

Draw raw water from rivers, water authorities urged

By **SARBAN SINGH**

sarbans@thestar.com.my

SEREMBAN: Water authorities in all states should draw raw water from rivers instead of relying solely on the dams.

Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan said the water stored in dams should be used during a prolonged dry spell when the levels of rivers recede.

“We have managed to avoid water rationing in Negri Sembilan because almost all the raw water we need is drawn from rivers.

“Since we had enough water in our dams, we were able to release some to replenish supply in rivers, where most of our treatment plants are located,” he said, adding that only two water treatment plants in the state received raw water supply from dams.

Negri Sembilan has seven dams. They are Sg Terip, Kelinchi, Talang, Teriang, Sg Beringin, Ulu Sepri and Gemenchah.

Mohamad said he had proposed this measure at last week’s National Natural Disaster Committee meeting and it was well accepted by representatives from other states.

“For the past two weeks, we have been

releasing some 90mil litres of raw water daily from the Talang dam into Ulu Sg Muar, where we have five suction pumps supplying water to different plants.

“We were fortunate that we had sufficient water in our dams as we have been storing it for some time,” he said.

Mohamad has also proposed that states build banded facilities to store rain water at downstream areas so that this could be pumped back into dams in times of need.

“Statistics show that we harvest less than 5% of the rain we get and one way to increase this is to build banded facilities,” he said, adding that these could also be an effective flood mitigation option.

Mohamad said since Malaysia was blessed with a high rainfall, the authorities should find more ways to harvest rainwater.

“Since it’s been raining the past few days, I have already instructed the water authorities in Negri to pump more water into our dams.”

On Tuesday, the National Water Services Commission said it was monitoring dams in five states and some of which had fallen to critical levels. These dams were in Perak, Perlis, Pahang, Kedah and Johor.



Critical level: Hot weather and dry spell caused by El Nino early this year have led to a severe drop in water level at Pedu Lake. — Bernama