

2-4-2025

Authorities considering cloud seeding to boost Penang water supply



PETALING JAYA: The Air Itam Dam has recorded only 122mm of rainfall in its water catchment area (WCA) since January, prompting authorities to consider cloud seeding to increase supply as it has fallen to its lowest level in eight years.

The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) said that it is monitoring the situation at both the Air Itam and Teluk Bahang dams and is tightening daily drawdowns to avoid compromising water supply services.

"With support from the state government, we will seek assistance from the National Disaster Management Agency (Nadma) and the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) to carry out cloud seeding operations around the WCAs of the two dams," said PBAPP chief executive officer Dato K. Pathmanathan on Wednesday (April 2).

He said the effective capacities of Teluk Bahang and Air Itam dams were 47.3% and 55.7% respectively as of March 31.

"In 2025, PBAPP recorded a bit more rainfall in the Teluk Bahang Dam's WCA, but the rainfall trend has not normalised to pre-Covid-19 levels yet.

"Meanwhile, the effective capacity of the 86,400 ML expanded Mengkuang Dam in Seberang Perai Tengah remains 'strong' at 92.4% on March 31.

Pathmanathan said the dam is currently serving as a 'stand-by' or 'backup' dam for treated water production at the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant (WTP).

"We hope Nadma and the RMAF will respond before the Teluk Bahang Dam's effective capacity drops below the 40% mark due to the inter-monsoon period when there are clouds in the sky to seed.

"As such, PBAPP would like to seek the kind support and cooperation from all water consumers in the following areas to use water wisely," added Pathmanathan.