

PENANG SEEKS CLOUD SEEDING ASSISTANCE FROM NADMA



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GEORGE TOWN, April 13 (Bernama) -- The Penang government has written to the National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) to seek immediate assistance for cloud seeding operations to be conducted in dam water catchment areas in the state.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer K. Pathmanathan said the state government has also approved the allocation of RM400,000 to implement the cloud seeding operations in water catchment areas in the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam.

"In a discussion held on March 29 and in an official letter dated March 30, the State Secretary's Office had informed NADMA's operations implementation division that due to climate change, low rainfall was recorded in the water catchment areas of the Air Itam and Teluk Bahang dams.

"This resulted in the dams' elective capacities to drop significantly until today. The Air Itam Dam, which was previously at 82.5 per cent, had dropped to 49.5 per cent while the capacity at the Teluk Bahang Dam had dropped from 64 per cent to 50.7 per cent," he said in a statement today.

He said the elective capacity of both dams is projected to decrease further to a critical level if the dry spell continues till August.

Pathmanathan said the State Secretary's Office had also referred to the Meteorological Department regarding the latest status of eligible companies that could carry out cloud seeding operations, however, no company could meet the criteria and conditions set by the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM).

He said the state government had no other choice but seek NADMA's assistance to facilitate the implementation of cloud seeding as soon as possible.

"We hope NADMA will prioritise (this) and meet Penang's request because cloud seeding operations are needed as soon as possible to produce rain that will refill the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam," he also said.

He added that Penang must avoid a potential water supply crisis that will cause undue hardship to 1.74 million people as well as disrupt socioeconomic activities that had contributed RM99 billion to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2021.