

No water rationing just yet

Cloud seeding improves situation at three Malacca dams

MALACCA: The plan for water rationing in the state has been put on hold thanks to heavy rain yesterday.

The rain, which was the product of cloud seeding, prevented water levels in three dams in the state from dropping to below the critical level.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Idris Haron said the cloud seeding carried out on Monday helped pushed the water levels at the Durian Tunggal Dam, Asahan Dam and Jus Dam to above the critical level of 35m.

The current water level at the Durian Tunggal dam is 36m, Asahan Dam at 60.3m and Jus Dam at 44m.

The state government on Monday announced the proposal to implement water rationing starting from tomorrow if the level at the dams continued to fall.

"We will continue with cloud seeding until Nov 2 to avoid the need for water rationing," he said.

Idris said Malacca Water Company was also working on various solutions, including installing a bigger inflow piping system from Tasik Biru Lake in Chinchin, to supplement the drying dams.

"Apart from cloud seeding, we are working on various other steps to ensure adequate water," he said.

Idris said even if rationing was carried out, it would be done in the most responsible manner and on a rotation basis to allow households to store water.

Malacca faced its worst water crisis following a drought in late



Drying up: The water level at the Durian Tunggal Dam in Alor Gajah declining after one month of no rain. This picture was taken in the Machap Baru area before yesterday's heavy rain.

1991 and also due to a mistake in monitoring the Durian Tunggal dam.

In another development, the Negri Sembilan Department of Environment (DoE) said it will work with the concessionaire of the Elite Highway to establish if traces of a toxic solvent found in Sungai Buah was dumped from a slope along the route or accidentally spilled following a road accident.

State DoE director Norhazni Mat

Sari said checks would also be carried out with the Fire and Rescue Department to establish if the solvent had seeped into the river following a road accident along KM45.9 of the highway.

"We need to establish this quickly to catch the culprit," she said.

Norhazni said her team had since sent samples of the solvent for testing at the Chemistry Department in Petaling Jaya.

"We can't say what or how toxic it

is until we get the results back," she said.

On Monday, a team led by the state DoE found large traces of the solvent along a slope of the highway.

Large swathes of grass where the solvent was found were charred. As a section of Sungai Buah flowed parallel to the expressway, the solvent found its way into the river, resulting in the closure of the Semenyih water treatment plant.