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Perak seeks urgent cloud seeding amid prolonged dry spell

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WATER, POWER SUPPLY CONCERNS

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IPOH: The Perak Irrigation and Drainage Department has called for urgent cloud seeding at the Bukit Merah Dam and upper Sungai Perak basin amid prolonged dry conditions.

State Infrastructure, Energy, Water and Public Transport Committee chairman Datuk Seri Mohammad Nizar Jamaluddin said this was aimed at boosting rainfall and preventing potential disruptions to irrigation and domestic water supply.

He said joint monitoring with Tenaga Nasional Bhd found that water levels at Tasik Temengor were low due to reduced natural inflows from surrounding catchment areas after several months of below-average rainfall.

“The situation has triggered a chain effect on downstream reservoirs, namely Tasik Bersia, Tasik Kenering and Tasik Chenderoh, which are now approaching their minimum operational levels.”

Under current conditions, Nizar said water releases from the Chenderoh Dam had been limited to maintain dam stability, ensure the continuity of Sungai Perak’s flow and prevent reservoirs from reaching critical operational levels that could compromise overall water resource management.

He said the low water levels had affected eco-tourism activities in the upper Sungai Perak areas, including Tasik Temengor and Tasik Raban, and posed medium-

term risks to water supply security and electricity generation.

“These constraints are not merely operational issues but could potentially have wider implications for the state, including support for the operations of the Manjung power station, which contributes about 25 per cent of Peninsular Malaysia’s electricity supply and is closely linked to the stability of water resources in Perak.”

Nizar added that the water level at Tasik Bukit Merah stood at 6.416m, with 19.89 per cent of storage remaining, placing it at irrigation critical level stage two.

As a result, he said, irrigation water for padi fields under the Kerian Irrigation Scheme was

now being supplied on a rotational basis.

Monitoring records showed that water levels at the Bukit Merah Dam began declining on Dec 25 when they reached the irrigation alert level of 7.62m, before dropping to the critical level of 7.01m on Jan 12.

Nizar said Perak’s drought and

dry-season management procedures would be activated if dam storage levels and river flow rates stayed at alert thresholds for three consecutive weeks.

Page 1 pic: A view of the low water level in Sungai Perak, as seen from a bridge in Tanjong Belanja, Parit, yesterday.