

Issue 1
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Odyssey



The journey
through
cognizance

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IS AI ACTUALLY TAKING UP JOBS?



IS THE FUTURE AI OR IS IT JUST A GIMMICK?

STEPHEN HAWKING

Success in creating AI would be the biggest event in human history. Unfortunately, it might also be the last, unless we learn how to avoid the risks.

AI, or Artificial Intelligence, refers to the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, particularly computer systems. These processes include learning, reasoning, problem-solving, perception, and language understanding. AI encompasses various subfields such as machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision, robotics, and more.

The concept of AI has its roots in the mid-20th century when scientists and researchers began exploring ways to create machines that could mimic human intelligence. Early AI research focused on symbolic reasoning and problem-solving techniques. The sector experienced significant growth in recent years due to several factors. One key catalyst was the availability of large datasets and advances in computational power, which fueled breakthroughs in machine learning algorithms.

As AI technology advances, there is a growing concern about its impact on the job market. While AI has the potential to create new job opportunities, it also poses a threat to traditional roles by automating tasks previously performed by humans. According to various studies and reports, millions of jobs globally have already been affected by the adoption of AI and automation, particularly in industries like manufacturing, transportation, customer service, and administrative support.

Looking ahead, there is potential for AI to disrupt other sectors as well. For example, fields such as healthcare, finance, agriculture, and education are already seeing the integration of AI systems for tasks ranging from medical diagnosis and financial analysis to crop monitoring and personalized learning.

AI's impact on the job market is undeniable. While it presents opportunities for productivity improvements and innovation, it also raises concerns about job displacement and the need for workforce adaptation. As AI continues to evolve, policymakers, businesses, and individuals must work together to navigate these challenges and ensure that the benefits of AI are equitably distributed while addressing the potential disruptions it may cause in the labor market.

URBAN TOWNS: HIT OR MISS?

“ The mark of a great city isn't how it treats its special places – everybody does that right – but how it treats its ordinary ones. ”

Urban town expansion can be seen as both a hit and a miss, depending on various factors and perspectives. On one hand, the expansion of cities brings about modernisation, better quality of life, and opportunities for a greater segment of the population, ultimately promoting the overall development of the country. Cities expanding into smaller towns and rural areas often result in the establishment of modern infrastructure, improved amenities, and access to better healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. This modernisation uplifts the living standards of residents and contributes to the economic growth and progress of the nation.

However, urban town expansion is not without its drawbacks. One of the most pressing concerns is the environmental impact, including deforestation and greater pollution. As cities expand, green spaces are often sacrificed, leading to habitat loss and reduced biodiversity. Increased vehicular traffic and industrial activities contribute to air and water pollution, compromising the health and well-being of both humans and ecosystems.

Furthermore, cultural heritage and historical significance may be overshadowed or even erased by rapid urbanisation, leading to a sense of loss and disconnection among local communities.

Moreover, the quality of modern architecture in expanding cities is often questioned. Poorly constructed buildings, due to lax regulations and oversight, pose serious safety hazards.


Additionally, inadequate town planning exacerbates the problems associated with urban expansion. Haphazard development leads to congestion, overcrowding, and inefficient land use, resulting in cities that appear chaotic and disorganized.

While urban town expansion brings about numerous benefits, including modernization and increased opportunities, it also poses significant challenges such as environmental degradation, social displacement, safety hazards, and poor planning. Achieving sustainable and inclusive urban development requires comprehensive strategies that address these challenges while harnessing the potential benefits of urban expansion.



HOTTEST YEAR YET!

Consequences of the hottest year on record



In the annals of meteorological history, the year 2023 will be forever etched as a watershed moment. With global temperatures reaching unprecedented heights, the world collectively experienced the hottest year on record, marking a 1.48-degree Celsius increase. As a writer with two years of experience, it is both my duty and privilege to dissect the implications of this alarming phenomenon and propose mitigants to safeguard our planet's future.

The Escalating Temperature Challenge:

The stark reality of the situation demands a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to the alarming rise in global temperatures. While natural variability plays a role, the overwhelming scientific consensus points to human activities, primarily the emission of greenhouse gases, as the primary driver behind this climatic shift.

Carbon Emission Reduction:

The cornerstone of any effective strategy must involve a concerted effort to reduce carbon emissions. Governments, industries, and individuals alike must prioritize cleaner energy sources, transition to sustainable practices, and adopt technologies that minimize carbon footprints.

Reforestation Initiatives:

Forests act as nature's carbon sinks, absorbing large amounts of carbon dioxide. Reforestation projects can play a pivotal role in offsetting carbon emissions. Governments and environmental organizations should collaborate to implement large-scale reforestation initiatives, protecting existing forests and planting new trees.

Education and Advocacy:

Education is a powerful tool in the fight against climate change. As a student, I strongly advocate for incorporating climate change education into school curricula. Furthermore, individuals and organizations should actively engage in advocacy efforts, raising awareness about the urgency of climate action and holding policymakers accountable.

The hottest year on record in 2023 serves as an unequivocal wake-up call. It is incumbent upon us, as global citizens, to take decisive action to mitigate the impacts of climate change. By collectively embracing sustainable practices, advocating for policy changes, and investing in innovative solutions, we can work towards a future where the temperature rise is arrested, and the health of our planet is restored. The time for action is now; our shared responsibility is to be stewards of a sustainable and resilient Earth.



7/8 Climate Red Lines Already Crossed?

Scientists warn that 7 out of 8 ESBs (Earth System Boundaries) that are critical for the planet's health stability and the survival of species have now been breached. As per a report in *Nature* by "Earth Commission", the future of humanity is at risk.

This ESB transgression is widespread, with some of them having transgressed to approximately 52% of the world's total land area affecting 86% of the world population. India, like Europe, South Asia and some parts of Africa, is a transgression hotspot. Humans are taking a huge risk with planetary systems, because the ESB for climate crossed at 1 degree Celsius warming over pre-industrial levels, and the world is already at 1.2 degree Celsius warming.

The Earth Commission developed a set of ESBs, which are at both global and sub-global scales, for climate, the biosphere, air pollution, nutrients and freshwater. These were chosen as they cover all the major components of the Earth system – lithosphere, geosphere, cryosphere, atmosphere and biosphere- and their interlinked cycles – water, nutrient and carbon cycles. These are the "global commons" that underpin Earth's life support systems and human well-being. They have a profound impact on policy-relevant time-scales and are now threatened by man himself, and can affect the entire Earth.

Safe ESBs for global warming are based on minimizing the likelihood of triggering climate tipping points and maintaining biosphere and cryosphere functions. The already achieved global warming beyond 1 degree Celsius has the slight risk of triggering tipping elements (example – Greenland ice sheet collapse, or the abrupt thawing of the local boreal permafrost). The likelihood grows immensely as it crosses 1.5 or 2 degree Celsius. As soon as that happens, carbon sinks will turn into carbon sources. ESBs have been crossed for phosphorous and atmospheric nitrogen excesses for minimising eutrophication of land ecosystems and surface water due to leaching, runoff and atmospheric ammonia and nitrogen oxide emissions. The air pollution ESB is breached, in South Asia surely.

As many tipping elements are about to cross their tipping points, the entire earth system is now in danger. Warming has happened. The loss of Amazon Forests and the loss of the Arctic Permafrost are now what the talks are about. Changes in extreme weather will become larger and larger with every extra increment in global warming. Human beings now need to urgently heed to the IPCC's warnings (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) that cautioned in March 2023 that the magnitude of the overshoot is proportional to the risks that natural systems and mankind are about to face.



IIT MADRAS

BREAKS BOUNDARIES AND OPENS FIRST CAMPUS IN ZANZIBAR

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has officially inaugurated its first international campus in the picturesque island of Zanzibar.

The decision to establish an international campus in Zanzibar underscores IIT Madras's commitment to fostering global perspectives and enhancing the educational experience for its students. The idyllic setting of Zanzibar provides a unique backdrop for students to engage in cross-cultural interactions, broadening their horizons and preparing them for a globally interconnected world.

The establishment of IIT Madras's international campus in Zanzibar is not just about the institute's global presence; it's also about collaboration with local educational institutions. The Zanzibar campus is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, ensuring that students have access to cutting-edge technology and research opportunities

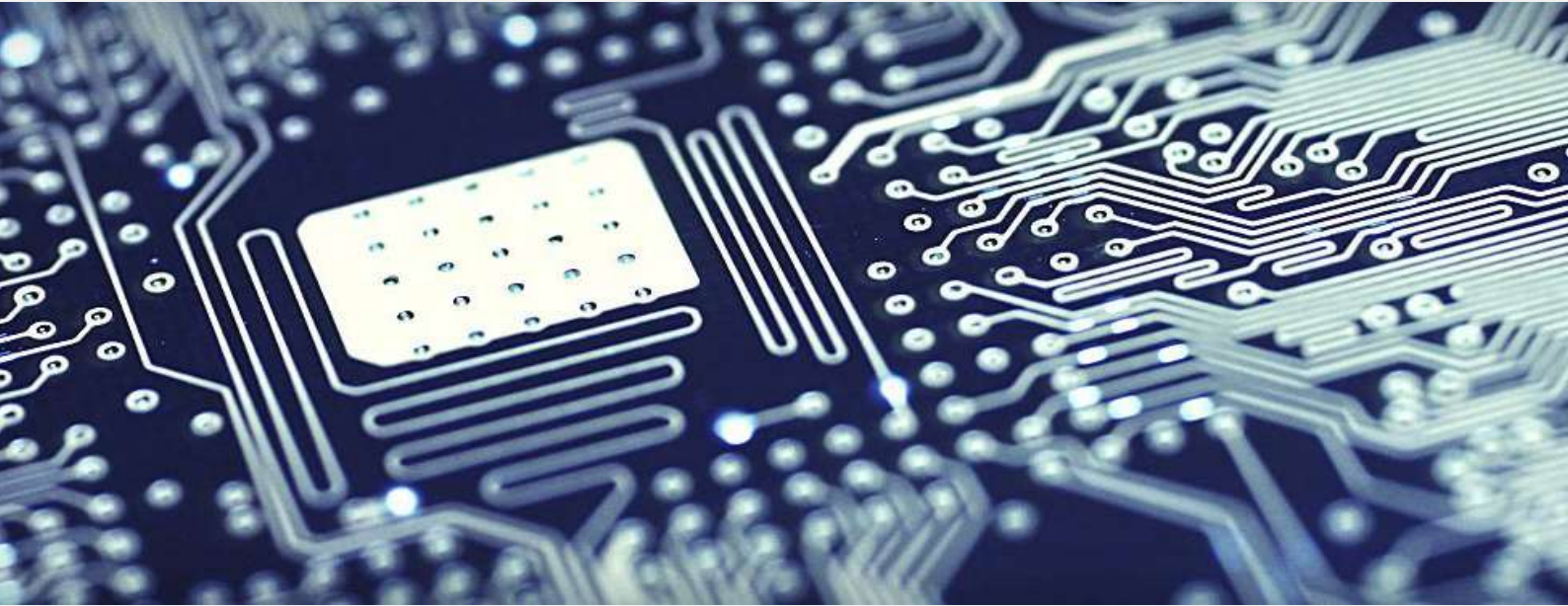
The campus will serve as a hub for collaborative projects and interdisciplinary research, providing a rich environment for intellectual growth.

To enhance the global learning experience, the campus will facilitate student and faculty exchange programs between IIT Madras' main campus and the Zanzibar campus.

The inauguration of IIT Madras's first international campus in Zanzibar is a momentous occasion in the history of Indian education. It symbolizes a bold step towards global collaboration, innovation, and cultural exchange. As the campus flourishes, it is expected to create a lasting impact on the landscape of international education, fostering a new generation of global leaders prepared to tackle the challenges of the 21st century.



IS THE IT SECTOR OVERHYPED?



The Information Technology (IT) sector encompasses a broad range of industries and activities related to the use of computers, software, networks, and telecommunications to store, retrieve, transmit, and manipulate data. It deals with the development, management, and maintenance of technology systems

The IT sector experienced a significant boom in recent decades, driven by rapid technological advancements and the proliferation of digital technologies. Factors such as the widespread adoption of the internet, advancements in hardware and software, and the emergence of mobile devices and cloud computing have fuelled the growth of the IT industry.

The IT sector plays a crucial role in driving economic development and innovation globally. It contributes to various fields revolutionising processes and services in most sectors. For instance, in healthcare, IT solutions like electronic health records, telemedicine, and medical imaging systems have improved patient care, diagnosis, and treatment outcomes. Similarly, in education, IT tools and platforms facilitate distance learning, personalised instruction, and access to educational resources.

Additionally, concerns about data privacy and cybersecurity have become increasingly prominent, given the growing volume and complexity of digital data and the rise of cyber threats and attacks. Ensuring the security and privacy of sensitive information and digital assets is crucial for maintaining trust and confidence in digital technologies.

Furthermore, there are concerns about the environmental impact of the IT sector. Addressing these environmental challenges requires sustainable practices and innovations in the design, production, and recycling of IT products and services.

While the IT sector has undoubtedly fuelled economic growth, innovation, and development globally, it is not immune to challenges and criticisms. Issues such as the digital divide, cybersecurity threats, and environmental sustainability underscore the need for responsible and inclusive approaches to technology development and deployment. By addressing these challenges and leveraging the transformative potential of information technology, the IT sector can continue to drive positive change and progress in the digital age.

INDIA: A TRADE MEGA HUB

India, with its rich cultural heritage and diverse population, has emerged as a significant player in the global trade arena, positioning itself as a mega trade hub in recent years. The country's remarkable development trajectory, combined with strategic initiatives to bolster its presence in international markets, has propelled India into a prominent position on the global trade stage.

India's development journey has been characterised by robust economic growth, fuelled by a burgeoning middle class, a young and dynamic workforce, and a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem. The country has witnessed rapid industrialization, urbanization, and technological advancements, laying the foundation for its integration into the global economy.

Establishing its place in the global trade markets, India has actively pursued trade agreements and partnerships with various countries and regional blocs. The government has implemented policies to promote exports, attract foreign investment, and enhance competitiveness across key sectors such as information technology, pharmaceuticals, automotive, and textiles. Additionally, initiatives like 'Make in India' and 'Digital India' have been instrumental in showcasing India's potential as a manufacturing and technology hub on the global stage.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has played a pivotal role in spearheading India's efforts to expand its presence in global markets.

Through proactive diplomacy and high-level engagements with world leaders, PM Modi has sought to strengthen bilateral ties, promote trade and investment, and position India as a preferred destination for businesses and investors. The rise of India as a mega trade hub is reflected in its growing Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which has seen steady expansion over the years.

India's participation in global trade has yielded significant benefits for its economy and people. Increased imports of goods and services have facilitated access to a diverse range of products, spurring consumer choice and enhancing living standards for many. Similarly, exports have generated employment opportunities, boosted incomes, and contributed to economic growth.

India's emergence as a mega trade hub signifies its transformation into a dynamic and vibrant economy with immense potential for growth and prosperity. Through proactive policies, diplomatic initiatives, and strategic partnerships, India has positioned itself as a key player in the global trade arena, driving economic development, creating opportunities, and enhancing its global standing.

LET'S NOT DRAG THE BIG CATS IN: EXCLUSIVE



Valmik Thapar, who wrote the original article "Let's Not Drag This Big Cat In", has observed and studied wild cheetahs in all of Africa for the past 25 years.

The cheetah is easily observable as it is comfortable in man's presence. In its entire history, India has never had a viable cheetah population.

For approximately 6000 years, cheetahs have never been a man's victim. He has always been a man's friend and hunting companion.

According to data, from 1725 to around 1960, thousands of cheetahs were brought to India from Africa, as the rich kept them as pets. All the cheetahs in India were brought via land or sea and were trained to be companions in hunting. There are extremely few or negligible records of wild cheetahs in India by naturalists or hunters. The majority of cheetahs in India are from Africa, and the ones that are found in the wild are the ones that escaped from captivity. These cheetahs that escaped from their captivity were shot down by British rulers. Mughal rulers painted several pictures of the indigenous and endemic animals that they hunted in India, and there is not a single picture of a cheetah.

The truth is India was never the native habitat for cheetahs. The Indian terrain is highly unsuitable for them. There are forests with uneven grounds, while what cheetahs need are big and open grasslands. There are countless enemies here too: lions, hyenas, tigers, wild dogs, wolves, and leopards. When these attack, cheetahs need to run, and for that what they need is big open grasslands, so that they can outrun their enemies.

VALMIK THAPAR

“Millions of dollars will be spent and we should use that money to look after what we have and not on a non-viable venture. This experiment is sadly fatally flawed, and this magnificent animal should not go through this traumatic experience.”

Strangely, cheetahs were reintroduced in 2022 in India, when there were hardly any grasslands left. There are several problems with this reintroduction. Firstly, experts did not warn the government about India's lack of a viable cheetah population. Secondly, why was the Kuno-Palpur region used for introduction? This region is known for being used by tigers from Ranthambore, and it was earlier planned for bringing in Asiatic lions from Gir. Lastly, during summers, the temperature in this region touches approximately 50 degrees Celsius, unlike in Africa, which would be enough to kill a cheetah. This idea has been incorrect from the very start. 6 cheetahs have already died and perhaps more will die. The huge cost incurred in this project is a total waste. African cheetahs are meant to be in Africa, not India.

The only way possible to limit the damage to cheetahs now is to turn it into a captive cheetah project, by enclosing a large area and taking care of the remaining individuals. Making it a tourist spot could also be a viable idea. To even think of having free range African cheetahs in the Indian wild is a terrible idea. It would kill them.

GENERAL TRIVIA



GEOGRAPHY

1. Which is the most spoken language in Brazil?
2. Which mountain range crosses the most number of countries?
3. Which supercontinent led to the formation of all the continents?
4. Which land in Asia is called the "Land of Thunder Dragons"?
5. The Great Lakes are made up of how many bodies of water?

Answers:
1. Portuguese
2. The Himalayas
3. Pangea
4. Bhutan
5. (5)



POLITICS

1. Which is the strongest currency in the world?
2. What is the capital of Saudi Arabia?
3. Which award is the highest civilian award of India?
4. Which country uses the currency "Ringgit"?

Answers:
1. Kuwaiti Dinar
2. Riyadh
3. Bharat Ratna
4. Malaysia

TECHNOLOGY

1. "Think Different" is the tagline of which brand?
2. A list of options available on a website has which name?
3. Ctrl+A does what?
4. "Angry Birds" was created by a company in which country?
5. What company made the first portable computer in 1981?

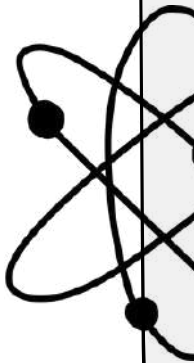
Answers:
1. Apple
2. Menu
3. Select All
4. Finland
5. Osborne Company



PHYSIOLOGY

1. What is the white part of the eye called?
2. Which gland produces melatonin?
3. Which animal has the highest blood pressure?
4. What is a group of parrots called?
5. Which bird's eye is bigger than its brain?

Answers:
1. Sclera
2. Pineal Gland
3. Giraffe
4. Pandemonium
5. Ostrich



THANK YOU



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