

Artificial Intelligence- The Genie Unbottled – Part 2

By Uday Kumar Varma, IAS

Author is a former Secretary, Information and Broadcasting, GOI

Loss of Jobs

A major concern and apprehension once ChatGPT was launched was how it would impact work place. The advancement of AI is feared to lead to a significant loss of jobs in particular for knowledge workers. In the hearing before the Subcommittee, IBM Chief Privacy & Trust Officer Christina Montgomery who also joined Altman in testifying for the first time acknowledged the risks of AI on workers in various industries. “Some jobs will transition away,” she admitted.

Even chatbots themselves have addressed the issue of job loss in their interactions. In a specific response to the question how it would impact jobs, Google’s BARD replied, “It is likely that Bard will have both positive and negative effects on employment, and the net effect will depend on a variety of factors, including the pace of technological innovation and the ability of humans to adapt to new technologies,” said the chatbot.

“GPT-4 will, I think, entirely automate away some jobs,” Altman said. “And it will create new ones that we believe will be much better.” And yet he felt that Large-language AI model and other AI models do excel at completing tasks but are not capable at completing a full job yet.

“I think it’s important to understand and think about GPT4 as a tool, not a creature,” he added, referencing OpenAI’s latest generative AI model. Such models, he said, were “good at doing tasks, not jobs” and would therefore ease off some pressure but don’t expect they replace workers from their jobs.

Bill Gates, Microsoft’s co-founder predicts ‘very soon robots will take over blue-collar jobs and humanoids would make industrial work cheaper and more efficient, besides, with AI producing accurate, compelling, and quality content, white-collar jobs are at no less risk of being replaced.’”

Economists like Nobel prize winning economist Paul Krugman seems to believe that the age of knowledge workers is likely to see an early demise. All that a knowledge worker in blood and flesh can perform can be done better by this new human. “ChatGPT is only the latest example of technology that seems to be able to carry out tasks that not long ago seemed to require the services not just of human beings but of humans with substantial formal education.”

The Google chatbot lists Artificial Intelligence engineers, Data Scientists, Cybersecurity specialists, Cloud computing engineers, Software engineers, Web developers, UX designers, Content writers, Marketing managers, Sales Representatives as the jobs that will be in great demand in 2024.

A Contentious Future

So, the future of AI at this juncture is mired in anxious anticipation if not in contentious controversies on several counts.

How should the world deal with a technological marvel that leads to job losses, may alter human behaviour in very fundamental ways, and has shown demonstrable capacity to create chaos and confusion? This question looms large both for the creators and consumers.

Regulation Can Stand Between Anarchy and Order

The clamour for regulation surprisingly is led not by consumers so much as it is by the tech companies who are the creators and purveyors of these chatbots.

When the Senator Blumenthal opened the hearing of Senate Judiciary Subcommittee, he began by playing an audio clip with “introductory remarks” from a computer-generated voice that sounded just like him. He revealed that the audio was made by a voice cloning software, with words written by ChatGPT, the AI chatbot created by Sam Altman’s company.

"That voice was not mine. The words were not mine," Blumenthal said.

Blumenthal asked ChatGPT why did it pick the themes in the introductory remarks. ChatGPT is supposed to have replied ‘Blumenthal has a strong record in advocating for consumer protection and civil rights. He has been vocal about issues such as data privacy and the potential for discrimination in algorithmic decision making. Therefore, the statement emphasizes these aspects.’”

Blumenthal jokingly thanked Altman for the "endorsement, of his stand" but then seriously warned about the dangers of Generative AI technology. Altman looked concerned but not embarrassed.

A more befitting example of the methodology and power of ChatGPT and the deceptions it can create will be difficult to find.

Please Regulate Us!

As Altman began his testimony, he surprised everyone by urging the government to regulate. “We think the regulatory intervention by the governments will be critical to mitigate the risks of increasingly powerful models,”

Altman is not alone in voicing this concern. Many of his peers share this apprehension of misuse; and support the idea of regulating the AI that would maximise the benefits of the transformative technology while minimising the harms. One suggestion was for the government to consider licensing and testing requirements of development and release of AI models. Government may also mandate independent auditing of companies like OpenAI.

“For a very new technology we need a new framework,” Altman said.

Altman’s sentiments, whether contrived or spontaneous, found echo in Microsoft’s President, Brad Smith’s statement that followed suit soon.

Smith wants government to move quickly and proposes moves like requiring an emergency brake for A.I. systems used in critical infrastructure and licenses for creating “highly capable” A.I. models.

And he also acknowledged that A.I. developers need to show restraint in creating new products with potentially broad, and negative, social consequences, and said that Microsoft wasn’t trying to pass the buck onto government regulators. “There is not an iota of abdication of responsibility,” he said.

Today almost all top AI executives, Altman, Smith, Sundar Pichai included, have asked government to work together to create effective rules. In other words, some kind of a government mandated regulation.

Some suspect that the tech industry is betting on outreach to regulators as the best way to head off more onerous regulation. But it is also almost certain that the governments crafted rules will please these companies.

Safeguards- Inadequate if Not Absent

Who should be liable if AI generated applications tend to destroy and destruct? Legally the creators and the platforms and the consumers constitute distinct identities, each one alone cannot be held accountable for any adverse consequences arising out of AI generated contents.

In US, the template for most regulations, Section 230 — the law that shields online platforms from liability for user-generated content — has never mustered critical scrutiny of the Courts. Most recently, the Supreme Court declined to review a suit about exploitative content on Reddit. The debate over what responsibility tech companies have for harmful content is far from settled — and generative artificial intelligence tools like the ChatGPT chatbot could open an entirely fresh line of enquiry.

Should Section 230 apply to generative A.I.? Opinions are divided. The writers of section 230 feel, it does not. A broad spectrum of politicians and law maker cutting across political divide, believe that ‘Platforms are immune only to suits about material created by others, not their own work. If you are partly complicit in content creation, you don’t get the shield.’ The challenge, though, is to define these distinctions, a far from simple proposition.

And what to do with search engines who also create content? Typically, search engines are considered vehicles for information rather than content creators, and search companies have benefited from Section 230 protection. But the emerging AI applications integrate chat and search. The lines of distinction is obviously blurred.

The legal position is as nebulous elsewhere. Europe is nowhere clearer; and as regards India, another huge consumer of these applications and extremely vulnerable to its pernicious after-effects, even the debate’s contours are hazy and confused.

A Deadly Recipe

Things do not seem to improve with time. Hallucinations — the falsehoods that generative A.I. tools create (like court cases that never existed) — are a significant problem. If a user prompts an A.I. for cocktail instructions and it offers a poisonous concoction, the algorithm operator’s liability is obvious, said Eric Goldman, a law professor at Santa Clara University and a Section 230 expert.

Goldman fears that anger over immunity for social media platforms threatens nuanced debate about the next generation of tech development. The challenge is complex, even intractable, as most emerging situations are not definitive.

Goldman said. ““The blossoming of A.I. comes at one of the most precarious times amid a maturing tech backlash,” We need some kind of immunity for people who make the tools,” he added. “Without it, we’re never going to see the full potential of A.I.”

Regulation Not A Bad Word

Regulation is made out to be a bad word. But life cannot continue without regulation. We exist because we regulate ourselves. Nature regulates and so does organised life. One may prefer to call it discipline. But it’s merely semantics. Without discipline, the resultant chaos and confusion, will imperil our very existence, and certainly impede all progress.

The choice before humanity is clear. Experimentation is an essential nature of humans. The instinct to breach new frontiers defines human mind. Yet to repeat mistakes and invite disasters also are aspects of the same human mind. But over time, humanity has always retraced its steps back from the brink of complete annihilation. The same human mind must heed the reasoning that should compel to learn from the past mistakes.

We must curb and control the occasional impulses and tendencies that may lead us to the path of existential destruction, and from a disquieting and chaotic disorder.

AI is value neutral. It is up to us to harness its potential in creative ways and not permit it to be usurped by the demonic intelligentsia or demagogues for short term gains and perniciously contrived ends. The liberalism that drives us to creativity and freedom must be overwhelmingly positive and broadly beneficial. And they must follow discipline.

Regulations can never be perfect. They shall always be a compromise, a well-intentioned compromise between the intrinsic human urge to create and the mitigation of this urge if it tends to go wayward. It is a necessary evil, if you please. And it is always a work in progress, ever evolving and responding to the transient developments affecting us.

The logic that humans do not know what is good for them is delusional and self-defeating. These new technologies must work for the common good. A technological marvel that tends to destroy and destruct cannot seek validation and justification through arguments of generous liberalism. They must be contained.

AI is one such technology.

Soft Power Policy And Solar Alliance – Part 1

By Dr.Santhosh Mathew

The writer is Associate Professor at Centre For South Asian Studies, School of International Studies & Social Sciences, Pondicherry Central University.

The expression of “soft power” can be understood in terms of a usable national capacity to advance foreign policy objectives and priorities of a country by non-coercive means. Soft power diplomacy plays a vital role in shaping bilateral and multilateral policies with foreign countries. It works as a complement to “hard power”, which is the military power or other types of compelling diplomacy. Soft power policies key components range from economic to socio-cultural and, even, civilizational; messaging, its veritable core, is done through strategic communication in official dialogues and by means of wider targeted public outreach using diverse media platforms available in our age of information saturation.

In other words, soft power policy is to co-opt rather than coerce.

It is capacity to attract and persuade others to do things they otherwise would not.

It involves the strategy of shaping the preferences of others through appeal and attraction. Soft power policy plays an important role in the development of any country's international relations. Soft power resources are said to be or considered to be the assets that produce attraction or centre of attraction in the geopolitical arena.

The term “soft power” was first used by Joseph Nye, a US foreign policy veteran; he coined the phrase soft power in 1990. He wrote a book THE FUTURE OF POWER TO THINK OF SOFT POWER IN TERMS OF RESOURCES.

Power is derived from resources and soft power is no different.

Soft power rests on three primary resources:

1. Culture
2. Political values
3. Foreign policy

The idea of soft power has gained traction during past few decades in addition with economic and military power. Indian arts, culture, yoga and spiritualism, culinary varieties, festivals, music and dance forms etc, have attracted people from all around the world for centuries.

• **Some of India's soft power areas are as follow-**

1. Yoga and ayurveda
2. Spiritual knowledge of India. Example – Save soil movement by Sadhguru
3. Indian cuisine
4. Indian film Industry.
5. Indian sports and games
6. Indian handicrafts and GI goods
7. Epics like Mahabharata and Ramayana
8. Sustainable and environmental friendly practices of India

• **Limitations of soft power-**

1. Soft power has been criticized as for being ineffective or less effective tool in diplomacy.
2. Actors in international relations respond to only two types of incentives-economic incentives and forceful coercion.
3. As a concept, it can be difficult to distinguish soft power from hard power.
4. Rising powers such as China, a greeting new approach to soft power. Example debt traps, there is using it defensively.
5. Soft power can backfire, leading to reputational, damage or loss, or what has been terms soft disempowerment. Example, India's perception in Maldives.

• **Initiatives by India showcasing its soft power -**

1. Principle of "Vasudev kutumbakam."
2. Nonalignment movement.
3. Neighborhood first policy.
4. Vaccine diplomacy.
5. Aid to Sri Lanka.
6. Developmental aids in Afghanistan.
7. Humanitarian assistance for disaster relief in neighborhood.
8. Political sensitization of leaders.

• **Major achievements-**

1. India has moral high ground at the world form, especially due to the non-violent manner in which we had achieved our independence.
2. International support for tough decisions like abrogation of article 370, maintaining neutrality in Russia, Ukraine war.
3. It keeps India distant from world conflict like recently in Syria, Sudan, Israel, Palestine issue. So, India earns goodwill from all over the world.

• **Threat to India's soft power -**

India's older regions in Academia did little to encourage, protect or to benefit from yoga. Perhaps no other country in recent times has so ignored the potential values of its soft power. There is cultural Battle occurring in the media and Academy in which India's civilization presented.

India's cultural diplomacy is often labelled by the left liberals as Hindutva politics.

• **Recommendations by committee on external affairs-**

1. Strategy document -the committee has recommended that a policy document should be prepared on India, soft power projections along with a soft power metrics for evaluating soft power outcomes.
2. Interministerial synergies- the report highlighted the need for greater synergy among Ministry of external affairs and other ministries, departments, and agencies, involved in India's of power, projections and cultural diplomacy.

3. Revamping the Indian Council of cultural relations – China is estimated to spend about \$10 billion a year just on its Confucius Institute and is of power promotion where Indian Council of cultural relations and other agencies put together spend only Rs.300 to 400 crores.
 4. Increase the funding – to step of India's efforts. The committee recommended minimum 20% hike in the budget of the Indian Council for cultural relations.
 5. Talent acquisition– Ministry of external affairs representatives admitted that finding and inducting train personal into the government has been a challenge for bureaucrats. They submitted but not always the right pick for cultural diplomacy.
- Way forward –
 1. Indian should move beyond asanas and analysis and take action.
 2. Having the Indian story nearly out there, jostling with 100 other stories isn't necessarily winning the power of negative.
 3. Our cultural outreach must be well and well-funded and prime to reduce geopolitical clout.
 4. Our moves whether they be heard to power thrusts or soft power manoeuvres- must emanate from consistent strategy.
 5. In the age of internet, India must amplify its strength and work rapidly to write the wrongs.

To be continued in Next issue

Strengthening Indian National Security: Part 1

By Brig Hemant Mahajan, YSM

Author is M Sc, M Phil in Defence Studies. He joined IMA Dehradun in July 1973 and passed out as a Commissioned Officer on 15 June 1975. He commanded his battalion 7 MARATHA LIGHT INFANTRY in Operation Rakshak in the most difficult areas of Poonch and Rajouri.

Acquisition of 31 MQ-9B Predator Armed Drones bolsters India's defence. The Navy is set to receive 14 drones, while the Indian Air Force and Army will each acquire eight. The MQ-9B, available in Sky Guardian and Sea Guardian variants, amplifies operational capabilities significantly.

During the Prime Minister's visit to the United States, defence cooperation and multi-billion dollar deals are poised to emerge as key outcomes. The recent approval by the defence ministry for the procurement of 31 MQ-9B Predator armed drones from the US under a government-to-government framework underscores this commitment. With an estimated cost of \$3 billion, the acquisition of Sea Guardian Predator drones aims to enhance operational efficiency along both land and sea borders, particularly in relation to China.

Drones offer numerous advantages, particularly when it comes to surveillance during peacetime. The MQ-9B Predator armed drones serve as a formidable force multiplier, providing a range of benefits that contribute to the nation's security and defence.

Minimum Risk During Peace Time:

One of the primary advantages of drones is that they are operated remotely, eliminating the risk to pilots. Pilots can control the drones from a safe location, away from potentially hazardous or hostile environments. This greatly reduces the risk of injury or capture in situations where manned aircraft surveillance could put human lives at stake. Drones are operated remotely, which means that the pilots are not in danger of being killed or captured.

Gathering Intelligence On the Border:

The drones' long loiter time and high-altitude sensors will make them ideal for gathering intelligence about Chinese. Drones are equipped with advanced sensors, cameras, and other surveillance equipment that provide real-time situational awareness to us. This allows for better intelligence gathering and analysis without putting individuals in harm's way. Drones can gather data and provide valuable insights without risking the lives of military personnel.

Longer flight endurance and Loiter time:

Drones can loiter over a target for a much longer period of time than any aircraft, helicopters. This extended flight time allows for more persistent surveillance and the ability to cover larger areas without the need for refueling or pilot rotations. Reduced reliance on limited pilot endurance decreases the risks associated with fatigue-related errors.

Precision Strike missions Against Terror Camps:

The MQ-9B Predator armed drones are a powerful force multiplier for ground attacks. The drones can carry a variety of weapons, including Hellfire missiles and laser-guided bombs. This will allow them to conduct precision strikes against terror targets in Pakistan, on the LOC or LAC.

Enhanced manoeuvrability and stealth:

Drones often have smaller profiles and more agile flight capabilities compared to manned aircraft. They can fly at low altitudes, hover in place, and access areas that may be difficult or dangerous for traditional aircraft to reach. This enables drones to conduct surveillance operations discreetly, reducing the chances of detection and potential neutralization.

Pakistan utilized drones 288 times in 2022 to smuggle narcotics into Punjab. Only 8 of these drones were intercepted and neutralized, highlighting the formidable challenge of detecting and countering drones.

Adaptability and scalability:

Drones offer greater flexibility and scalability. They can be easily deployed and rapidly repositioned as needed. Drones can also be operated in swarms, where multiple drones work together to cover larger areas or perform complex surveillance tasks. This adaptability and scalability provide greater operational efficiency.

Lower Cost of Operations:

Drones are much less expensive, which makes them a more cost-effective compared to manned aircraft surveillance. They typically have lower operational and maintenance costs, making them an attractive option for sustained or long-term surveillance missions.

By reducing costs, armed forces can allocate resources more efficiently.

Lesser Duration Of Training, Lower Cost Of Training

MQ-9B Predator armed drone pilots have the responsibility of conducting surveillance and strike missions using the drone's sensors and weapons systems. Effective communication with ground crews is also crucial for successful operations.

The training for MQ-9B Predator armed drone pilots is significantly shorter and more cost-effective compared to traditional aircraft pilots. The training program combines academic instruction with simulator training, focusing on the MQ-9B's systems, sensors, controls, and weapons operations.

The cost of drone pilot training is much lower, making it a more affordable option compared to training manned aircraft pilots. The training duration for drone pilots usually spans from 6 to 12 months, which is considerably shorter than traditional pilot training programs.

As a result, significant cost savings can be achieved. Drone pilots can become effective in a shorter period of time compared to traditional fighter aircraft or reconnaissance aircraft pilots.

Islands, Coastal, EEZ Security Tasks and Anti-piracy and:

A more efficient and cost-effective approach to surveillance along India's long 7600 km sea borders, as well as its island territories of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands, could be achieved by incorporating drones alongside the current methods of naval reconnaissance aircraft and ship patrolling.

In order to enhance surveillance capabilities within India's vast Exclusive Economic Zone and numerous unoccupied islands in Andaman Nicobar and Lakshadweep and Minicoy archipelagos, the utilization of drones would offer superior surveillance compared to the existing methods in place.

The drones can be used to patrol the Indian Ocean instead of costly patrolling by big naval ships and deter piracy.

Lesser Accident Rate

The accident rate for the MQ-9B Predator armed drone is relatively low. According to data from the Air Force Safety Centre, there have been only 12 accidents involving MQ-9B drones since their introduction in 2007. This equates to an accident rate of 0.14 accidents per 100,000 flight hours.

The lower cost of training, shorter duration, and lower accident rate associated with MQ-9B Predator armed drones contribute to significantly reduced operational costs for the armed forces. This makes them a more cost-effective option overall.

To be continued in Next issue

New Delhi Is Carving Out A Lonely Furrow In SCO

By Srikanth Kondapalli

Author is Dean of School of International Studies and Professor in Chinese studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

The SCO represents 40 per cent of the world's population and a third of its GDP, albeit due to China and India.

India seemed to be charting a new bottom-up, democratic approach in the just-concluded Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit meeting under its presidency. The challenges are formidable in the highly authoritarian regimes of the region, but the approach is subtle, long-term, and comprehensive.

The July 4 meeting of the heads of the SCO came at the end of a year-long outreach to all member-states, observers and dialogue partners during which India organised a massive programme of 140 diverse activities across the country involving these countries, specifically their youth.

As the SCO is expanding – Iran became a member, Belarus may be next – India has been paying much attention since it became a full member six years ago. The SCO represents 40 per cent of the world's population and a third of its GDP, albeit due to China and India.

One significant approach India adopted at this meeting was to strongly put forth its strengths and interests. In contrast to the top-down approach among many authoritarian governments, India advocated enhancing “contact and engagement among people” -- reflected in the programmes conducted across the country.

New Delhi also offered to share India's start-up experience. With the Stalinist planning model discredited and market economy spreading, India's suggestions on start-ups, innovation and digital inclusion provide a transformative moment for the SCO states. India also advocated youth empowerment, traditional medical practices, and shared Buddhist heritage. There are also proposals for cooperation in emerging fuels, decarbonisation, and digital public infrastructure.

These are sure to create interest in the Central Asian states whose aspirations India declared to be its "primary focus". The New Delhi declaration announced Central Asia as the "the core of SCO", perhaps replicating its "ASEAN centrality" approach in the Indo-Pacific in this Eurasian grouping. However, India needs to find its feet and resurrect the age-old ties it had with the region to overcome the hard power of the two dominant powers in the SCO, Russia and China.

This is easier said than done for several reasons. Firstly, in a surprise move, India announced that the 23rd SCO summit would be held in the virtual format. That decision led to speculation mainly due to the actions of China and Pakistan. Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's intemperate remarks and Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang's (and Defence Minister Li Shangfu's) denial of any border crisis with India created an impression of a Sino-Pak cabal in the SCO. China's summit meeting with the Central Asian republics at Xian in May this year, the new trilateral of China-Russia-Iran and other signals from Beijing indicated strongly moves to balance against India. A virtual meeting avoided any embarrassment for New Delhi due to all this.

Secondly, given India's national security priority of countering cross-border terrorism, India found the Sino-Pak axis on the issue intriguing. India's call to avoid double standards in addressing counter-terrorism efforts appear to be falling on deaf ears as China supports Pakistan in the UNSC 1267 committee proceedings as well as shielding Pakistan-based terror outfits. While India participated in Russia-led counter-terror exercises and found useful tactical and operational principles, given the Sino-Pak axis, counter-terrorism issues have been diluted in the SCO to India's disadvantage.

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India is Proud of: Radha Devi



Radha Devi was born in a Dalit family in Village Dharpur, Daulatabad in the district of Azamgarh. As per the social customs prevailing those days, she was married at the age of Two years to one Tulsi Ram from her community. She went to his husband's home when she attained the age of twelve or fourteen years. Tulsi Ram was a bright student and had completed middle school education. After this his family decided to discontinue his further education so that he may help his parent by doing odd jobs here and there. But he was determined to study further. When Radha Devi came to live with him, he mentioned about his desire to study. However, finance was a major problem. Radha Devi was the adored daughter amongst six siblings of which five were sons of her parents. She talked about her husbands' desire to study with her parents and brother's. Her father, who himself was not very well off but gave One Hundred rupee for the further study of Tulsi Ram. He continued with his study. As he was a brilliant student after matric and intermediate, he joined Banaras Hindu University for higher studies. To ensure that Tulsi Ram accomplishes his desire to study, Radha Devi gave her all bridal jewelry for Tulsi Ram's financial needs for studies.

Further to ensure that Tulsi Ram's bright future, Radha Devi's family ensured uninterrupted supply of ration every month to Tulsi Ram ji. Radha Devi though was uneducated and faced many hurdles in her husband's family as it happens, but never got distracted from her resolve for education of her husband.

Tulsi Ram ji, joined JNU and proved his mettle as an academician and rose to become Professor, Centre for Russian, Central Asian and East European Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, the position which he held till his death in Feb 2015. He was a known figure in Dalit movement. Besides being very well grounded in Ambedkarite thought, he remained a Marxist till his last breath.

Well! Radha Devi was never taken to Delhi by Prof Tulsi Ram, (who sacrificed everything for the studies of Tulsi Ram), still lives in her village in very difficult conditions.

It is irony in our society, that many times we have failed to recognise the contribution of wives in the success of men of repute.

Though few years back, famous Film industry producer Dr Chandraprakash Dwivedi made a 52-episode TV serial "Upanishad Ganga" where he highlighted the role played by wives in the life of our saints and Rishi-Muni's.

Well, there is a need that life of strong women like Radha Devi must be known to society.

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