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S'pore's first victim of terror attacks

Keep her death in perspective

December 06, 2008

I WRITE in reference to the news reports of the late Ms Lo Hwei Yen, particularly in reference to the article, 'Your pain... is our pain' by Andre Yeo and Liew Hanqing (The New Paper, 2 Dec).

My heartfelt condolences to Mr Michael Puhaindran, the Lo family and Ms Lo's close friends. Her loss must be unimaginable.

I write this letter not to take anything away from this tragedy, but to point out to the greater public in Singapore that we have to put this event in perspective.

Ever wonder why the best, most talented, most impressive individuals are remembered in such high-profile ways?

Look at the late teen triathlete Thaddeus Cheong - a book was written about him, and there was an unending stream of accolades from friends and family.

I am not saying that these praises are unworthy. But imagine this: What if it wasn't Ms Lo who perished in Mumbai? What if it was a 45-year-old, not so attractive male factory worker who happened to be Singapore's first terror victim?

Would we have had such massive news coverage over the event? Would we have seen comments from people such as customer service officer Andrew Lee, who said he could tell that Ms Lo was someone special from the newspaper reports?

What if this 45-year-old man did not have a great love story like Ms Lo had? What if this 45-year-old man was not exactly the life of any party?

Would we have dwelled on this death as much? Would you have attended this man's funeral?

My point is: We're all special. Lawyers, road sweepers, dentists, receptionists, beautiful and not-so-beautiful people alike.

While I'm certain that Ms Lo is a fantastic, accomplished and talented individual, we have to keep this situation in perspective, however angered and saddened at her loss we may be.

FROM READER HOE SHUHAN, MELVIN

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For employers, grades are just a starting point

Plenty of chances, even for those who aren't top students



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