

KUALALUMPUR: Two-time Olympian archer Cheng Chu Sian will be bowing out of the sport after a nine-year stint with the national team.

Yesterday, national coach Lee Jae-hyung confirmed Chu Sian's decision to quit to pursue his studies at University Putra of Malaysia (UPM).

Jae-hyung said that after ending his second Olympic Games outing in London in August without any medals, the 26-year-old Chu Sian decided to pursue his Bachelor of Communications degree which he has deferred since 2007, because of archery.

"Chu Sian will not be able to train full time because he wants to focus

Archer Chu Sian quits to pursue his studies

on his studies. Prior to the London Olympic Games, he had deferred his studies and now, he just wants to complete it, now," said Jae-jyung.

"It is difficult to be part of the national team if one is unable to commit full-time and Cheng knows this. However, the door will always be open to him. If he returns one day, he can still go through the selection process just like the others to earn the right to represent the country.

"I have known him since his junior days in 2002 and he has come a long way. He has done well in the

sport all these years but I think he is making the right decision."

Over the last one year though, Penangite Chu Sian's form has dropped a little and he lost his reign as the number one archer to Khairul Anuar Mohamad Khairul and Haziq Kamaruddin, who also represented Malaysia at the Olympics in London. Khairul was the best performer, reaching the quarter-finals in the recurve individual event.

Chu Sian began his rise in the sport after playing a pivotal role in helping the men's team win gold at

the 2003 SEA Games in Vietnam at the age of 17.

Since then, he had regularly delivered gold medals at the SEA Games and in Jakarta last year, he nailed three medals – two gold and one silver – the most won by an archer in the series.

He also enjoyed many highs like winning the country's first medal in the World Cup Series, qualifying for the Olympic Games, and striking it right in the Asian Championships. He also played a big part in helping Malaysia finish fifth in the 2005

World Championships, which was best ever standing in the event.

Jae-hyung was confident that the vacuum left by Chu Sian would be easily filled.

"This decision of Chu Sian has left an opening but it is good as I can now look at some other youngsters. We have a pool of back-up archers who are good and they will get a chance to earn a place in the elite squad," he said.

"For now, there are no tournaments for the archers but I am looking at all them and we will be able to name our line-up (the elite and back-up) for the new season soon," he added.