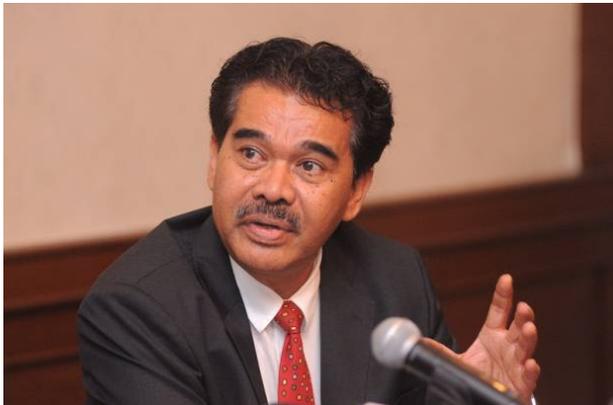


Malaysia

Penang corp calls for urgent water meeting as four northern states face shortage

BY OPALYN MOK
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Penang Water Supply Corporation chief executive officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said Putrajaya must implement several measures to prevent water rationing in the northern states. — Pictures by KE Ooi

said.

He said four states — Perlis, Kedah, Penang and north Perak — are facing an impending threat of water shortages.

"It is evident that the threat will affect four million people or the entire population of the northern region so Putrajaya must act now to avoid water rationing," he said.

PBAPP practises a "no water rationing" system where it implements dry weather measures such as reducing drawdown of water from dams for agriculture uses to ensure sufficient supply.

Penang's 80 per cent water supply is extracted from the Muda River.

The Muda Dam and Beris Dam in Kedah are the only two dams in Kedah that release water into the Muda River for 14 Kedah water treatment plants and Penang to draw water to meet dry weather demands.

Currently, the effective capacities of the Muda Dam and Beris Dam are at 44.9 per cent and 37.5 per cent as at April 15, respectively.

Jaseni urged Kedah to reveal how many days the Muda Dam and Beris Dam can continue to release water into the Muda River based on its present water reserves.

"What are Kedah's contingency plans if or when the levels of Muda Dam and Beris Dam fall below the minimum levels?" he asked.

He also proposed a four-step measure that Putrajaya must implement now.

GEORGE TOWN, April 18 — Putrajaya has 30 days to come up with an action plan to deal with the current drought before the dams and rivers supplying water to four states dry up, chief executive of the Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) warned today.

Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said the Super El Nino season meant that the northern states with a population of roughly four million people are facing impending threat of water shortages.

"By now the National Water Resources Council should convene to solve this issue before the Muda River dries up," he told a press conference here after PBA Holdings Bhd signed the Corporate Integrity Pledge with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).

He said PBAPP has done the calculations and believes there will be a serious deficit in water supply if Kedah continues to use its water resources for irrigation.

"There is not enough water to supply for both irrigation and consumers during this dry spell that will continue till June," he

He pointed out some parts of Perlis and Johor have announced water rationing so this must be avoided at other states.



Air Itam dam water level at 58.8per cent on 18 April 2016 in Penang.

The measures are large scale cloud seeding in the northern region, postponement of irrigation activities in the northern region, minimize drawdown of reserves from all dams and acknowledge the threat now to persuade water consumers to save water.