

Technical Humans

by Arnab Bordoloi - Thursday, July 09, 2015

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Satisfaction, has always been a mirage for humans. However hard we try but we never achieve it . Our thirst for curiosity has never been quenched but instead has always made us thrive for excellence and live for a better, bigger and greater cause. This fact along with the ability to think has attributed as the main cause for which homo sapiens has left behind all the other species and has emerged as the supreme commander of the world.

If we rewind our time to our very old ancestors, a time when all living beings were alike, no distinction being made between animals and humans, I would like to ask what caused us to levitate above all the others? I believe a very simple answer to this was when man began to put stress on brains and began the action of thought. They thought and made lesser use of hands and legs but tried different ways to make their work more efficient and less time procuring. Consequently transformation from quadrupeds to bipeds and then came the invention of wheels, fire, boat and many more.

That was I would call the spark for ignition of a technological fire, a fire that would live through oceans of time and has now engulfed us so deep that if we come out instead we would find our self burnt out. In the following context I would like to discuss some of the major technological advancement of 2015 that I am very sure will revolutionize our very near future.

A mere google search will show a list of many cool technological gadgets coming up in 2015, but I have tried to categorize them into the following sections mainly in accordance with the World Economic Forum's Meta Council

1) Zero Emission Cars: - One of the major dangers imminent on our world as of now is global warming. A threat that possesses the danger of wiping out the existence of every living organism in this world. A major cause for this problem can be attributed to high emissions of green house gases one of the important source being CO₂ from motor vehicles. However these cars are fuelled from "fuel Cells" containing hydrogen that emits only water vapour and absolutely nothing else. These cars also promise to have better efficiency. Without going into technological details I would like all of you to imagine the world then if we are able to restore the balance of these Green House Gases. No trees would die, not the fear of exposing ourselves to UV radiations, the earth would be a much cooler place to live, its temperature being reduced to adequate levels. We can live in the midst of green mother nature living in harmony with all other species. This technology is yet to hit the markets and a long way to make it consumer oriented but I see this coming and when it will come it will bring along with it the solution to a lot of our major problems.

2) Next Generation Robotics:- Robotics as of now is mainly factory oriented. But with the major developments in Robotics those days are not far away when you will find your food being cooked by a Robotic chef and your house being cleaned by a robotic maid. Yes recently robots have been developed that can be trained to perform any job. They have been trained to be adaptive and flexible to any

environment. Complex biological organs such as the human hand have been successfully incorporated into them. They could learn our language and talk with us. I feel “i-Robots” would become real. If this happens the world will be a much faster and efficient place to live in. There would be no errors and exactly 100% efficiency will be a common thing to be seen everywhere.

3) Additive Manufacturing:- First of all what is Subtractive manufacturing? Lets say we want to manufacture a table. We cut wood, remove unnecessary parts, cut chunks of wood to get the desired shape. In this process we subtract unnecessary parts, so subtractive manufacturing. However imagine we take just a chunk of wood and then go on adding layer by layer more wood to get the desired shape. This is called additive manufacturing. In a practical sense this process uses a loose layer as liquid or powder and then using a digital template gives it the desired shape and size. Extreme application of this technique is to use 3-D printing in a biological direction. It has been used to print living cells and tissues. Biological printing can be used to print bones and vascular tissue. More extreme is 4-D printing. A technique used to print objects that are self adaptive and can change automatically. Just imagine a lady was holding her purse and then it changed into an umbrella because it began raining. It would be much like “Transformers” I believe all the sci-fi films that we are seeing now will be our society tomorrow.

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4) Artificial Intelligence:- Science and technology are never exhausted with their feats. There seems to be always more and more. Artificial Intelligence I must say is the next generation brain of Humans. Scientists are now trying to duplicate the entire human brain and mind digitally. These computers will be able to interact with you understand you much like other humans. Much not like our computers these brains will be able to apply logic, reason, learn and think but much much more faster than a human brain and non tiring. Now I would like to say to all those of you who have got a facebook account. Whenever you open your account you always find to be surrounded by the newsfeed that matches your topic of interests. But few years this was not so, you open your account and find some randomly updated newsfeed. Now it seems facebook seems to know you, the type of topics you like, the type of friends who would match you and the best part it all suggests this automatically. This is just a very simple glimpse of AI and is the result of very intelligent algorithms that are input by the workers of facebook. But imagine a computer that will be able to generate its own programs and act accordingly. Won't it be wonderful?

5) Sense and Avoid Drones:- Till now UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) have become almost common for example quad copters to be used for delivery by Amazon, aerial surveillance and even to be used to prevent cheating in exams in China by aerial camera surveillance. These may be unmanned but many miles away there is a man sitting who controls the path of the vehicle. But now have come “Sense and Avoid Drones” These drones can sense any obstacle on their way and hence can make its trajectory accordingly. Only one needs to input the destined location. Google is all set to launch its “self-driving” cars. There will be a day when you will just get in your car and just have to say to your car where you want to go.

6) Flexible displays:- All of us remember the hype of I phone 6 and Samsung Galaxy S IV that they would come with bendable flexible screens. These are rumors now but not after a few years. There will be days when the “The Daily Prophet” would be in your hands. Your newspaper would contain moving images and you will be able to fold it back to your pocket. Here I have named just a few innovations of 2015 but the sea of technology is vast, wide and never ending. There is a lot more to this that will

determine the standard of our lives in the days to come. There is biotic engineering, nanotechnology, genetic engineering that even digitalize our genes and allow to edit it as if it were a word document, the vast space to explore, dark energy, dark matter, etc the list is endless.

No doubt we are the supreme commander of the world. But in this race that we are leaving out all the rest is right? My mind finds one question always answered: Is it for sure that this technological revolution will leave us in a better state? Will we be so technically revolutionized that we will forget our ideals and principles? Will we be so in the midst of machines that human feeling and emotions will have no place amongst us? I don't know whether this fear is justified. But I hope we don't become so technically dependent that ultimately we are all overshadowed by machines. It is true that we are changing, we are being evolved it cannot be stopped. This Change will either lead us to a far better world or will devour us within itself is a question that can only be answered by time. But a change is a must for "Change is the only constant".

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