

We have followed the rules regarding our dolphins: RWS CEO

04:47 AM May 28, 2011

by **Sabrina Chan**

SINGAPORE - In his first public comments on the controversy surrounding the dolphins caught for the Resorts World Sentosa's (RWS) marine park, CEO Tan Hee Teck said they had followed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) rules on the trade of endangered species.

The remarks were made on the same day an animal welfare group released undercover videos of the dolphins being tamed in Subic Bay in the Philippines.

Speaking at a press conference yesterday, Mr Tan said: "All our dolphins in Subic Bay today are very healthy and we hopefully will be able to bring them, what I call back home here, in the next 12 months."

The Animal Concerns Research and Education Society (ACRES) also held a press conference yesterday to step up its call for the release of the 25 dolphins bound for RWS Marine Life Park (MLP), where visitors will get to interact with them.

Calling the timing of their press conference a coincidence, the society said one of its concerns is that the dolphins are believed to be fed only dead fish, which is unnatural as they are used to eating only fresh fish.

Last December, Today had broken the story on how two of the RWS dolphins had died of acute bacterial infection called melioidosis, in Langkawi, in October.

Said ACRES executive director Louis Ng: "We need to realise that these dolphins have a home range of over 40 square kilometres in the wild. Even if you give them another two by two metres, I don't think that makes much of a difference."

An MLP spokesman told MediaCorp they will be as transparent as possible about their plans while ensuring the safety and well-being of their animals.

He confirmed the dolphins were from the Solomon Islands, where the government is a member of CITES.

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