Chen: I never stopped being a Singaporean

WP star candidate says he has always kept abreast of issues at home

BY KOR KUAN BENG

GLOBETROTTING corporate lawyer Chen Show Mao stressed yesterday that he is able to represent Singaporeans and identify with their aspirations, and that he will make a good MP if he is elected in the upcoming polls.

Despite being away from Singapore for nearly 30 years due to studies and work, the Beijing-based 50-year-old shared nearly 30 years due to studies and work, Chen, who was Singapore's top A-level student in 1979, did his national service despite being a Taiwan-born降人 who did not have Singaporean citizenship at the time. Mr Chen, who has lived in Taiwan since the mid-1980s, said that while abroad, he has been playing the role of an ambassador for our country.

He left Singapore in 1982 for studies at top universities Harvard, Oxford and Stanford. Since 1992, he has been based in Beijing.

He has pledged to return to Singapore for good with his wife and two children, regardless of whether he wins or loses in the May 7 General Election.

Mr Chen said he would let his son make the decision on NS on his own, but added: "I would certainly hope that he would decide to do what I did."

Taiwan-born Mr Chen was referring to how he voluntarily underwent NS after he finished his A levels in 1979, even though he became a Singaporean only in 1986. He was a platoon commander and brigade staff officer in the army.

He also revealed more about his family. His wife, a former accountant, was born in Taiwan and raised in Indonesia, before emigrating to the US with her family. Mr Chen, she went to school there and in Britain.

They have three children, but their second child, a girl, died of a illness just before she turned four in 2006. His wife is now a housewife in Beijing, but will be returning back here with their two children.

Mr Chen said his wife and parents were concerned when he told them about his intention to enter politics.

"My parents, for example, don't quite understand why it makes sense to not continue the path that I'm on in terms of professional development," he said.

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