**Outernet : How internet became our reality?**

* **Samarjeet Rankhamb**

Back in 1990, when Tim Berner-Lee created the internet, it was seen as a new revolution.

People were awed by all the new possibilities. But there existed a group of people who were

frightened. Frightened by what they thought it would turn into. They were called Luddites, and

they were ridiculed and shunned for being conspiracy theory believing nut-jobs. The Luddites

were scared that people would use the internet to replace social lives. They were scared the

internet would further alienate antisocial people, trapping them in a circle-jerk of their own

opinions.

Were they too paranoid? Or did they really see it for what it was? We started with a system to

share files, which evolved to a system to communicate across the world quickly, and is now a

part of every single part of our lives. The internet evolves everyday, and frankly, nothing else in

the world is as versatile as it is. The problem with having such a powerful tool at our disposal is,

not all of us use it for good. And these problems that have risen in the modern information age,

are some we’ve never seen before.

Let’s be fair here, the internet has either been the source of, or an integral tool to most modern

day progress. And isn’t that why it’s so difficult to come to grips with our current reality?

Fast forward to today, the internet is now seen as an essential need. People of all ages are

extremely dependent on it, especially young adults. Teens being radicalized by social media,

whose algorithms only show them what they want to see, specially developed to keep people

scrolling. People blame the pandemic for making the internet essential, but all it did was

accelerate the pace of the inevitable. It forced us to use the internet for everything. Now, even

though the pandemic is gone, we’re still dependent on the internet for basic needs- navigation,

music, socializing, food, the list goes on. We’ve integrated the internet into our lives in a major

way, and we might just have to accept that it is going to keep evolving the way it has, and

become a much more intrusive part of our lives.

To be fair, this can be looked at as a good thing too. It is up to you, the reader, to decide. We

choose to not think about it because, after all, who likes thinking and talking about unpleasant

things? I chose to write about this because I’d like us to.

Our lives are infinitely better and worse because of the internet. The term “Inter-net” was coined

because it was developed to help communication “inter” devices. Is it time we changed it to

“Outer-net”?