

2-4-2025

## Penang seeks help for cloud seeding as water levels in two dams drop



GEORGE TOWN, April 2 — Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) will be seeking assistance from National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) and the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) to carry out cloud-seeding operations as water levels in its two dams dropped.

PBAPP chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said they hoped for cloud seeding operations to be held over the water catchment areas (WCA) of Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam on the island.

“We hope that NADMA and the RMAF will respond before the Teluk Bahang Dam’s effective capacity drops below the 40 per cent mark,” he said in a statement today.

He said it is currently the inter-monsoon period, which provides suitable cloud cover for seeding.

He said the effective capacity of Teluk Bahang Dam has dropped to below 50 per cent, at 47.3 per cent, as at March 31. The effective capacity of Air Itam Dam has also dropped to 55.7 per cent.

“The effective capacities of the two dams on Penang island have dropped significantly in the first quarter of 2025, primarily due to the lack of rainfall in the respective WCAs again,” he said in a statement today.

He said the Teluk Bahang Dam’s effective capacity was at 61.7 per cent on January 1 this year and PBAPP has been capping daily drawdowns from the 18,240 million litre (ML) dam at 60 million litres per day (MLD) since the beginning of the year.

“This is the main reason why its effective capacity has dropped by only 14.4 per cent in the past 90 days, despite low rainfall in its WCA,” he said.

The effective capacity of the 2,159 ML Air Itam Dam has declined by 21 percentage points from 76.7 per cent. He said PBAPP recorded only 122mm of rainfall in its WCA since January 1, the lowest in the Air Itam WCA in the past eight years.

He said PBAPP will continue to implement the Air Itam Dam Action Plan 2025 (AIDAP 2025) by limiting daily drawdowns, pumping treated water from the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant and optimising treated water production at the Air Itam Water Treatment Plant.

There are a total of about 67,000 water consumers in the service areas of the two dams. He urged water consumers in Teluk Bahang, Air Itam, Batu Ferringhi, Farlim, Tanjung Bungah, Paya Terubong and Tanjung Tokong to conserve water.

Pathmanathan said the effective capacity at the Expanded Mengkuang Dam (EMD) in Central Seberang Perai remains strong at 92.4 per cent as at March 31. He said the EMD will remain as a back-up dam for treated water production at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP).

He said PBAPP will continue to abstract raw water from Sungai Muda for water production at the Sungai Dua WTP.

“The river level dipped below the 2.0m safe mark at Penang’s Lahar Tiang Intake for seven days in March,” he said.

As of March 31, the river level was reported to be 2.4m.