Clouds seeded only if dam water drops below 40 per cent

Last update: 24/03/2019

GEORGE TOWN, March 24 (Bernama) -- Penang will carry out cloud seeding when the water level of the Air Itam Dam drops below 40 per cent, said Penang Chief Minister, Chow Kon Yeow.

Chow said currently the Air Itam Dam has an adequate amount of raw water to meet the needs of the Air Itam township, Paya Terubong valley and surrounding areas for another 48 days.

"As of Friday, the effective capacity of the dam was 49.1 per cent, but after the rain yesterday, the level increased to 50.1 per cent.

We will only call for cloud seeding if the effective capacity of the Air Itam Dam drops below 40 per cent," he told reporters after visiting the Air Itam Dam with Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer, Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa, today.

Chow said he would leave it to PBAPP to keep an eye on the situation.

Jaseni said PBAPP will inform the state to ask for the cloud seeding from the Meteorological Department should the water level drop below 40 per cent.

"We have already coordinated with Kedah because when we do cloud seeding, it doesn't just affect the clouds in Penang, but northern Perak to Langkawi as well, with certain areas receiving rain depending on the wind," he said.

However, Jaseni expressed his concern about Sungai Muda's low water level because it is Penang's primary source of water.

He added the water level has fallen below PBAPP's alert level of 2m for 42 consecutive days (Feb 9 to March 22), with the level at 1.82m last Friday.

"We will continue to be vigilant because PBAPP extracts water from this river downstream of 14 Kedah water treatment plants and four irrigation intakes," he said.

He also said that Kedah is releasing water into Sungai Muda from the Muda and Beris Dams in Kedah to meet demand in Kedah and Penang.

He said that as of last Friday, the capacity of the Muda Dam was 49.6 per cent, Beris Dam 73.3 percent, Teluk Bahang Dam 70.7 per cent and Mengkuang Dam 46.6 per cent.

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