



HE used to work in the President's Office back home in the Maldives, but Hussain Yamin decided that he wanted to be more than just a salaried employee.

"I was assisting the secretary to the President, but decided that it was time for me to better myself professionally, rather than staying on as a salaried member of staff.

"That was when I decided to apply to study in Malaysia. After having worked for three years, I have to admit that it was difficult to start studying all over again."

But Hussain, 22, was not easily awayed. He finally enrolled in a certificate programme in Computing and Information Technology at a local college last year and is adapting well to the study regime.

"It was difficult to follow the programme initially, but after seven months I think I'm coping well."

He says many young Maldivians like himself are seeking education and work experiences abroad to better themselves both professionally and academically as such opportunities are not widely available back home.

"There are about 600 Maldivians pursuing a wide range of study programmes in Malaysia. There are quite a few other Maldivians at my

college too."

He says things are rather laidback in his own country where economic activities are confined to tourism and fishing.

"I have this ambition of striking out on my own and opening a business related to graphic design and multimedia one day.

"But unfortunately, the demand is still lacking, although I foresee it picking up in the near future."

Hussain says although Internet facilities are available and many Maldivians are quite comfortable with the new technology, it has not really caught on among the masses.

"Malaysia, on the other hand, is very much ahead in terms of technological development and the people are fairly IT-savvy."

Like many of his peers, Hussain plans to continue his studies to degree level upon completion of the certificate course.

"I plan to study for another two years to qualify for my degree and hopefully seek employment either in Singapore or Thailand.

"If that falls through, there is little choice except to go back to the Maldives and continue with my old job."

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