

PBAPP recommends cloud seeding to fill dams



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GEORGE TOWN, March 12 -- The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) has recommended the state government to carry out cloud seeding operations to achieve a minimum of 80 per cent effective capacities in the Air Itam and Teluk Bahang dams by December 2021.

Its chief executive officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said there had been minimal rainfall in the water catchment areas of the two dams, resulting in the Air Itam dam's effective capacity declining to 77.3 per cent as of yesterday from 95.2 per cent in Jan 1 this year, while the Teluk Bahang dam dropped to 56.7 per cent from 58.7 per cent.

"We are recommending the state government to implement cloud seeding again this year to encourage heavier rainfall, which can be done during the intermonsoon season in April right up until December, like what was done last year.

"This was what saved us last year because we managed to get very good capacity for both dams. There were 15 cloud seeding operations carried out last year and we recommend the same for this year," he told a press conference on Penang's dam water level here today.

He said Air Itam dam could last for 75 days with the current level of effective capacity while the Teluk Bahang dam could last for 170 days.

Jaseni said PBAPP is issuing the first water supply alert for this year to ensure that both dams have enough capacity to last until August.

Last year, he said the Air Itam dam reached its lowest capacity of 31.4 per cent on Oct 2 while the Teluk Bahang dam at 16 per cent on Sept 5.

He said PBAPP has implemented dry weather control measures to sustain storage capacities of the two dams which include monitoring dam capacities in Penang and Kedah, as well as Sungai Muda river levels on a daily basis, as well as, optimising daily drawdowns from the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam.

Apart from that, he said PBAPP is also drawing down raw water from the Mengkuang Dam in Seberang Prai to support water production at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant. Deemed as the state's strategic dam, he said the Mengkuang Dam's effective capacity was still high, namely at 94.9 per cent as of yesterday.