

Singapore Scene

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RWS responds to dolphin petition

By Fann Sim

UPDATED

Resorts World Sentosa (RWS) has responded to concerns from dolphin activists on the welfare of its bottlenose dolphins.

Its Marine Life Park (MLP) spokesperson told Yahoo! Singapore that its bottlenose dolphins are residing in a facility that is safe and conducive to their health and well-being.

“We exceed stringent international regulations and ensure our bottlenose dolphins have space to play, rest and grow healthily,” he said.

MLP added that its team of experts, including world-renowned veterinarians and scientists from various fields in marine husbandry, is providing the very best care for them with a superior diet, daily enrichment, and veterinary care.

“We have also built a laboratory to ensure proactive animal health procedures and tests. All our bottlenose dolphins have been under a robust health and husbandry programme since the beginning, and this will continue at the animals’ new facility in the MLP.”

RWS was responding to the over 100,000 people who pledged their support through Change.org in a petition to free 25 dolphins that are kept in captivity.

The "Please Help Free the "Sentosa 25" from Resorts World in Sentosa Singapore " petition was started by dolphin activist Barbara Napoles and has received worldwide support in the last two months.

There were initially 27 dolphins caught in Solomon Islands and two have died in captivity at Langkawi, where they were previously held. The remaining 25 dolphins are kept in Philippines while the housing facility at Sentosa is still being constructed.

MLP said that they were “deeply saddened by the loss of two dolphins to a water and air-borne bacterial infection” and added that no medical expense or effort were spared and the dolphins could not be saved.

Singapore-based animal welfare group, Animal Concerns Research and Education Society (ACRES) is supporting the petition and have rolled out their own roadshows to spread awareness about the dolphins' plight.

ACRES executive director Louis Ng said: "The number of signatures clearly shows people are passionate about this issue."

"I will always remain confident that RWS will follow the progressive trends that more and more companies are paying attention to corporate social responsibility and will release the dolphins," Ng added.

RWS maintain their position and said that the dolphins that have been living under their care for the past three years have acclimated well to their interim environment. "Clearly stated, returning them to the wild is contrary to our mission to create a zoological home for them and would be irresponsible," a MLP spokesperson said.

On 28 August, ACRES will be hosting a concert at the Speaker's Corner at Hong Lim Park to show their support for the campaign.