

## Not enough water for agriculture purposes, says PBAPP CEO

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**GEORGE TOWN:** There is not enough water to supply both consumers and for agriculture purposes according to Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) CEO Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa.

As such, he urged federal authorities in charge of agriculture activities to put a temporary stop to paddy planting activities to ensure adequate water supply for consumers.

He pointed out that Penang had already delayed the start of the paddy planting season, pointing out that 75% of water was used for agriculture purposes with 25% for consumers.

Jaseni said there was no point in planting paddy when water supply was uncertain during the prolonged dry season caused by the Super El Nino phenomenon which is expected to last until June.

"If there is not enough water until the paddy matures, then the paddy will die," he said at a press conference yesterday after a media tour of the Waterfall of Penang water treatment plant off the Penang Botanical Gardens here.

Jaseni also urged water operators countrywide to reduce their drawdown of water from dams and only to draw just enough to meet demand.

He said the Ministry of Water, Energy and Green Technology should issue an order through the National Water Commission (SPAN) to that effect to ensure water supply can outlast the dry season.

He said Penang has already started to do so in January in preparation for the dry season and again urged others to follow suit.

Jaseni also stressed on the need for federal administrators to start cloud seeding immediately to ensure the Kuala Muda basin and Beris basin will have sufficient water levels to be drawn on.

He said these basins were important in the northern region as both Penang and Kedah drew water from them and their going dry will also affect Perlis and northern Perak.

"This large scale cloud seeding exercise is for the benefit of four million people in the region," he said, adding that people should start to use less water and utilise the resource wisely.