

**KERATAN AKHBAR-AKHBAR TEMPATAN
TARIKH: 12 JANUARI 2016 (SELASA)**

Bil	Tajuk	Akhbar
1.	Cuaca panas : Bekalan air masih terkawal - SPAN	BERNAMA
2.	Hot spell spells Aedes danger	The Star
3.	SPAN belum terima laporan kekurangan air	Sinar Harian
4.	Rise in case, El Nino prompt alert	New Straits Times
5.	A week into 2016, 1,000 extra cases	The Star
6.	El Nino ekstrem bulan Januari	Utusan Malaysia
7.	Pam air disedia hadapi fenomena El Nino – Shabery Cheek	BERNAMA
8.	Jumlah pam air ditambah hadapi cuaca panas – Ahmad Shabery	Utusan Malaysia
9.	Pam air disedia hadapi fenomena El Nino	Sinar Harian
10.	Cuaca panas risiko alami dehidrasi	Sinar Harian
11.	Take more care during hot spell	The Sun
12.	Driven to drastic measures in flight against heat	Malay Mail
13.	Save water during dry season	Malay Mail
14.	RM15j tingkat paras air Sungai Lebam	Berita Harian



Cuaca Panas: Bekalan Air Masih Terkawal - SPAN

KUALA LUMPUR, 11 Jan (Bernama) -- Bekalan air di Semenanjung dan Labuan masih terkawal, meskipun negara kini sedang mengalami cuaca panas disebabkan fenomena El Nino yang dijangka berterusan sehingga Mac.

Pengerusi Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Air Negara (SPAN) Datuk Ismail Kasim berkata sehingga kini pihaknya masih belum menerima sebarang aduan mengenai kekurangan sumber air disebabkan cuaca panas.

Bagaimanapun beliau meminta operator air di semua negeri memantau rapi kedudukan sumber air di empangan dan sungai yang membekalkan sumber air mentah ke loji-loji rawatan air di negeri masing-masing.

"Ini adalah kerana kerajaan Negeri bertanggungjawab untuk memastikan sumber air di negeri masing-masing mencukupi untuk memenuhi keperluan bekalan air," katanya dalam satu kenyataan di sini hari ini.

Beliau turut meminta kerajaan negeri mengkaji sumber alternatif lain seperti air di bawah tanah dan kolam takungan bagi menambah sumber air, selain empangan dan sungai.

Dalam pada itu, pengguna dinasihat berhemah dan tidak membazir dalam menggunakan bekalan air supaya sumber air dapat bertahan lebih lama.

Pada 8 Jan lepas, [Menteri Sains, Teknologi dan Inovasi Datuk Seri Panglima Madius Tangau](#) memaklumkan cuaca panas dan kering ketika ini disebabkan oleh kejadian fenomena El Nino kuat yang sedang berlaku dan dijangka berterusan dalam suku pertama 2016.

Fenomena El Nino boleh menyebabkan pengurangan jumlah hujan antara 20 peratus hingga 60 peratus dan kenaikan suhu sekitar 0.5C hingga 2.0C dari biasa.

-- BERNAMA

Hot spell spells Aedes danger

PETALING JAYA: The current hot spell can bring dehydration and heatstroke. And it can also bring the Aedes mosquito into your home.

So, it is important that breeding grounds are eliminated, says Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah.

He said the dry spell can cause a spike in vector and water-borne diseases.

Extreme hot weather can cause people to feel fatigued, besides causing dehydration and heatstroke.

Dr Noor Hisham said there could also be related problems such as food contamination, and Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (URTI), asthma and conjunctivitis.

He said senior citizens and children were at high risk of contracting such illnesses.

He advised the public to drink enough water, limit outdoor activities and wear hats or carry an umbrella to be protected from the sun.

Energy, Green Technology and Water Minister Datuk Seri Dr Maximus Ongkili called on all water concessionaires to closely monitor water levels at dams.

As of now, he said there was no report of a water supply shortage anywhere in the peninsula and Labuan.

Dr Ongkili said the water rationing in some areas in Johor Baru was due to a lack of rain at the Sungai Lebam and Sungai Layang catchment areas last year, and failure to manage the water resources.

Last week, Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Wilfred Madius Tangau said peninsular Malaysia, Limbang and Miri in Sarawak, and Sabah would experience hot and dry weather until March.

The weather condition is a result of the El Nino phenomenon, which is expected to reduce rainfall by between 20% and 60% and cause temperatures to rise between 0.5°C and 2°C.

KERATAN AKHBAR
SINAR HARIAN (NASIONAL) : MUKA SURAT 12
TARIKH: 12 JANUARI 2016 (SELASA)

SPAN belum terima laporan kekurangan air

SHAH ALAM - Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Air Negara (Span) memaklumkan pihaknya belum menerima laporan kekurangan sumber air disebabkan fenomena El Nino yang sedang berlaku dan dijangka berterusan sehingga suku pertama tahun ini.

Pengerusinya, Datuk Ismail Kasim berkata, selain itu, fenomena itu juga dijangka dapat menyebabkan pengurangan jumlah hujan di negara ini antara 20 hingga 60 peratus.

Menurutnya, walaupun keadaan cuaca panas telah mula dirasai, namun buat masa ini, bekalan air di Semenanjung Malaysia dan Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan masih lagi berada dalam keadaan terkawal.

"Sehingga kini, SPAN masih belum terima laporan kekurangan sumber air di-

sebabkan keadaan cuaca panas," katanya.

Ismail berkata demikian bagi merujuk kepada kenyataan yang dikeluarkan oleh Menteri Sains, Teknologi dan Inovasi Datuk Wilfred Madius Tangau sebelum ini yang menyatakan bahawa Malaysia akan menghadapi cuaca panas mulai bulan Januari sehingga Mac 2016.

Sehubungan itu, Ismail memaklumkan SPAN meminta supaya semua negeri melalui operator air masing-masing memantau rapi kedudukan sumber di setiap empangan dan sungai yang membekalkan sumber air mentah ke loji rawatan air.

"Ini adalah kerana kerajaan negeri adalah bertanggungjawab untuk memastikan sumber air di negeri masing-masing adalah mencukupi untuk memenuhi keperluan bekalan," katanya.

Rise in cases, El Nino prompt alert

KUALA LUMPUR: The number of dengue fever cases reported nationwide in the first week of the year has increased by 33 per cent from the last week of December last year.

The Health Ministry recorded 3,337 dengue cases (from Jan 3 to 9), an increase of 826 cases from 2,511 cases in the previous week, which involved 13 states except Kedah.

Health Ministry director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said four deaths were reported in the first week of this year in Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Negri Sembilan and Terengganu.

"The number of localities found rose in the first week of this year from 907 localities in the previous week to 1,044 in the first week of this year," he said yesterday.

Dr Noor Hisham said although there was a trend showing an increase in dengue fever cases since 2014, the number of cases reported in the first week of this year (3,337 cases) was higher than the cases reported during the first week of last year at 2,633 cases.

He said 120,836 cases were reported last year, an increase of 11.3 per cent or 12,138 cases compared

with 108,698 cases in 2014.

Based on the ministry's analysis, he said, the contributing factors included unhygienic environment, people's habit of littering and inefficient waste management.

"High population density and rapid urbanisation processes also contribute to the spike in dengue cases.

"Hence, dengue prevention requires community involvement, as well as cooperation between relevant agencies.

"Besides that, according to a press statement issued by the Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry on Jan 8, the El Nino phenomenon of hot and dry weather is expected to occur nationwide beginning at the end of the month until March.

"During the dry and hot weather, the life cycle of the Aedes mosquito, from an egg to becoming an adult, is shorter, less than seven days, which causes the mosquito population to increase.

"Warmer temperatures will also lead to more active mosquitoes and the frequency of mosquito bites will be higher, hence the spread of the dengue virus will be more widespread."

A week into 2016, 1,000 extra cases

Numbers to rise further when El Nino hits

By LOH FOON FONG
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PETALING JAYA: If last year was bad, the dengue problem could be far worse this year. The number of cases has been soaring since November, with a whopping 3,337 cases on the first week of this year alone.

That is 1,000 cases more than the average of 2,300 cases per week last year.

The last week of December saw 2,511 cases reported with four deaths.

On top of these high numbers, the Health Ministry has warned that the El Nino effect could cause a 50% spike.

The Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry announced on Jan 8 that the El Nino phenomena that brings hot and dry weather, is expected to hit the country from the end of January to March, said Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah.

"With the hot weather, the life cycle of Aedes mosquitoes, from eggs to adulthood will be shortened to seven days and this will increase the mosquito population during the period," he said in a press statement yesterday.

Dr Noor Hisham also said the high temperatures would cause mosquitoes to be active and increase the frequency of biting and speed up the spread of virus.

He reminded people who stock up water during the hot season to ensure there were no mosquitoes breeding.

"This dengue issue needs to be tackled through more creative, innovative, comprehensive and integrated methods," Dr Noor Hisham said.

He said the ministry hoped that all ministries, agencies and NGOs as well as the society, would take proactive preventive measures.

Dr Noor Hisham said that from Jan 3 to 9, the number of dengue cases reported had been showing an upward trend since early November.

The increasing cases involved 13 states except Kedah and Labuan.

The number of outbreak locations was higher, 1,044 compared with 907 the week before and the number of hotspots increased from 145 to 161 involving Selangor (122), Johor (22), Perak (8), Penang (4), Sabah (2), Negri Sembilan (2) and the Federal Territory (1).

Last year, 120,836 dengue cases had been reported, an increase of 11.2% or 12,138 cases compared with 108,698 cases in 2014.

Dr Noor Hisham said the number of deaths also increased from 215 in 2014 to 336 last year, an increase of 56%.

The main reasons for the continued increasing numbers were the unhygienic environment, people throwing rubbish indiscriminately and lack of garbage management, he said.

People movement, high population and rapid urbanisation had also contributed to the increase, he said.

Dengue high alert

Measures from all parties needed

> All ministries, departments and agencies to step up clean-up activities. Search and destroy all mosquito breeding areas every week in their respective institutions.

> Local authorities must ensure garbage is collected on schedule at least three times a week while enforcing against illegal garbage dumping. Larvaciding be done in high risk areas.

> Checks and enforcement at construction sites must be carried out continuously.

> The public must clean up their own backyard. Search and destroy mosquito breeding areas, use mosquito repellent and wear long sleeved shirts/blouses to protect themselves outside, especially during dusk and dawn.

> The community, resident associations and local authorities must carry out mega gotong-royong efforts with various departments and agencies, especially on vacant lots.



Dengue symptoms



Fever



Headache



Diarrhoea



Body ache



Rashes



Vomiting



Pain behind eyes



Mild bleeding from the gums, nose, below the skin

Source: Health Ministry

KERATAN AKHBAR
UTUSAN MALAYSIA (DALAM NEGERI) : MUKA SURAT 13
TARIKH: 12 JANUARI 2016 (SELASA)

El Nino ekstrem bulan Januari

KUALA LUMPUR 11 Jan. - Fenomena El Nino yang sedang melanda dunia termasuk Malaysia dijangka mencatatkan pemanasan suhu paling kuat bulan ini dan akan mulai reda bermula Februari.

Ketua Pengarah Jabatan Meteorologi, Datuk Che Gayah Ismail berkata, El Nino yang bermula bulan Julai tahun lalu itu dijangka pulih sepenuhnya dan menjadi normal seperti biasa pada Jun ini.

"Fenomena El Nino kali ini akan menyebabkan kita mengalami pengurangan hujan sebanyak 20 hingga 60 peratus. Impaknya akan dirasakan seluruh negara terutamanya negeri di utara dan pantai timur Semenanjung seperti Kedah, Terengganu dan Kelantan; Limbang dan Miri di Sarawak.

"Apabila bercakap mengenai pengurangan hujan, ini mungkin

akan mengakibatkan gangguan bekalan air yang mengalami panas ekstrem untuk masa yang lebih lama," katanya ketika dihubungi *Utusan Malaysia* di sini hari ini.

El Nino adalah fenomena pemanasan suhu permukaan laut yang berlaku dalam tempoh enam bulan berturut-turut setiap dua hingga empat tahun di timur Lautan Pasifik.

Fenomena tersebut boleh menyebabkan rantaian perubahan iklim berlaku di seluruh dunia dan antara kesannya ialah hujan lebat di sesetengah kawasan, sementara di kawasan lain, berlaku kemarau berpanjangan.



CHE GAYAH ISMAIL

Tambah Che Gayah, di samping mengalami pengurangan hujan, negara juga akan mengalami peningkatan suhu daripada 0.5 hingga 2 darjah Celsius.

"Kali terakhir El Nino melanda negara adalah pada tahun 1997 dan 1998 yang suhu tertinggi dicatatkan adalah di Chuping, Perlis iaitu 40.1 darjah

Celsius.

"Untuk kali ini, suhu tertinggi yang kita catatkan adalah 36 darjah Celsius iaitu di Lubok Merbau, Perak. Jabatan Meteorologi sentiasa memantau suhu dan mengambil langkah berjaga-jaga untuk memberi amaran sekiranya sampai ke tahap bahaya," katanya.



Pam Air Disedia Hadapi Fenomena El Nino - Shabery Cheek

PUTRAJAYA, 11 Jan (Bernama) -- Kementerian Pertanian dan Industri Asas Tani akan menyediakan pam bagi membekalkan keperluan air ke kawasan yang berkemungkinan kering ekoran fenomena El Nino, kata Menteri berkenaan Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek.

Beliau berkata El Nino, yang menyebabkan cuaca panas dan kering, dijangka memberi kesan kepada tanaman terutamanya yang memerlukan banyak air.

"Antara tanaman yang dijangka terjejas ialah padi dan durian," katanya kepada pemberita selepas menyampaikan amanat Tahun Baru 2016 kepada warga kementerian di Wisma Tani di sini, hari ini.

Jabatan Meteorologi Malaysia menyatakan cuaca panas dan kering yang berlaku di Perlis dan Kedah, dijangka dialami seluruh Semenanjung pada penghujung Januari hingga Mac ini.

Keadaan sama dijangka berlaku di Sabah dan Bahagian Limbang dan Miri di Sarawak disebabkan fenomena El Nino kuat yang akan berterusan sehingga suku pertama 2016.

Sementara itu dalam amanatnya, Ahmad Shabery berkata insurans pertanian akan dimulakan tahun ini di Malaysia bagi meningkatkan keyakinan dan daya saing petani negara.

Insurans pertanian turut menjadi amalan di Amerika Syarikat dan Indonesia serta Filipina, katanya.

"Oleh itu, Malaysia mesti mempercepat pengeluaran insurans pertanian dan memulakannya pada tahun ini juga," kata beliau.

-- BERNAMA

Jumlah pam air ditambah hadapi cuaca panas – Ahmad Shabery

PUTRAJAYA 11 Jan. - Kementerian Pertanian dan Industri Asas Tani akan menambah jumlah pam air di beberapa kawasan pertanian di seluruh negara berikutan cuaca panas akibat fenomena El Nino.

Menterinya, Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek berkata, fenomena tersebut yang dijangka meningkatkan suhu antara 0.5 hingga dua darjah Celcius bakal memberi kesan kepada tanaman yang sangat bergantung kepada keperluan air.

"Kita telah membuat persediaan untuk membekalkan pam air bagi mengairi kawasan yang berkeungkinan kering akibat fenomena El Nino ini.

"Fenomena ini bakal memberi kesan kepada hasil tuaian dan tanaman yang memerlukan air yang banyak seperti padi dan sebagainya," katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian dalam sidang akhbar selepas Majlis Amanat 2016 kepada warga kementeriannya di sini hari ini.

Ahmad Shabery mengulas mengenai ramalan **Jabatan Meteorologi** mengenai fenomena El Nino yang dijangka melanda negara sehingga April ini terutamanya di negeri-negeri utara Semenanjung, Sabah serta Bahagian Miri dan Limbang di Sarawak.

Mengulas lanjut, beliau turut



AHMAD SHABERY CHEEK

meminta semua agensi dan jabatan di bawah kementeriannya bertindak secara proaktif dengan menyediakan ramalan berkaitan industri pertanian berdasarkan kajian Jabatan Meteorologi, fenomena cuaca dan bencana yang melanda negara setiap tahun.

Dalam pada itu, menyentuh isu bauksit di Kuantan, Pahang, beliau mengesahkan terdapat nelayan di

pesisiran pantai terutama di Bese-rah dan berhampiran pelabuhan yang terjejas teruk akibat pence- maran.

Bagaimanapun katanya, masalah tersebut hanya dapat ditangani selepas isu bauksit dapat diselesaikan secara baik oleh semua pihak terlibat.

Sementara itu, dalam ucapannya, beliau turut meminta warga kementerian dapat meningkatkan eksport makanan dan pertanian negara bagi mengurangkan defisit imbalan perdagangan.

Katanya, negara perlu mengawal produk import dan tidak terlalu bergantung kepada barangan tersebut sehingga menyebabkan industri pertanian dalam negara terjejas serta tidak berkembang.

"Sehubungan itu, kita telah meminta pengusaha industri berkenaan meningkatkan daya saing produk mereka supaya boleh menjadi juara di semua peringkat dan pada masa sama, kementerian juga meminta Agrobank untuk memperkenalkan insurans agro terhadap pengeluaran makanan pada tahun ini.

"Langkah ini diwujudkan supaya pengeluaran makanan tidak takut menceburi bidang tersebut kerana ada insurans yang melindungi mereka," katanya.

Pam air disedia hadapi fenomena El Nino



AHMAD SHABERY

PUTRAJAYA - Kementerian Pertanian dan Industri Asas Tani akan menyediakan pam bagi membekalkan keperluan air ke kawasan yang berkemungkinan kering ekoran fenomena El Nino, kata Menteri berkenaan, Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek.

Beliau berkata, El Nino, yang menyebabkan cuaca panas dan kering, dijangka memberi kesan kepada tanaman terutamanya yang memerlukan banyak air.

"Antara tanaman yang dijangka terjejas ialah

padi dan durian," katanya kepada pemberita selepas menyampaikan amanat Tahun Baru 2016 kepada warga kementerian di Wisma Tani, semalam.

Jabatan Meteorologi Malaysia menyatakan cuaca panas dan kering yang berlaku di Perlis dan Kedah, dijangka dialami seluruh Semenanjung pada penghujung Januari hingga Mac ini.

Keadaan sama dijangka berlaku di Sabah dan Bahagian Limbang dan Miri di Sarawak disebabkan fenomena El Nino kuat yang akan ber-

terusan sehingga suku pertama 2016.

Sementara itu dalam amanatnya, Ahmad Shabery berkata, insurans pertanian akan dimulakan tahun ini di Malaysia bagi meningkatkan keyakinan dan daya saing petani negara.

Insurans pertanian turut menjadi amalan di Amerika Syarikat dan Indonesia serta Filipina.

"Oleh itu, Malaysia mesti mempercepat pengeluaran insurans pertanian dan memulakannya pada tahun ini juga," katanya. - Bernama

Cuaca panas risiko alami dehidrasi

PUTRAJAYA - Cuaca panas dan kering yang berpanjangan boleh menyebabkan seseorang lebih berisiko mengalami dehidrasi dan strok haba, kata Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah.

"Cuaca panas yang terlampau boleh menyebabkan seseorang kerap berpeluh dan kesannya, cecair dalam tubuh akan berkurangan seterusnya menyebabkan individu tersebut mudah berasa letih dan kurang bertenaga," katanya dalam satu kenyataan semalam mengenai penjagaan kesihatan ketika cuaca panas dan kering.

Beliau berkata, musim kering berpanjangan boleh menyebabkan beberapa masalah seperti krisis bekalan air, cuaca panas, kebakaran hutan dan jerebu dan berisiko menimbulkan beberapa penyakit berkaitan masalah tersebut.

Antara penyakit berkait-



Cuaca panas yang terlampau boleh menyebabkan seseorang kerap berpeluh.

an ialah kejadian penyakit bawaan air dan makanan, penyakit bawaan vektor seperti demam denggi dan penyakit berkaitan jerebu iaitu jang-

kitan pada saluran atas pernafasan (URTI), asma dan konjunktivitis.

"Kanak-kanak dan warga emas adalah antara mereka

yang paling berisiko mendapat penyakit ini," katanya.

Sehubungan itu, Dr Noor Hisham menasihatkan orang ramai bersiap sedia dan mengambil tindakan sewajarnya bagi mengurangkan kesan terhadap kesihatan akibat cuaca panas dan kering yang dijangka berlanjutan sehingga Mac depan.

Menurutnya, Jabatan Meteorologi memaklumkan cuaca panas dan kering yang kini berlaku di Perlis dan Kedah dijangka turut dirasai di seluruh Semenanjung, Sabah, Bahagian Limbang dan Miri di Sarawak pada penghujung Januari hingga Mac tahun ini.

Kedudukan yang disebabkan fenomena El Nino dijangka menyebabkan pengurangan jumlah hujan antara 20 hingga 60 peratus dan kenaikan suhu sekitar 0.5 hingga 2.0 darjah celsius berbanding hari biasa suhu maksimum ialah di an-



DR NOOR HISHAM

tara 28.6 dan 35 darjah celsius manakala semasa hari panas adalah antara 35 dan 37 darjah celsius.

Dr Noor Hisham menasihatkan orang ramai agar minum air yang dimasak secukupnya dan pada masa sama menghadkan aktiviti di luar dan jika tidak dapat dielakkan, pakai topi atau payung yang boleh melindungi diri daripada terlalu terdedah dengan cuaca panas.

Orang ramai juga harus memakai pakaian yang ri-

ngan dan elak pakaian tebal dan ketat, sebolehnya berada dalam rumah atau bangunan yang mempunyai pengudaraan yang cukup atau kelengkapan pendingin hawa sekiranya mampu.

Orang ramai disaran agar menghapuskan tempat pembiakan nyamuk Aedes dan bagi mereka yang menyimpan air di dalam bekas, diingatkan supaya memastikan bekas penyimpanan air adalah bersih dan selamat.

"Mereka yang mengalami penyakit seperti batuk, selesema, asma, sakit mata, jangkitan paru-paru kronik hendaklah datang ke klinik jika keadaan penyakit bertambah teruk," katanya.

"Perokok, pengguna rokok elektronik dan vapers juga dinasihatkan supaya berhenti merokok dan berhenti menggunakan rokok elektronik dan vape," katanya. - Bernama

Take more **care** during hot spell

> Extreme weather expected to last until March

BY **HAIKAL JALIL**
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PETALING JAYA: The public, especially children and senior citizens, must take more care of their health during the hot season.

Health Ministry director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said the hot weather expected to last until March is likely to see a rise in diseases caused by parasites, contamination of food and water, and air pollution.

"The extreme hot weather can cause a person to sweat frequently, causing a depletion of body fluids which will result in a person becoming easily tired. They also risk experiencing dehydration and heat stroke," he said in a statement yesterday.

He advised the public to take measures to reduce the health risk.

People should drink an adequate amount of boiled water, limit outdoor activities, wear light clothing and stay in a place with sufficient ventilation.

Noor Hisham said dengue cases have been increasing, with 3,337 cases reported in the first week of 2016 which is a sharp increase compared to the same period last year, in which there were only 2,633 dengue cases reported.

The number of cases in the first week of 2016 increased by 33% from the 2,511 cases

reported in the previous week.

All states, except for Kedah, recorded an increase of dengue cases in the same period, with four deaths reported.

"The number of epidemic localities also saw an increase in the first week of 2016, which was at 1,044 localities as compared to 907 localities the previous week," he said in a statement.

The hotspot locality has increased from 145 to 161 localities, involving seven states - Selangor (122), Johor (22), Perak (8), Penang (4), Sabah (2), Negri Sembilan (2) and Federal Territories (1).

He said some of the factors contributing to the increase of dengue cases were unhygienic surroundings, littering and inefficient garbage management.

To add to the problem, the hot spell nationwide could further increase dengue cases as it would shorten the time for an Aedes mosquito to reach a mature age and increase its population.

"The hot temperature will cause the mosquito to become more active and increase the frequency of mosquito bites," he said.

He said the El Nino phenomenon could increase dengue cases by up to 750%.

Meanwhile, the **Malaysian Meteorological Department** said the hot weather in the peninsula, Sabah and parts of Sarawak was due to the El Nino phenomenon which could reduce rainfall by between 20% and 60% and increase normal temperatures.

Driven to drastic measures in fight against heat

PETALING JAYA — Over the weekend, the Jaya Shopping Centre branch of electronics retailer Best Denki saw an increase in the sale of table fans, with about a dozen units being snapped up.

Store manager Victor Gan said that for a small store like theirs, the number was quite significant.

He said there had been more enquiries regarding air-conditioning and air cooler units but no purchases had been made.

However, because of the prolonged hot weather, they were expecting to sell more units and had been gearing up for an increase in demand.

Brisk sale of fans and air coolers has also been reported in many parts of the Klang Valley as the public prepare to face the heat.

The Meteorological Department has said temperatures could rise to 40° Celsius, equalling that of 1998 when the last Super El Nino hit the world.

Malay Mail took to the streets for comments on how the people were dealing with the weather.

Self-employed Raju Ponnai, 69, revealed that he was bathing more frequently.

"The heat is bad and I've resorted to bathing at least four times a day," he said, adding that he kept both the air-conditioning and fan in his home on when he is at home.

"The electricity bill is going to go up but I have no choice," he said.

Food truck operator Mohd Naza Mahmud, 42, said he was already having fever because of the heat but he had no choice but to stay outdoors because of his work.

"I'm afraid there may be water rationing especially since it's important for people to consume a lot of water during this time, but I have not made any preparations for that," he said.

Systems engineer Mohd Zaharin, 35, said that even walking short distances was unbearable.



Tourists run to a bus to escape the heat at Dataran Merdeka in Kuala Lumpur yesterday as the temperature rose to 33° Celsius.
— Picture by Azneal Ishak

"I've noticed that this month is a lot hotter than last month. Our office is just down the road from the shoplots in Section 13 and we usually walk over for lunch but now we've resorted to driving to escape the heat," he said.

Student Renuka Nair, 20, is concerned the heat could cause health problems like heat stroke, skin cancer

and dehydration.

"I've been staying indoors more often and drinking more water, but not necessarily iced water because that doesn't help," she said.

"I don't really turn on the air-conditioning either as you just end up going from too hot to too cold. Besides, it's an unhealthy practice.

Student Daphne Tan, 19, said she experienced water disruption yesterday and was stocking up on bottled water.

In a surprising turn of events, Middle Eastern lecturer Terry Fa'iz, 69, who has been living in Malaysia for the past 18 years, said he had got used to the weather here that he did not even notice the increasing heat.

Save water during dry season

PETALING JAYA — Dams nationwide are at a safe level due to the heavy rainfall last month but it will not last if the public make no effort to conserve water during this dry season.

The Drainage and Irrigation Department's Water Resources Management and Hydroelectric deputy director-general, Paridah Anum, reminded the public that less rain was expected until April because of El Nino.

"Although our dams are at normal level, we have to keep in mind that there will be hardly any rainfall. So the public must not waste water," she told *Malay Mail*, referring to its report yesterday that rainfall was expected to reduce by 20 to 60 per cent.

Asked if water rationing would be

imposed, she said it would only happen if the water level at the dams fell to 50 per cent.

The 15 active dams in the country yesterday recorded an average water level of more than 90 per cent.

Only one dam, Bukit Kwong dam in Kelantan, was at the warning level at 14m but the Kelantan Drainage and Irrigation Department said the dam was only for the irrigation of padi fields.

The National Water Services Commission (SPAN) confirmed that water supply nationwide was still under control.

Its chairman, Datuk Ismail Kasim, said in a statement SPAN had not received reports of water shortage from the states.

"The state operators will monitor dam levels and rivers that supply water directly



to treatment plants, he said, adding that it was also the responsibility of the state operators to ensure there was enough water in their states.

Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek

said his ministry would provide water pumps to farming areas that could be affected by El Nino.

He said in a Bernama report the hot and dry weather would adversely affect crops, especially those which needed a lot of water, like padi and durian.

He hoped the agriculture insurance or crop insurance to protect farmers from losses resulting from damaged crops due to natural disaster would be introduced this year.

The Meteorological Department recently said the current hot and dry weather in Perlis and Kedah was expected to be felt across the peninsula.

Similar conditions were also expected in Sabah, as well as Limbang and Miri in Sarawak in the first quarter of this year.

RM15j tingkat paras air Sungai Lebam

Johor Bahru: Langkah meningkatkan paras air di Empangan Sungai Lebam dekat Kota Tinggi membabitkan kos tambahan lebih RM15 juta baru-baru ini, dijangka mampu mengatasi kesan fenomena El Nino.

Pengerusi Jawatankuasa Kerja Raya, Kemajuan Luar Bandar dan Wilayah Johor, Datuk Hasni Mohammad, berkata kerajaan negeri yakin rancangan jangka pendek itu dapat mengelak bekalan air berjadual dari berulang di sekitar Kota Tinggi dan daerah ini terutama akibat fenomena cuaca panas melampau.

Katanya, Johor juga sudah mengemukakan permohonan kepada Kerajaan Persekutuan melalui Kementerian Tenaga, Teknologi Hijau dan Air

(KETTHA) berjumlah RM100 juta bagi meningkatkan penyaluran air ke Empangan Sungai Layang, Pasir Gudang yang turut terjejas kerana fenomena kemarau sekarang.

Atasi bekalan air

"Kerajaan negeri maklum mengenai El Nino dan rancangan jangka pendek yang bertujuan mengatasi masalah bekalan air di Pengerang dan Johor Bahru sudah dan sedang dilaksanakan.

"Kesan El Nino boleh menjejaskan paras Empangan Sungai Lebam dan Layang tetapi pada masa ini keadaan masih terkawal," katanya kepada BH di sini, semalam.

Beliau berkata demikian ketika ditanya mengenai fenomena cuaca panas melampau yang

menyebabkan bekalan air berjadual di beberapa kawasan di daerah ini dilanjutkan.

Hasni berkata, bekalan air berjadual di kawasan terjejas kawasan Pasir Gudang, Masai dan sebahagian Johor Bahru sudah ditamatkan akhir tahun lalu manakala di Kota Tinggi dan Pengerang masih diteruskan sehingga Jumaat ini.

"Dengan siapnya Projek Air Mentah RAPID di Pengerang yang mendapat sumber air dari Empangan Sungai Seluyut maka kerajaan negeri akan berbincang dengan PETRONAS mengenai hasrat untuk mendapat sumber air dari punca yang sama.

"Kami akan minta perunding untuk mengkaji kesesuaian dan kaedah untuk melaksanakan rancangan berkena-



Hasni Mohammad

an," katanya.

Dilaporkan taburan hujan di seluruh negara dijangka berkurangan antara 20 hingga 60 peratus bermula bulan ini, berikutan fenomena El Nino kategori kuat yang sedang melanda Malaysia.

Jabatan Meteorologi berkata fenomena pemanasan suhu permukaan laut yang berlaku dalam tempoh enam bulan setiap dua hingga empat tahun di timur Lautan Pasifik menyebabkan suhu negara dijangka meningkat antara 0.5 hingga dua darjah Celcius.