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## Penang calls for cloud seeding over Air Itam dam as water level drops

The dam's effective capacity is currently at 32.8%, which has bypassed the second alert level.



The Penang Water Supply Corporation previously said there was only about a month's worth of water at the Air Itam dam. (Penang Water Supply Corporation pic)

GEORGE TOWN: Penang's water company has sought the "urgent assistance" of the National Water Services Commission (SPAN) for cloud seeding over the Air Itam dam as its water level continues to drop.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) CEO K Pathmanathan said a letter was sent to the commission on Feb 2, seeking help in planning and implementing cloud seeding operations in March, the inter-monsoon season, to support PBAPP's efforts to increase the effective capacity of the dam.

Pathmanathan said the last cloud seeding operation over the dam's catchment area was successful, with 30.5mm of rainfall recorded in June last year.

"The rainfall helped to ensure that there was no water crisis in Air Itam in 2023. PBAPP is awaiting feedback from SPAN to start preliminary discussions regarding the proposed cloud seeding operations.

"We have stated that the cloud seeding operations are critical for PBAPP to sustain continuous water supply services in Air Itam, for the benefit of about 30,000 water consumers including domestic and non-domestic consumers," he said in a statement.

The Air Itam dam supplies water to over 170,000 residents in the state.

PBAPP previously said there was about a month's worth of water at the dam. As of today, its effective capacity was at 32.8%, which has bypassed the second alert level.

Pathmanathan said besides cloud seeding, PBAPP was planning to draw down less water from the dam to save water. The company also proposed that water sourced from the mainland be directed through several pumping stations to reach Air Itam, in the hope that the state government would approve the plan.

The level of the Air Itam dam dropped drastically at the height of the major water cuts in the rest of Penang, as water from there was used to make up for the shortfall in at least half of the state.

The water cuts were caused by a ruptured pipe in Butterworth, the main artery for water supply to the island.