



# Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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## Press Statement

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### **CAP URGES PADANG TERAP FARMERS' PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED IMMEDIATELY**

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) urged the Kedah government and the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry to build a well-functioning irrigation system in Mukim Padang Terap near Kuala Nerang to irrigate 500 hectares of paddy fields here.

The villages involved are Kampung Lubuk Labi, Kampung Tanjung, Kampung Padang Gelanggang, Kampong Pok and Kampung Tanah Merah.

Immediate action should be taken by the relevant agencies as roughly 100 farmers in the area may face serious adverse impacts due to insufficient water supply for the paddy fields they are working on.

Farmers here rely heavily on rainwater to enable them to cultivate rice twice a year. During dry season, frequent water shortage problem that occurs causes the rice fields to become dry, hence affecting the crop yield and their source of income.

The farmers also had to bear huge amount of losses as broadcast seeding result in poor germination, subsequently causing reduction in the rice sales as the yield's quality is affected.

In a survey done by CAP it was discovered that 70% of the rice fields were covered by various types of weed, particularly the *sambau* grass which causes stunted growth of paddy.

CAP hopes that the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Drainage and Irrigation (DID) will conduct a comprehensive study on the problems faced by the farmers here. This is to ensure that the irrigation system built in this area is effective.

CAP is concerned that the present situation will lead to more problems in the future if it remains unsolved. Farmers will face problems in the future such as infestation of rats and golden apple snails (siput gondang), as well as *sambau* grass that will likely cause reduction in rice yields between 10 to 80% in the harvest season.

It is also possible that paddy fields will be left idle if the water source from the Ahning Dam and the Pedu Dam located not far from this area is not given due regard to serve the farmlands here. Therefore, this issue must be taken seriously and dealt with urgently so that it will not affect the lives and livelihood of farmers in the area, as well as threaten the county's food security and agricultural sector in the future.

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