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Lower rainfall sees sharp drop in water levels at Penang dams

The Penang Water Supply Corporation plans to request assistance for cloud seeding operations over the dams' catchment areas.



GEORGE TOWN:

The Teluk Bahang and Air Itam dams in Penang have experienced a significant drop in water levels due to reduced rainfall in their catchment areas during the first quarter of the year.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) CEO K Pathmanathan said that as of March 31, the water level at the Teluk Bahang dam was at 47.3%, down from 61.7% at the start of the year.

Similarly, the water level at the Air Itam dam dropped to 55.7%, a decrease of 21%.

“Although the Teluk Bahang dam was not full at the start of the year, PBAPP has been reducing the daily water release to conserve the available supply, as rainfall in the catchment area has been much lower than usual,” Pathmanathan said in a statement today.

As for the Air Itam dam, he said rainfall in the area had reached its lowest in eight years.

He said PBAPP was working to stabilise the dam's water level through the implementation of the Air Itam Dam Action Plan 2025.

Pathmanathan said PBAPP would continue to monitor the water levels at both dams and reduce the release of water as needed, while ensuring that daily water supply remains as stable as possible.

With the support of the state government, PBAPP plans to request assistance from the National Disaster Management Agency (Nadma) and the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) for cloud seeding operations over the dams' catchment areas.

“We hope that Nadma and RMAF will respond before the Teluk Bahang dam's water level falls below 40%, as this is an ideal period for cloud seeding due to favourable weather conditions between the monsoon seasons,” Pathmanathan said.

Pathmanathan also urged the 67,000 residents relying on water supply from these two dams to use it wisely, saying reducing consumption was key to preserving the remaining water reserves.

The Teluk Bahang dam serves the areas of Teluk Bahang, Batu Ferringhi, Tanjung Bungah, and Tanjung Tokong, while the Air Itam dam supplies water to Air Itam, Farlim, and Paya Terubong. - BERNAMA