



PHOTO: AFP

## AI will replenish, complement and enhance human intelligence



### AN OPEN DIALOGUE

**Dr. Abdullah Shibli** is an economist and works for Change Healthcare, Inc., an information technology company. He also serves as senior research fellow at the US-based International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI).

**ABDULLAH SHIBLI**

I have said elsewhere that AI will be a friend and not a foe of human intelligence; it will in most instances support human beings and supplement and not be used in lieu of human intelligence. Like all technological developments, even if it is revolutionary (e.g., the Internet and nuclear energy), human beings are always going to be in charge – so we don't have to fear that AI will override human intelligence. Control will always be in the hands of the masters. In sum, humans are going to drive AI and assess, evaluate, and measure the latter's analyses, prognostications, predictions or forecasts.

I am so optimistic about AI, particularly generative AI, of which ChatGPT is an example, because I have seen how technology has helped learning and teaching in academia over many decades. Students in higher education in the USA have been using software tools enhanced by AI for years. Research, problem-solving, coding, and writing papers are the bread and butter in the undergraduate learning repertoire.

In academia, there are two types of writing. Students write their term papers, thesis or dissertations, while professors and researchers write for academic journals and publish their research findings because they "publish or perish". It is expected that the students, whether at the undergraduate or the graduate level, will display their creativity, and their submission will be an original piece of work. An author has to certify that his or her work was not plagiarised from another source. It is a reasonable rule. If a student is enrolled in a course and submits a poem copied from a fellow student, it is considered a violation of honour or ethics codes. It can result in disciplinary action from a person's school or workplace.

Sadly, plagiarism is one of the biggest and trickiest problems that college and university professors have to address. From the earliest days of the Internet and the availability of

search engines, students (and, for that matter, many others) have used (i.e., copied) paragraphs and data from published materials without proper attribution. With the new variety and a plethora of tools available now, it is possible to catch these acts of deception much more quickly than before. In my previous op-ed in this newspaper, I mentioned that Boston University has already leaned on faculty to employ AI detection tools to evaluate the degree to which AI tools have likely been employed in a term paper or thesis submitted by students.

As I mentioned above, ChatGPT belongs to a genre of AI algorithms that generate or create an output, such as text, photo, video, code, data, and 3D renderings, from data they are trained on. Other forms of AI have been available that might be used for other purposes, such as for analysing statistical data or controlling autonomous cars.

It is easier now to flag plagiarised materials with the availability of AI software such as ChatGPT. As a former university professor, I can anticipate the challenges that my colleagues working now face if students use ChatGPT indiscriminately. Some of these issues were raised by professor Shamsuzzaman in an op-ed in these pages earlier this month.

While I agree that widespread adoption of ChatGPT type of software may have significant negative unintended consequences not only on writing but learning in many academic disciplines, there is no denying that if we all adopt an "honour system" and practice full disclosure, students and amateur writers will benefit. One could overcome writer's block and improve their writing and analytical skills. And I can vouch for that based on my personal experience.

A few years ago, I developed the urge to write. The first thing I discovered when I started writing for publication is that our skill set is not genetically endowed. I was an economist and had developed many skills while working

with computers, but I had not written much except my PhD dissertation. At Dhaka University, I was pen-shy. I could write a good sentence in exams and /or a decent paragraph for a composition exercise, but no more. Then, after my mother passed away, I developed an intense desire to write for two reasons. First, I wanted to write about my family and leave something for future generations. Secondly, growing up in Dhaka, I have some wonderful memories that I was eager to share. So, I started writing but faced several handicaps. I had to figure out the style of literature. In addition, I needed ideas. How I struggled, and now I know I could have used a tool like ChatGPT!

Let me illustrate this point. Even if you are a very good writer, you are constantly looking for various angles. For example, suppose you're writing a term paper on how robots will affect the production line. In that case, one may wonder whether to start with the history of robotics, with a dramatic quotation, or by providing a vision for the future? So, it's a good thing to have three different perspectives. We know that if you can appropriately prompt ChatGPT, it would offer three different versions of an essay on "Robots and Factory Automation", and you can decide then which one you like.

As William Faulkner, the American Nobel prize-winning novelist, said, "The writer has three sources: imagination, observation, and experience". As we know, one is not born with all or any of these three. Having (or not having) these did not help me much. During my PhD years, I was stuck on my dissertation for many years. The Internet and access to the world literature in digital form on the Web could have really helped.

I will end this note with another tangible benefit of AI in education. As a former teacher, it was difficult for me to keep track of the students in my class and their levels of ability to absorb the materials. Some students are good at following lectures, while others like to go home and review the notes or other materials I post online. AI is now able to give me timely feedback on my daily presentation. It helps me calibrate my approach to ensure that every student has a good comprehension of the topic and can apply these in practical situations.

## What we mean when we talk about democracy



**Yao Wen** is the Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh.

**YAO WEN**

Recently, "democracy" has become a hot word in Bangladesh and beyond. The term derives from the ancient Greek language, which means "rule by the people" or "sovereignty rests with the people". Throughout history, democracy has taken various forms in different periods and under different circumstances. Nowadays, democracy has become a common value shared by all of humanity. There is, however, no one-size-fits-all model for democracy. "All roads lead to Rome," as the old saying goes. As an exchange of minds, I would like to share China's ideas and practices in pursuing democracy.

Democracy is an ideal that has always been cherished by the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese people. China is the largest developing country with a vast territory, a large population and limited resources per capita. China's unique national conditions determine its unique democratic system. Under the leadership of the CPC, China has developed the whole-process people's democracy, which implements the people's democratic dictatorship as the governing system and the people's congresses as the governing structure. The multiparty cooperation and political consultation under CPC leadership has been upheld and improved. In Xinjiang, Xizang (Tibet) and some other places, the regional ethnic autonomy system is applied. The villagers, urban residents and employees of enterprises run self-governance at community levels. Through the broad patriotic united front, China endeavours to combine all the forces that can be united and to mobilise all positive factors. In this way, China has successfully integrated the process-oriented democracy with results-oriented democracy, procedural democracy with substantive democracy, direct democracy with indirect democracy, and people's democracy with the will of the state. Democracy has been planted in elections, consultations, decision-making, management and oversight.

First, China's democracy guarantees broad and continuous participation of the people and inspires the infinite power of the people. The Constitution stipulates that all power in the People's Republic of China (PRC) belongs to the people, and that the people shall, in accordance with the provisions of the law, manage state and social affairs and economic and cultural undertakings. In China, the concept of democracy is deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, and the practice of democracy is integrated into all aspects of work and life. Democracy in China inspires the people to fully tap into their own wisdom and strength to create a better life and make the country stronger. Democracy in China gives full expression to the guidelines of the CPC, the will of the state, and the expectations of the people, which generates a huge cohesive force that translates into one of China's great institutional strengths – the ability to pool resources to accomplish major initiatives. Democracy in

China has safeguarded national independence and protected national sovereignty, security and development interests, and seeks the well-being of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation.

Second, China's democracy promotes sound governance and shared development. A favourable democracy must solve practical problems and promote national development. It has been proven in history that the CPC has led the Chinese people to open a distinctive Chinese path to modernisation, and achieved remarkable successes. There has been a marked increase in China's economic and composite national strength, and a notable improvement in the people's living standards. On the occasion of the

Bullying is never part of China's diplomacy. China drives global growth with its own development, and has strengthened exchanges and cooperation with countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and shared the gains with them, expanding the initiative into a well-received global public good. China has also put forward the Global Development Initiative (GDI), the Global Security Initiative (GSI) and the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI), which bring about more opportunities to broaden and deepen global partnerships.

Whether a country is doing well in democracy should be judged by its people. According to surveys respectively conducted by Harvard University Kennedy School of Government and Edelman, a leading global public relations consultancy, 90 percent of the Chinese people trust in the Chinese government and are satisfied with it. This showcased that democracy in China fully ensures the people's status as masters of the country, thus proving itself to be genuine and effective.

However, in certain countries,



**China's unique national conditions determine its unique democratic system.**

PHOTO: REUTERS

100th anniversary of the founding of the CPC, China announced the historic eradication of absolute poverty and the completion of the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. In the face of an epidemic unseen in a century, China put the people and their lives first, and resolutely won the battle to prevent and control Covid-19. China is among the countries with the lowest rates of severe illness and mortality. Democracy in China means people-centered development that fully mobilises the initiative of the people, relies on their strength, and ensures that all share the benefits.

Third, China respects the path to democracy as chosen by every country based on its own national conditions, and promotes democracy in international relations. Countries can borrow from the successful experience of others and develop forms of democracy suited to their own modernisation process, but they should not simply duplicate other systems or models. China endeavours to increase democracy both within its own territory and between nations. At a time of momentous change of a scale unseen in a century, China champions peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit. China proposes to build a global community of shared future, and presses for a new model of international relations based on mutual respect, fairness and justice, and win-win cooperation.

the people are awakened only to cast a vote but become dormant afterwards; the people are offered great hopes during electoral campaigning but have no say afterwards; the people are offered fulsome promises during electoral canvassing but are left empty-handed afterwards.

Politicians ignore the existence of troublesome issues concerning democracy and human rights in their own country, but point their fingers at other countries and make irresponsible remarks about other democracies. They wield unilateral sanctions and long arm jurisdiction against foreign countries, instigate "colour revolutions" and "democratic transformation" abroad, and even use force directly. Interference as such seriously damages the sovereignty and interests of other countries.

By concocting a so-called "democracy versus authoritarianism" narrative, they engage in camp confrontation, draw lines with ideology and values, and use democracy as a tool to maintain hegemony. These acts are themselves undemocratic, even anti-democratic.

Many insightful people in Bangladesh told me that, since the independence of the country more than half a century ago, the Bangladeshi people have been striving to build a better democracy. This is the business of the Bangladeshi people, not one up to judgment by other countries. Such voices should be heard and given due respect.

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**CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH**

**ACROSS**  
1 Citi Field's forerunner  
5 TV grouch  
10 Golf feat  
12 Without aid  
13 Car quartet  
14 Barbera's partner  
15 Luau strings  
16 Talk incoherently  
18 Green need  
20 Bill dispenser  
21 Shortly, in poems  
23 "Not Unusual"  
24 Gator's cousin  
26 Prime setting  
28 Coffee, in slang  
29 Puts away  
31 TV alien

**DOWN**  
1 Arrange  
2 17 syllable poem  
3 Snowy bird  
4 Bar choice  
5 Diamond Head  
6 Louver piece  
7 Hold  
8 Bening of

32 Stick in the fridge  
36 Neatnik's bane  
39 – de la Cité  
40 Newscaster  
43 Insurance seller  
44 Sensational  
45 Narrow shelf  
46 Church event

"Bugsy"  
9 Gives more weapons to  
11 Gist  
17 Old hand  
19 Eastern "way"  
22 Artless  
24 Cut-and-paste art  
25 Proved false  
27 East, in Berlin  
28 Wolf's cousin  
30 Penny prez  
33 pageant crown  
34 "The King"  
35 Oboe parts  
37 Crystal-tapping sound  
38 Head, to Henri  
42 Stick in a pack

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**FRIDAY'S ANSWERS**

D	A	B	B	E	D	A	F	R	O
O	R	A	L	L	I	S	L	O	W
C	E	R	I	S	E	H	O	W	L
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**BEETLE BAILEY** BY MORT WALKER

**BABY BLUES** BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT