

TODAY

20 October 2011

Does RWS really have world-class treatment?

Letter from Elissa Loi Shiling

REFER to Mr Neil Wilkinson's letter "We should support RWS' Marine Life Park" (Oct 18), in which he said that Singaporeans should be "proud that Singapore will have the world's largest oceanarium".

With the international attention the local dolphin campaign has received, any pride we might have in that accolade is undermined by how Resorts World Sentosa refuses to answer questions posed by local animal welfare groups and the public.

Besides, it is still possible for Singapore to have the world's largest oceanarium sans dolphins.

Mr Wilkinson argued that "no one can say what dolphins prefer" and concluded that dolphins would prefer to enjoy the same creature comforts that Singaporeans do. But dolphins are not humans, let alone Singaporeans.

The analogy should be between being cooped up in an artificial space where every aspect of life is decided for you, after being captured, and coming and going as you please in the environment you were born in, to enjoy fully what nature has designed for you.

A wild animal's greatest privilege is freedom. Who are we to take it away from them?

To conclude, I would ask if RWS can detail the capture of the 27 dolphins. How was it in line with conservation laws?

Was there no force or trauma dealt to the dolphins in the process of locating them, separating them from their pods and removing them from the ocean, that is, does RWS' boast of world-class treatment hold?