

HOW TO HANDLE INFORMATION IN 2017

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The world is a complex web of events that may be geographically distant but have real and immediate consequences. To navigate your daily life you will need to know what's happening. With so much garbage and vitriol polluting the media, how do we keep from being bamboozled? How do we handle information?

For a start, learn about the information's source. Look for two qualities: credibility and bias. Every source,

be aware that the bias exists and will skew the content. If you want to get a clear picture read a mix of sources that would broadly cancel each other out as far as bias goes: since that's a lot of work it's alright to instead just read sources that are pretty restrained. For example, The Guardian is left-leaning but hosts a variety of opinions and tries to give the opposition its due. In contrast, Breitbart is hot garbage and everyone associated with it needs to be sealed together in a small room and placed in the dankest corner of the ocean floor. That is my biased opin-

credibility can still produce accurate and exclusive information.

So you have to verify. If there's the slightest doubt about the accuracy of news, verify it on the web immediately. If at least three trustworthy sources are running it, then it's probably true. If it isn't available anywhere it still might have a kernel of truth in it. Cross-check with eyewitness accounts from people you trust.

It's OK to not know the details. If the news media are running a story with the same details you can be fairly certain that those are facts that have been verified by the outlets and are as official as you can get. People trying to fill in the blanks with their opinions and interpretations of ambiguous phone videos or just wild speculation contribute nothing. This is how a victim of terrorism turns into a terrorist himself. "Video shoho" is the internet journalist's way of saying "I have no conscience or intelligence, please step on my face."

Lastly, don't dismiss something just because it sounds too weird to be true. Last year there was a lightning coup in Turkey and the president reassured his people that he was still in power by Facetimeing himself onto the news. If that's true, almost

anything is possible; just demand credible evidence.

Zoheb Mashiur is a prematurely balding man with bad facial hair and so does his best to avoid people. Ruin his efforts by writing to zoheb.mashiur@gmail.com

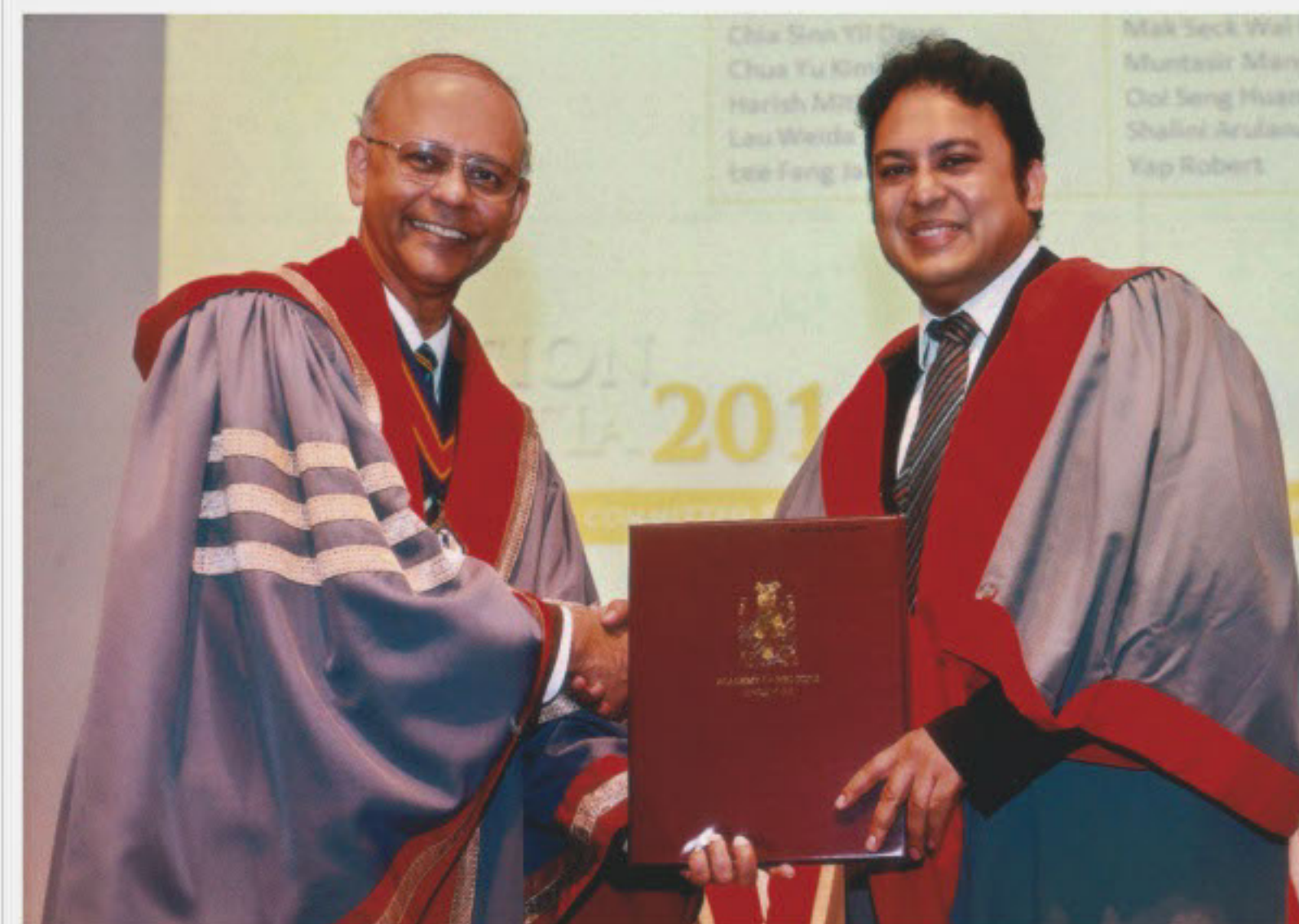


whether they are a person or an organisation, has a history. The validity of what they are telling you now can be derived from this track record. If you know someone to report incidents based on hearsay – or to take accurate information and then garble it in their heads – don't trust them.

As to bias, it's important to know that neutrality is a myth and that everyone and every organisation has a stance. This is fine and even highly partisan news can be worthwhile – I read the A.V. Club's political news because it's unabashedly biased in a way I find funny. You have to

Don't think in absolutes either. Certainly The New York Times is generally more trustworthy than your friend Ratul's posts in www.somewhereinblog.net. That doesn't mean that it's impossible for Ratul to cover a story reliably, ever; if it's something happening in an area Ratul is an expert in he might even be a better source than the Times. Similarly, BuzzFeed is a regular on those lists people make of bad news sites, and yet I have seen them do proper journalism. Sources that have strong bias and which lack

Brilliant Achievements of Bangladeshi Doctor in Singapore



Doctor Muntasir Mannan Choudhury (right side) joined as Fellow in 2016 in the Singapore Academy of Medicine and Surgery, after successfully accomplishing the Singapore Surgical Advance Specialist Training. At present he is serving as a specialist and Associate Consultant in the department of Hand & Reconstructive Microsurgery at Singapore General Hospital.

He was nominated as one of the best doctors in 2016 and honoured with 'Star Award' by Sing Health. Previously he obtained MBBS from the All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) and MRCS from Royal College of Surgery (UK).

It is worth mentioning here that he is the 2nd Son of Professor Dr. Abdul Mannan Choudhury and Morsheda Choudhury.