an eco-friendly project that will have minimal impact, in terms of development type, conservation of the natural environment and disposal of wastes.

In fact, a Penang State-level committee has been set up to carefully monitor the Teluk Bahang catchment. This committee is headed by Y.B. Lim Hock Seng as the State Executive Councillor for Public Works, Public Utilities and Transportation.

As far as PBAPP is concerned, we monitor rainfall via rain gauges in Teluk Bahang as well as the effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam on a daily basis.

## **A Stormy and Rainy September**

In the first 6 months of 2016, the unprecedented and abnormal dry season caused by the Super El Niño phenomenon compelled PBAPP to draw down on the strategic drought reserves of the Teluk Bahang Dam. We needed these reserves to avoid water rationing at all costs in Penang.

Today, we are experiencing the effects of a stormy and wet La Niña phenomenon that normally comes after an El Niño phenomenon.

In the period 1<sup>st</sup> September to 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016, PBAPP recorded 1,252mm of rain in the Teluk Bahang catchments.

Accordingly, our data shows that the effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam has steadily risen, from 43.8% on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 to 54.9% on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016. This represents an increase of 10.1% in 21 days. This compares favourably with the dam level during the same time of 69.0% in 2015 and 51.5% in 2014.

This data is indicative of the following:

1. Penang is experiencing stormy and rainy weather that is beyond the norm in September 2016.

In the first 21 days of September 2016, we have already recorded 74% more rain in Teluk Bahang than the historical average of 721mm for the whole month of September in the period 2005 – 2015.

2. There will be more rain this month. Weather forecasts are predicting thunderstorms and scattered thunderstorms in the next 8 days.

Moreover, we may also expect more rain in the first half of October, with the onset of the “9 Emperor Gods” festival.

3. For now, the amount of rainfall in the Teluk Bahang catchments seems to be consistent with the rising effective capacity percentage of the Teluk Bahang Dam.

It appears as though the glamping development project is not adversely affecting the Teluk Bahang catchment at this point in time. However, PBAPP will continue to carefully monitor rainfall and the dam levels in

Teluk Bahang.

PBAPP will not hesitate to inform the State Government if we find anything amiss in Penang's catchment areas. We are confident that Penang's people-friendly State Government will react decisively to ensure no water rationing at all costs, as and when necessary.

### **Watch out for Heavy Rain and High Tides**

Meanwhile, it is also worthy to note that while there has been an abnormally high amount of rainfall in Teluk Bahang in September 2016, there was no recurrence of severe flash flooding in the Teluk Bahang township.

It seems apparent that the threat of flash flooding in Penang arises whenever heavy rainfall coincides with a "king tide", as was recorded and widely reported on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

As such, PBAPP would like to advise all its customers who live in flood-prone areas, specifically in areas such as Teluk Bahang and Teluk Kumbar, to be on the alert when there is heavy rain and high tides.

We must remember that we are living in the age of climate change when sudden and severe changes of weather may wreak havoc, such as in the case of "Super Typhoon Meranti" that lashed the Philippines, Taiwan and Eastern China recently.

Thank You.

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