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Time to shake the world, shall we?

By Yow Chong Lee

JULY 5 — A shocking news reached many of us when a high scoring student from Penang, suspected suicide, is found dead at the compound of his apartment. The boy is said to have gone through miserable months of stress due to his increasingly burdening study.

This kind of news has generally made many of us feel down, that it has become a trend recurring every year, particularly near the exam or result announcing months.

Instead of gossiping about those who score poorly or well in their exams, have we ever spent a few minutes to ponder why a suicide of this nature happens?

In a capitalist society, many are kept captive in the myth that education (or certificates, some would say) is needed for one to find work in the competitive market.

People believe that education (certificate) is needed as a passport to a better world. Through education, one's value has thus been enhanced (value added), therefore increasing his/her opportunity to seek a “better” job with “better” pay.

In other words, we are putting — or trying to suit — ourselves to a system that recognises us as “assets” (human capital), without which we literally can do nothing.

Our politicians, employers, parents, teachers — and all those who are in line with this idea — have never stop selling this to us, convincing us that we have to “study hard” to get excellent results (“value”).

In the process, all the humanistic values (sadly, they are not assets for the capitalists) have been sidelined, if not ignored altogether. You will then see a bunch of people who care more about results, be it the employers, teachers, parents or students themselves.

What they look for are the people with great “value” — “value” that can be sold or exchanged for better job and salary.

Those who have bought this idea have never challenge or even question the need for such “value,” certificates and this corrupt way of education.

Shall we stop this way of education? And seek instead an education that looks at people as humans. Thus what they need is humanistic values — love, passion, enthusiasm, compassion, forgiveness and many more.

Is this the time to shake our (the world's) education system which is shaped by “value”-driven (capitalist) principle?

Shall we?