

Water level drops at Penang island's main dam

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PETALING JAYA: The prevailing hot and dry weather has caused the water level at Penang island's main dam, the Air Itam dam, to fall by 24.9% from the start of the year to Monday.

The level at the Air Itam dam has fallen from 92.2% to 67.3%, raising alarm bells with the Penang Water Authority (PBAPP) which has urged residents there to save water with immediate effect.

PBAPP chief executive officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa urged consumers in Penang to go slow on the consumption rate, saying that water rationing must be the last course of action in the state.

Low rainfall is the primary reason for the dramatic drop in the effective capacity of the Air Itam dam. In the period of Jan 1 until Feb 18, the rainfall gauges at this dam have recorded only 94 mm of rain.

In comparison, the rainfall gauges at the Teluk Bahang dam recorded a total of 172.5 mm of rainfall since Jan 1.

High water consumption is another reason for the significant drop in the effective capacity of the Air Itam dam.

Water consumption in the Air Itam township and surrounding areas had shot up due to hot and dry weather conditions, as well as festive celebrations which went on for the last two months, said Jaseni.

High levels of consumption are dangerous, especially when the raw water storage in the Air Itam dam is being depleted significantly.

He said in a statement that PBAPP has now implemented its dry weather control measures to ensure that supply can be sustained until the wet season returns.

"The people must also play their role to save water in support of Penang's 'no water rationing' policy," he added.

PBAPP also shared tips on water saving; such as avoiding using a hose, avoid washing their road vehicles too often, water plants by using a watering can instead of a hose and fix all leaking pipes and sewerage systems in the households.

For more water saving tips, visit www.pbapp.com.my.