

Cloud-seeding for Penang if dam water level drops below 40%

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Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow says heavy rain yesterday increased the water level at Air Itam Dam from 49.1% to 50.1%. (Bernama pic)

GEORGE TOWN: Penang will carry out cloud seeding when the water level of the Air Itam Dam drops below 40%, said Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow.

Chow said currently the Air Itam Dam has an adequate amount of raw water to meet the needs of the Air Itam township, Paya Terubong valley and surrounding areas for another 48 days.

"As of Friday, the effective capacity of the dam was 49.1%, but after the rain yesterday, the level increased to 50.1%.

"We will only call for cloud seeding if the effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam drops below 40%," he told reporters after visiting the Air Itam Dam with

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Jaseni Maidinsa today.

Chow said he would leave it to PBAPP to keep an eye on the situation.

Jaseni said PBAPP will inform the state to ask for the cloud seeding from the Meteorological Services Department should the water level drop below 40%.

“We have already coordinated with Kedah because when we do cloud seeding, it doesn’t just affect the clouds in Penang, but northern Perak to Langkawi as well, with certain areas receiving rain, depending on the wind,” he said. However, Jaseni expressed his concern about Sungai Muda’s low water level because it is Penang’s primary source of water.

He added the water level has fallen below PBAPP’s alert level of 2m for 42 consecutive days (Feb 9 to March 22), with the level at 1.82m last Friday.

“We will continue to be vigilant because PBAPP extracts water from this river downstream of 14 Kedah water treatment plants and four irrigation intakes,” he said.

He also said that Kedah is releasing water into Sungai Muda from the Muda and Beris dams in Kedah to meet demand in Kedah and Penang.

He said that as of last Friday, the capacity of the Muda Dam was 49.6%, Beris Dam 73.3%, Teluk Bahang Dam 70.7% and Mengkuang Dam 46.6%