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Media Release

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2023 PENANG WATER ALERT 3: SECOND WAVE OF CLOUD SEEDING NEEDED, CONSUMERS MUST USE LESS WATER

- **Some rainfall was recorded in the water catchment areas on days when the first wave of cloud seeding was carried out over Penang but dam effective capacities are still low.**
- **All Penang domestic water consumers, especially consumers in Air Itam and Paya Terubong, must reduce water consumption immediately.**

PENANG, MONDAY, 8.5.2023: PBAPP is recommending a second wave of cloud seeding operations in Penang soon because the raw water reserves of the two dams on island are still below 50%.

The first wave of cloud seeding operations for Penang in 2023 were carried out on 2.5.2023, 3.5.2023 and 4.5.2023, with the support and assistance of the:

- National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA);
- Royal Malaysia Air Force (RMAF);
- Malaysian Meteorological Department (METMalaysia); and
- Penang Water Regulatory Body (Badan Kawal Selia Air – BKSA).

Over this 3-day period, PBAPP recorded:

- 8.5mm of rainfall in the Air Itam Dam water catchment area; and
- 19.5mm of rainfall in the Teluk Bahang Dam water catchment area.

The following table outlines the impact on the effective capacities of the 2 dams:

	1.1.2023	1.5.2023 (before cloud seeding)	7.5.2023 (after first wave of cloud seeding)
AIR ITAM DAM	82.5%	43.6%	41.5%
TELUK BAHANG DAM	64.0%	49.1%	48.4%

There was rainfall in the water catchment areas of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam during the days when the cloud seeding was carried out. However, much more rainfall is required to replenish the dams.

El Niño 2023

According to the latest El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) outlook report published online by METMalaysia*: “Most climate forecast models expect the transition to El Niño to occur around May to July with a probability of 62%.”

With the possibility of a (hot and dry) El Niño phenomenon this year, it is imperative to do all that can be done to prevent the two dams on Penang Island from running dry before the next rainy season arrives.

As such, PBAPP recommends the implementation of a second wave of cloud seeding in Penang to optimise rainfall in the water catchment areas of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam.

Please use less water immediately

In the period from 1.1.2023 to 7.5.2023, the effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam dropped by 41% while the effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam dropped by 15.6%.

This is because the maximum effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam is 2,160 million litres (ML) while the maximum effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam is significantly higher: 18,240 ML.

One of the key factors that caused the rapid depletion of dam reserves in 2023 is low volumes of rainfall since 1.1.2023. The other equally important factor is high water consumption; especially domestic water consumption which accounted for 61.6% of total water consumption in Penang in 2022.

In 2022, PBAPP supplied 868 million litres of treated water per day in Penang. This is the highest average volume per day for one year that we have supplied in PBAPP’s history. In the January 2023, we broke the 2022 record by supplying an average of 875 MLD. In February 2023, we supplied an even higher average of 944 MLD.

As such, PBAPP would like to appeal to all domestic water consumers in Penang to kindly use less water at home immediately. This is an urgent appeal, and it is especially relevant to domestic water consumers in Air Itam, Paya Terubong and all the other nearby service areas of the Air Itam Dam.

Please help us to “conserve” the reserves of the Air Itam Dam for as long as possible. This is the smallest dam in Penang and its effective capacity is below 50%. Moreover, we may face an El Niño phenomenon this year. If its effective capacity reaches 0%, there will be no water left to supply to Air Itam, Paya Terubong and nearby areas.

Easiest and most effective domestic water saving tip

The easiest and most effective way to use less water at home is to stop using a hose.

- Do not use a hose to water your plants or garden. Use a watering can instead.
- Do not use a hose to clean your car or motorcycle. Use a bucket, cloth and sponge instead; and only clean your vehicle when it is absolutely necessary.
- Do not use a hose to clean your yard or patio. Use a broom and dustpan instead.

Also, please do not leave a tap running. Open the tap only at the moment when you need to rinse your hands, food, clothes, cooking utensils and dishes. Then, shut it off immediately.

For more water saving tips, please visit: www.pba.com.my

On its part, PBAPP will pump more treated water from the Sungai Dua Water Treatment Plant in Seberang Perai to Penang Island to reduce dependency on the Air Itam Dam, as far as possible. We will also tighten our dry weather controls in the Air Itam service areas to minimise daily drawdowns from the dam.

One of PBAPP's primary objectives now is to avoid the complete depletion of the Air Itam Dam reserves during a potential El Niño year. In order to achieve this objective, we need the urgent support and cooperation of Penang domestic water consumers.

Thank You.

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* <https://m.met.gov.my/iklim/ramalanbermusim/ramalanelninerkini?lang=en>



4.5.2023 : CLOUD SEEDING OVER PBAPP'S TELUK BAHANG DAM