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Conserve your water! Penangites told to cut down consumption as two dams on island now less than 30pc full amid scarce rain



GEORGE TOWN, Aug 14 — Penang locals have today been told to save water, as effective capacities of Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam on the island have dropped below 30 per cent — which is “abnormally low”.

Penang Water Supply Corporation chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said in a statement that since raw water is drawn from both dams to produce sufficient treated water to meet consumer demands, their capacities can be extended by reducing usage.

“The Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam are ‘daily dams’. Raw water is drawn from these dams daily to produce sufficient treated water to meet consumer demands,” he said in a statement.

“Theoretically, if water consumers reduce water usage by 10 per cent, the reserves of the dams may be extended by 10per cent. If consumers reduce consumption by 20 per cent, then the remaining reserves may last 20 per cent longer.”

The two dams serve consumers in Air Itam, Farlim, Teluk Bahang, Batu Ferringhi, Tanjung Bungah and nearby areas.

Otherwise, he said that both dams may only be refilled by rainfall in their respective water catchment areas.

“Every mm of rainfall recorded should ‘prolong’ the dam reserves. Sustained heavy rainfall may increase effective capacity.

“Weather forecasts indicate that Penang may expect more incidences of significant rainfall in August and September 2024 as compared to previous months. However, we cannot be sure about the volume of actual rainfall.”

Pathmanathan said the National Disaster Management Agency (Nadma) has informed the Penang state secretary that it is awaiting advice and analysis from the Malaysian Meteorological Department before conducting cloud seeding operations over the state

“Nadma also stated that cloud seeding operations were subject to the availability of RMAF aircraft,” he said, referring to the Royal Malaysian Air Force.