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Oral narration | Chen Min-lang Sorted | The Editing Team

# 「同島一命，如兄如弟」

## 上士陳敏郎專訪

### Serving Island Missions with a United Fate with Great Camaraderie - an Exclusive interview with Staff Sergeant Chen Min-lang



上士陳敏郎與南沙指揮官李佩麟合影  
A snapshot of Corporal Chen Min-lang take picture with Lee Pei-lin of Na Sha commander

在接受完整治療痊癒之後，為了感懷國家對我的恩澤，並無因地處偏遠、運輸困難而吝於照顧及關懷，心想該是對國家有所回饋的時候了！於是毅然決然轉服志願役，願日後能為國家盡一份心力。」這是三年前，因為患了嚴重眼疾致動用國防部拉法葉艦急駛台灣及南沙之間海域，感念各界馳援而志願留營的上士班長－陳敏郎。由於南沙地處偏遠，且每年從台灣出發航至南沙的船班有限，因此，特別安排與陳敏郎上士以「視訊」方式進行訪談。

陳敏郎，民國 90 年 5 月入伍，同年 11 月登上南沙太平島服役。隔年，即因感染細菌性眼角膜潰爛症以致右眼嚴重紅腫、淚流不停，由於當時島上醫療設備不足以應付其嚴重病狀，因此該指揮部立即回報台灣勤指中心，同時通報國家搜救中心協助其返台就醫。提到救援的過程，只見視訊畫面中的陳上士情緒微揚，彷彿當時情境歷歷在目，他娓娓道出眼疾前後的經過……「91 年 1 月 21 日病發當晚，在台灣聽到消息心急如焚的各級長官，試圖以最快的方式將我接送返台就醫，多次積極與國防部協調醫療後送支援，

Upon fully recovered from having undergone the comprehensive treatment, and in expression my gratitude to the nation for not having deprived me of the proper care and treatment despite the remote locale and transport difficulties, I figure that it is high time that I give back to the country with that, I had decidedly switched to the volunteer duty, anticipating that I would be able to contribute my humble efforts to the good of the nation and the society as a whole". It all started three years ago, when I was suffering from severe eye disease that required mobilizing the Defense Department's Lafayette frigate to zigzag between Taiwan and Spratly Islands, coming from Chen Min-lang, staff sergeant and a squad leader who volunteered to remain in the camp in appreciation of all the help that he had received. With Spratly Islands being in a remote locale, and with limited boat schedules departing from Taiwan to Spratly Islands every year, special arrangements have been made to interview Staff Sergeant Chen Ming-lang via the teleconferencing mode.

Chen Min-lang, enrolled in May, 2001, was soon placed to serve duty on Taiping Island in November of the same year. The following year, he had been infected with bacterial cornea ulcer and resulted in severe swelling and tearing to his right eye. At the time the island's medical equipment had not been adequate enough to handle his severe symptoms, the headquarters had reported back to Taiwan's command center and a report file with the National Rescue Center to help dispatch Chen for medical care on the mainland of Taiwan. When mentioning of the rescue process, one could see that Staff Sergeant Chen was slightly emotional, as if going back to the scenario of the incident, as he slowly recounted the ins and outs of his eye disease, "On the night of January



同時透過外交關係協請南沙太平島的鄰近國家菲律賓，空投最新抗生素藥物以抑制細菌侵蝕眼角膜。同日晚間凌晨，國防部派出拉法葉艦及成功級巡護艦前來實施醫療後送事宜。當時聽見這消息的我，要不是眼睛痛的難過，淚水早已潰堤成河了！」陳上士語氣略顯激動地說著。

「終於，歷經了 47 小時急速行駛的拉法葉艦抵達本島，此時島上同仁也準備就緒將我駁送登艦。一登艦，艦上人員迅速安排我至醫務室接受診療，在此同時，我的耳邊盡是艦上人員及長官的問候聲！在整個返航期間，艦上醫護人員細心照顧，很快地，船艦在 1 月 25 日返抵高雄左營軍港。船艦接近岸邊，隨即就看見備妥的救護車及醫護人員，剎那，感激與感謝在心中激盪不已……不一會兒，我即被送至國軍 802 醫院接受治療。」

為了感懷國家及海巡署各方面提供的救援，陳上士毅然決然再次的志願留營，為此常被問及到：「南沙太平島位置偏遠，物資取得不易，且需服役一年才能返台，在這麼嚴苛的環境條件之下何以願意二次留營服役？」對於這點他侃侃而談：「除了感念國家的恩惠之外，南沙對我而言，意義已不可同日而語。除了例行性的勤務之外，由於環境比鄰盡是不同的國家，因此也存在著他國越界捕魚的問題，不只是我，每位在島同仁都必須學習許多與不同國家人民溝通的方法，當然，大致都須依法行政、秉公處理！此外，在南沙讓我學會獨立自主，這裡的海水清澈、沙灘雪白、空氣清淨，週遭環境零污染，身心在此更能達到平衡境地。再者，我個人認為，服役是學習獨立的重要時機。南沙太平島雖然經過國軍及海巡署駐防後積極建設，但仍需依賴在島的全體人員戮力經營及經驗傳承，才能持恆發展，因此這兒可說是最好的試煉場！經過南沙的洗禮，日後到任一工作職場必能快速的適應環境，發揮所能。」能適應南沙較台灣本島資源缺乏的生活嗎？他語帶驕傲地說：「南沙太平島並非想像中落後，島上設有發電廠、RO 海水淡化機……等，另外，由於當地氣溫酷熱，因此所有辦公住所都特別設有冷氣，以消暑

21, 2002 when my condition happened, officers of various levels in Taiwan, upon hearing the news, had attempted to transport me back to Taiwan for medical attention via the fastest means, and through repeated contact for support with the Defense Department's medical coordination team, and through diplomatic relations by contacting the nearby country of the Philippines closest to Taiping Island for air dropping the latest antibiotics and bacteria suppressant from invading the cornea. Near midnight, the Defense Department had arranged the SS Lafayette and the SS Cheng Kong-class escort vessel to tend to the post-treatment transport logistics. Upon hearing the news, I would have burst out in tears if not for my eye malady!" Staff Sergeant Chen recounted the incident with a slightly agitated emotion.

"Finally, upon undergoing 47 hours of rapid sailing, the SS Lafayette had finally arrived in the island; at the time, my associates had readied me to board the ship. Once onboard the ship, vessel crew swiftly arranged me to receive treatment at the medical treatment room; right at the moment, what I could hear was greetings from vessel crew and senior officers. Throughout the entire return voyage, vessel crew took diligent care of me, and soon the ships had arrived at Kaohsiung's Zhouying Military Port on January 25. As the vessel moored in the shore, I soon spotted the standby ambulance and paramedics; at that instance, I was overwhelmed with gratitude and appreciation ... No sooner, I was sent to the Joined Forces #802 Hospital to receive treatment".

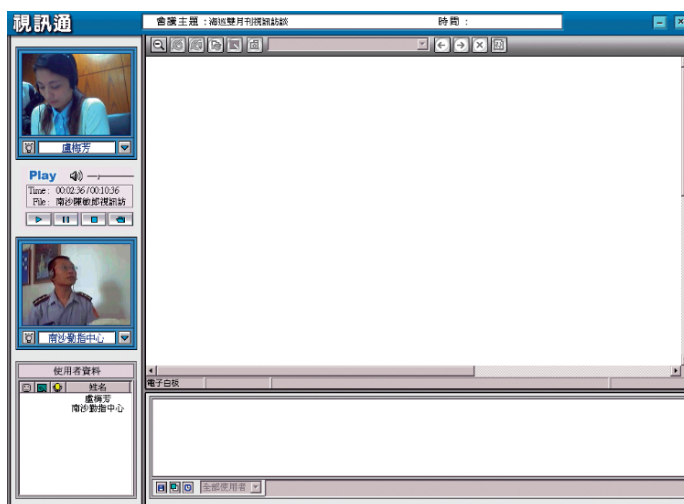
In appreciation of the extensive support from the state and the Coast Guard Administration, Staff Sergeant Chen had decidedly determined to remain on the camp voluntarily, for that, he was often asked, "With Spratly Islands being so remote, where supplies were scarce, where one needed to serve a year's duty before getting a chance to go back to Taiwan for a home visit, Under such harsh environmental conditions, why would he want to stay on the camp to serve a second duty?" To which, he said unhurriedly, "Besides being appreciative of what the nation had done for me, Spratly Islands had a different meaning to me. More than the routine duties, the many adjacent countries in close vicinity brought on more than just issues concerning trespassed fishing, and more than myself, every associate on the island needed to learn a few ways to communication with people from different countries. Naturally, under most circumstances, things were done according to the rule and done justly. In addition, in Spratly Islands, I had learned how to be independent where the water was cleared, and sandy beaches snow white, with clean air and zero pollution to the environment, a place that one could achieve a total equilibrium in heart and soul. Furthermore, I personally reckoned that serving the military duty marked a critical moment in learning to be independent. With Taiping Island only having been developed when the Armed Forces and the Coast Guard began to station here, it would still take the efforts of everyone on the island, and the prior experience, in order to gain a sustainable development, which made the island a fantastic training ground. With the experience gained in Spratly Islands, I could no doubt quickly be assimilated to any job and excelled to the best I could." When asked whether he was able to adjust to Spratly Islands' lack of material comfort compared to Taiwan, he said proudly: "Taiping

氣；在食的方面，經由台灣的全力支援及島上弟兄的精研之下，各種中、西、日式餐點弟兄們做來毫不馬虎，能在島上吃到這些美食別有一番風味！不僅如此，在島休假時，也有運動中心及視聽室可供休閒娛樂；島上幹部及弟兄之間相處也相當地融洽，『島上一命，如兄如弟』的共同信念，深植在每個人的心中，大夥兒相處就像一個大家庭，生活環境可說比上不足比下有餘。但唯一美中不足的是，由於通訊設備有限，島上一百餘位幹部及弟兄，往往思鄉情緒濃烈時，必須大排長龍等待島上唯有的四具公用電話使用，這是唯一較令弟兄們困擾的一點！」

陳敏郎上士幾年偏遠的離島生活，沒讓他心生倦怠，相反的，他更積極的面對自己的人生，他說：「跟我一樣志願留在島上的同仁不在少數，不只是他們，所有島上的幹部及弟兄在這裡都有著同樣的認知，那就是保家衛國！這並不是虛喊口號！離家越遠，越清楚家對個人的重要性，身處家園的最邊界，就越有擔起護衛家園責任的使命，這是我人生中難得的際遇，我珍惜並且會更積極地面對日後每一次的挑戰。前後兩次到南沙服務，內心感觸良多，這裡有我許多美好且難忘的記憶，一切都將會是我人生中最深刻的體驗！」

的確，外離島諸多不便的環境，並非生活在處處便捷的台灣的我們所能體會！陳敏郎上士義無反顧的情操及南沙島上海巡人「同島一命，如兄如弟」的體認，正是所有海巡同仁值得學習的地方！

(本文受訪人目前任職於南巡局南沙指揮部)



● 編輯小組與陳敏郎視訊訪談畫面

A snapshot of the editing team's video conferencing interview with Chen Min-lang

Island had not been as outdated as you imagined, for the island had a power plant, RO seawater desalination equipment, and so forth; moreover, due to the harsh local climate, all offices and dormitories were equipped with air conditioner to cool off; in dining, through the full support from Taiwan and with everyone's ingenuity, the associates continued to churn out all sorts of gourmet dishes in Chinese, Western and Japanese styles, which brought a different meaning in how one was able to taste these delicious dishes on the island. More so, on days off on the island, there were the gym and A/V lounge for leisurely entertainment; the officers and servicemen on the island got along with each other harmoniously, with everyone taking to a common commitment of "Sharing the same fate for being on the same island in a united camaraderie", which had been deep-rooted in everyone's heart, making everyone as close as a big family, and quite contented with what we had been blessed with. A setback of all things was perhaps the lack of communication equipment, for among the more than 100 officers and servicemen on the island, when homesickness hit, how everyone had to queue up for the only four public payphone on the island was something that did annoy the associates on the island!"

What Staff Sergeant Chen Min-lang had spent living on the remote island for a few years had not drown him with fatigue but had conversely motivated him to be more positive in facing his life, he said, "There were quite a number of associates who had decided to remain on the island, just like me, and not only them, all officers and servicemen on the island shared the same awareness - which was to defend the nation. It was more than chanting a slogan. The further you were way from your homeland, the clearer you were on how important a home was to an individual. This was a rare encounter in my life, and I would treasure it and embrace every challenge that lied ahead. In my two successive terms of service in Spratly Islands, I had had many feelings. It was here that I had had many fond and unforgettable memories, all of which would remain a profound experience in my life!"

Indeed, despite the many inconveniences on a remote island, it is hardly how most of us could image for having lived in Taiwan where amenities abound. Staff Sergeant Chen Min-lang's unrelenting perseverance and what Coast Guard men on the Spratly Islands had come to realize of a "United fate for being on the same island with a camaraderie bond" is something that all Coast Guard associates could learn and emulate from!

(The article's interviewee is currently with Nansha Bureau's Nansha Command Headquarters)