

Malaysia

Start cloud seeding in Kedah now to prevent crisis, Penang says

BY OPALYN MOK
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Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said cloud seeding must be intensified to prevent potential water crisis in Perlis, Kedah and Penang. — Picture by Opalyn Mok

GEORGE TOWN, Jan 19 — Cloud seeding efforts in Kedah must be immediately intensified as a preventive measure for the dry season ahead, said Penang Water Supply Corporation's (PBAPP) Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa today.

The PBA Holdings Bhd and PBAPP chief executive officer said cloud seeding is needed to prevent a potential water crisis in Perlis, Kedah and Penang.

"Cloud seeding must continue to maximise the effective capacities of the Beris Dam and Muda Dam in Kedah, otherwise Kedah will not be able to face the dry season," he said in a press conference this morning.

He expressed his concern over the status of the Kedah dams because these are the strategic drought reserves for Sungai Muda.

More than 80 per cent of Penang's raw water is extracted from Sungai Muda daily and the raw water reserve is shared with Kedah.

"PBAPP is operating in alert mode due to the status of the Beris Dam and Muda Dam in Kedah which stands at 71.7 per cent and 56 per cent capacity as at January 18," he said.

Comparatively, Penang's two key dams, Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam, are at 98.1 per cent and 100 per cent capacity as at January 18.

"In line with our no water rationing policy, we would like to assure Penang's 575,747 registered water consumers that we have done our best to put the state on a strong footing to face the projected dry season in 2017," he said.

Jaseni said the anticipated dry season begins in the first quarter of every year.

He also called on the Kedah state government to manage water releases from both the Beris and Muda Dams prudently.

"Kedah must not release too much water too soon and cause the dams to run out of water before the rains arrive in April or May," he said.

He reminded Kedah of the crisis scenario it faced when the effective capacities of the Beris Dam and Muda Dam fell to critical levels of 24.9 per cent and 14.2 per cent respectively last year.

"We support Kedah's call for urgent and timely federal action and intervention to avoid a water crisis that will affect more than four million people as well as thousands of businesses in Perlis, Kedah and Penang," he said.

Last month, Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng pledged that the Pakatan Harapan Penang government will ensure no water disruptions, including rationing, until the year 2030.