

# Paddy cultivation: 'dry direct-seeding' to address water shortage

10 Feb 2020



ALOR SETAR, Feb 10 -- The Muda Agricultural Development Authority (MADA) today agreed to implement 'dry direct-seeding' as an alternative method for paddy cultivation for the 1/2020 season due to water shortage in the state.

MADA chairman Datuk Seri Mukhriz Tun Dr Mahathir said the method was adopted at the MADA Board Meeting because the water level at the Pedu Dam, Muda Dam and Ahning Dam was low and insufficient for normal planting methods.

"Normally, irrigation of paddy crops for each season depends on the water supply in the dam. However, we are deprived of rainfall for the first half of the year and MADA needs at least 550,000 acre-feet of stored water in the catchment area.

"MADA also has an obligation to secure the supply of raw water for domestic purposes and when the water level in the Pedu Dam reaches 29 per cent, water release for paddy cultivation (agricultural sector only) will be halted," he said in a statement here today.

Mukhriz, who is also Kedah Menteri Besar, said to date, the water level in Pedu Dam is 37.18 per cent, Muda Dam (5.88 per cent) and Ahning Dam was 56.86 per cent.

“Determining the water supply schedule and paddy planting season 1/2020 will be discussed jointly between MADA and the farmers at a meeting on Feb 20. All factors including historical data analysis, rainfall forecast, valid supply of paddy seeds and subsidised fertiliser will be taken into account.

"In addition, the MADA Development Team will also initiate the Strategic Development Campaign to explain the implementation of the 'dry direct-seeding' method to all farmers," he said.

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