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Storage level at Penang dams now below 30%, says PBAPP



GEORGE TOWN: Penang's two main dams have seen a significant drop in raw water storage, with levels falling below 30% as of last Monday.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said the Air Itam Dam's effective capacity was at 29.7% equating to 641 million litres out of a total capacity of 2,159 million litres, while the effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam was at 26.4% with 4,810 million litres available out of a maximum capacity of 18,240 million litres.

Pathmanathan said the rate of reduction in the Air Itam Dam's capacity has decreased from an average of 0.82 per cent (17.61 million litres) per day in July to 0.51 per cent (11.0 million litres) per day in the first 12 days of August.

Similarly, the Teluk Bahang Dam's effective capacity, which is 8.45 times that of the Air Itam Dam, decreased at a slower rate, from 0.31 per cent (57.10 million litres) per day in July to 0.27 per cent (48.33 million litres) per day in August.

Pathmanathan explained that the recent low rainfall has worsened conditions at Penang's two main dams. The water catchment areas (KTA) at the Air Itam Dam received just 48mm of rain last month and 36mm in the first 12 days of this month, while the Teluk Bahang Dam KTA saw 47mm of rain, down from 84mm during the same period last year.

He said while the current rainfall is insufficient to increase the dams' effective capacities, it does help to slow down the rate of decrease.

To meet water demand, PBAPP releases an average of 22.16 million litres per day from the Air Itam Dam for areas including Air Itam, Farlim and nearby regions. In addition, 68.06 million litres per day are released from the Teluk Bahang Dam to supply Teluk Bahang, Batu Ferringhi, Tanjung Bungah and the surrounding areas.

As such, Pathmanathan urged residents in the state to conserve water to help sustain the dams' raw water reserves until the next rainy season.

On cloud seeding, Pathmanathan said the Disaster Management Agency (Nadma) had informed them on Aug 9 that operations would only proceed following advice from the Malaysian Meteorological Department (MetMalaysia) and subject to the availability of Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) aircraft.

As of Aug 11, recent rains have not been sufficient to improve the water storage levels in Penang's dams. The Air Itam Dam's effective capacity had decreased by 1.2% to 30.0 per cent, while the Teluk Bahang Dam's effective capacity fell by 0.8%. - Bernama