

Editorial

Are we placing too much reliance on technology?

Most of us are now undeniably living in a world dominated by modern technology and our lifestyle is accordingly shaped by it. For example, just think of what it would be like if we were to go without electricity for the rest of our life. Or if there were no means of such modern communications as telephone, computers, TV and radio any more. Our ancestors had in fact gone through that kind of lifestyle before and surprisingly they survived and actually did very well! For one thing, this simply shows that, in the ultimate sense, those products of modern technology that we tend to take for granted and think we cannot do without are indeed not essentials for life per se.

Having said that, it is also true that technology, when used judiciously, can help make our modern everyday life much easier and more pleasant. In fact, our ancestors also had their own technology to ease them through life, but they relied on it only for their physical comfort and conveniences and never appeared to allow it to take the place of or interfere with their moral/ethical standards or judgement on important issues.

To cite as examples—and well known ones at that, cases have been occasionally witnessed even as recently as within the lifetime of many of us still living now, in which a pledge is kept without a written and signed document (in a way, a product of technology). Obviously for these people of integrity (mostly the senior members of the common citizen), words and deeds are more important and worthier of keeping than a piece of paper. Recently also, an average couple might simply live together as man and wife and have a dozen children without a single official marriage licence (another product of technology). However, to these people, irresponsibility and unfaithfulness is out the question. Just think of how life would be if, every time a wife is pregnant and gives birth to a child, the husband and/or his folks raise their eyebrows and demand a DNA test!

Nowadays it seems we tend to place too much reliance on modern technology, the more modern the better! A patient with a simple ailment, for example, has been known to go through diagnostic tests with a battery of expensive instruments of the latest technology when sometimes all that is needed is a simple stethoscope coupled with a sound analysis and judgement by an experienced doctor to find out what is wrong. Other examples of over-reliance on technology abound in this country, where technology and its verdict is sometimes regarded as something almost sacred and not to be disputed.

Technology is fine as it is, but it should neither be allowed to control, manipulate or modify our discernment and integrity as human beings especially when and where it counts most, nor be looked upon as the final answer or cure-all to all our problems.

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