

THE BRAVE NEW WORLD OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Brave New World is a book by the English author Aldous Huxley. It is one of the most popular dystopian novels, along with 1984 by George Orwell and Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury.

Dystopian novels usually depict a future world where everything we knew has either disappeared, or the world has gone all wrong because of some terrible catastrophe.

Huxley's 1932 book is set in London, in the year 2540. Society is run by a global government that engineers humans in factories and conditions them from birth to be happy and productive. There's no war, no disease, no aging, no religion, no family, no art that challenges anything. People are basically zombies, but happy zombies.

It is a world where *gavumenti enyamba* has come true, only to an extent no one had imagined. People do not think for themselves or make any decision for themselves. Even sex has become routine, you can have it anytime, anywhere. No emotions are involved, or allowed; *gavumenti* removed them all.

What Huxley was warning about (just after WWI that was mainly a fight against fascism), was the danger of people giving up their freedoms for contentment. While everyone is happy and satisfied, they are really slaves. But slaves who are happy with their servitude.

Many science fiction stories about advanced technological societies imagine lives where everything is done by machines, and man's role is to just enjoy their lives. Of course, things occasionally go wrong,



WHAT'S UP

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hence the books and movies. If nothing went wrong, there would be no stories to write or movies to make about such a society.

With the rise of artificial intelligence (AI), there is a fear that we are heading into that kind of world. With AI doing many of the tasks that humans did, there is a danger that skill and knowledge built over millennia would disappear.

What is the use of learning calculus if you are not going to use it anywhere, with AI able to make millions of calculations in the time humans can do only one? Why even go to school, when what you learn will be outdated before you even complete a class?

If AI made everything so efficient, and production was almost 100% effective, why even bother going to class? Anything you can do, AI can do better.

YouTube is now full of music produced by AI, with the only disclaimer mostly being 'in the style of so-and-so musician'.

You can now use AI music generators like Suno to compose a song without any musician's involvement. Amazon is flooded with books written by AI, so who needs writers and poets?

It will soon be possible to produce any kind of food we want from AI-controlled laboratories, so why bother with farming? There is a lot of food in our supermarkets that if you were not told was produced in a lab, you wouldn't be able to tell the difference. You happily pick your steak and your fillet with no idea it had never set a foot on a farm.

If there is any conflict between countries that needed to be sorted by force of arms, AI has got you. Send out the machines to do the fighting for you. Ukraine is already doing that while fighting Russia's 'special operation' that is currently in its fifth year.

Faced with a shortage of human soldiers, and faced with Russian seemingly inexhaustible hordes, Ukraine is now sending in battalions of robots to do its fighting. The result is that for the first time since the war started, Russia is losing more soldiers than it can replace. The machines' first victory over humans is nigh.

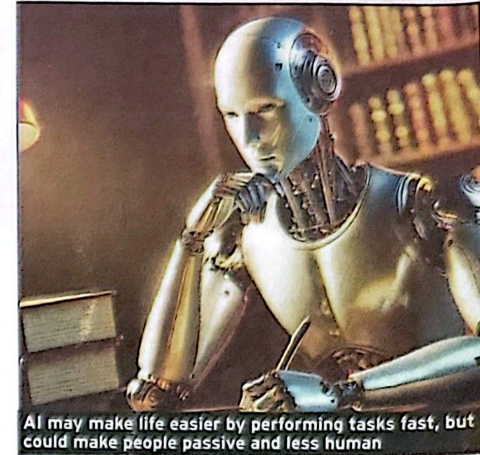
Fifteen million young people go to school in Uganda, with the ultimate goal of making enough money to maybe buy a plot, build a house, and get married. What if the *gavumenti* provided all that? If everyone's got a house and a family provided by the state, why would you complain? I know many people who would be very happy in such conditions.

So, with everybody happy, who would bother with politics? In

Huxley's brave new world, and soon our own, too, human beings are almost soulless, and closely resemble the machines that have replaced them.

I still remember the first New Year's fireworks show at the Sheraton Hotel in the National Resistance Movement era. People came from all over the country, some even camped two nights before New Year's eve. Fireworks? It was a real big deal. But now even nursery school graduations can have a fireworks display.

So, in comes the drone show on Monday night. I'm not sure if people realised what they were actually seeing. For one, it was the first large scale drone show in East Africa, according to



AI may make life easier by performing tasks fast, but could make people passive and less human

Google. Estimates had it that it featured about 350 drones, programmed to form all those figures people saw.

It was a pretty basic show as far as drone shows go, and the fireworks that followed probably drew more 'aahs' and 'aws' than the drone show.

But think of it, in the near future fireworks may be obsolete. After thousands of years of wowing people,

AI-controlled drones will take over. Very soon, we could be able to watch a whole theatrical production in the sky. All you'd need is something to give you the sound, and a re-incarnation of the drive-in cinema would have happened. Only this time it is in the sky.

Yeah, a brand-new world, but without any soul to it. Are you ready for it?

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