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PRESS STATEMENT

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## **2020 PENANG WATER SUPPLY ALERT 5: SECOND SERIES OF CLOUD SEEDING OPERATIONS NEEDED IN JUNE 2020**

- **Cloud seeding operations from 25.4.2020 to 21.5.2020 have been successful in inducing rainfall in Penang and Kedah.**
- **The Air Itam Dam's effective capacity has increased by 11.6%. However, the Teluk Bahang Dam's effective capacity has only increased by 1.0%.**
- **PBAPP will seek approval for another series of cloud seeding operations in June.**

PENANG, Friday, 22.5.2020: The Penang State Government's April-May 2020 cloud seeding plan has been successful in inducing more rainfall in the water catchment areas of the Air Itam Dam and the Teluk Bahang Dam.

The State Government had approved a plan to implement 10 cloud seeding operations over the water catchment areas of 6 dams in Penang and Kedah, as well as Sungai Muda, commencing from 25.4.2020. To date, 6 cloud seeding operations have been carried out, with 4 cloud seeding operations scheduled in late May and early June 2020.

In the period 25.4.2020 to 21.5.2020, a total of 253mm of rainfall was recorded at the Air Itam Dam while 801mm of rainfall was recorded at the Teluk Bahang Dam.

Kindly note that the maximum effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam is 2.16 billion litres while the maximum effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam is 18.24 billion litres.

In other words, the Teluk Bahang Dam is a bigger dam. Its maximum effective capacity is 8.4 times more than the effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam. Accordingly, significantly more rainfall is required to refill the Teluk Bahang Dam.

The following table compares the effective capacities of the Air Itam Dam and the Teluk Bahang Dam on 25.4.2020 and 21.5.2020:

Dams	Effective Capacity (%) 25.4.2020	Effective Capacity (%) 21.5.2020	% Increase
Air Itam Dam	32.4	44.0	11.6
Teluk Bahang Dam	20.4	21.4	1.0

Based on the results thus far, Perbadanan Bekalan Air Pulau Pinang Sdn Bhd (PBAPP) will seek approval from the Penang State Government to initiate a second series of cloud seeding operations in June 2020 because there must be significantly more rainfall for PBAPP to ensure water supply security in 2020 and 2021.

### **Rationale for a second series of cloud seeding operations in June 2020**

PBAPP's key rationale for a second series of cloud seeding operations in June 2020 are as follows:

- 1. As at 21.5.2020, the effective capacities of both the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam are still below the 50% mark.**

The dams' effective capacities have been low since 1.1.2020 because abnormally low volumes of rainfall were recorded in the water catchment areas of Penang Island in the period June 2019 to mid-April 2020.

- 2. Without continuing rainfall, the effective capacities of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam would be further depleted.**

PBAPP has been implementing tight controls to minimise the daily dam drawdowns since 1.1.2020.

**3. June 2020 offers a promising window of opportunity for maximising rainfall over Penang’s water catchment areas.**

Thunderstorms and rainy days have been forecast for June 2020, predicting the presence of rain clouds. However, the volume of rainfall is not predictable. It would be prudent to implement cloud seeding to maximise rainfall yield when the conditions are favourable. By July 2020, there may be less rain clouds present.

**4. The April-May cloud seeding operations have been effective.**

Cloud seeding operations over the past 4 weeks have yielded results. Accordingly, the cloud seeding should continue in June 2020 because Penang still needs more rainfall to re-fill its key dams.

**5. Assurance of “no water rationing” in the second half of 2020**

The Air Itam Dam must store sufficient raw water to meet all the water supply needs of water consumers in Air Itam and Paya Terubong until the end of the year. Similarly, the effective capacity of the Teluk Bahang Dam must be increased to ensure water supply security in the areas of Teluk Bahang, Batu Ferringhi and Tanjung Bungah until 31.12.2020.

**6. Assurance of “no water rationing” in the first quarter of 2021**

Looking ahead, Penang and PBAPP must also prepare for the next dry season, which will occur from the beginning of 2021. In this context, we must take advantage of every available opportunity to refill the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam, with as much rain water as possible, from now until the end of 2020.

**7. Sustenance of Penang’s “green state” status in the fight against Covid-19**

Under normal circumstances, continuous water supply is an essential public service that supports the well-being of the Penang community and the growth of all socioeconomic sectors. In the fight against Covid-19, it has become a critical front-line service because water supply helps 1.78 million people to maintain good personal hygiene, so as to keep the pandemic at bay.

Led by Chief Minister YAB Tuan Chow Kon Yeow, Penang has now achieved “green state” status in the battle against Covid-19. For the state to sustain its “green state” status, PBAPP must continue to supply sufficient water for 1.78 million Penangites to stay clean, healthy and safe. Moreover, continuous good water supply is also needed to facilitate a gradual and healthy recovery of the Penang economy.

As such, an “investment” into a second series of cloud seeding exercises in June 2020, to further replenish the in-state raw water storages of the Air Itam Dam and Teluk Bahang Dam, would be a prudent and wise initiative.

Thank You.

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