

The Horizon Newsletter

July 2020

The Effects of Surveillance on a Mass Population

By: *Abhiram Dasari*

In today's world, everything is online. Any bit of information that you want is right at your fingertips through the power of the internet. However, that also includes personal information. And if it is available to us, it is available to the government. Now, this might not be a big deal to many. After all, if you had nothing to hide, then there would be nothing to worry about,



right? Well, as it turns out, surveillance can have many effects when it comes to humans. In an age where people are increasingly using the internet for everyday tasks, we need to make sure that privacy is still prevalent. Let's talk about side effects of surveillance. According to Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, "Evidence shows that mass surveillance erodes

intellectual freedom and damages the social fabric of affected societies; it also opens the door to flawed and illegal profiling of individuals." Essentially,

this means that people under surveillance might be more likely to “self-censor”, and not talk about controversial issues, which recent events have shown we definitely need to talk about. This also means that people can profile you based on how you look through surveillance, which is another issue that people today have been fighting to stop. Support for this is found in a study done in 2016 and published in the *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. In this study, people were asked a series of political questions and polls to establish a person's psychological profile. They were then shown a fake story about a US airstrike against the Islamic State. They were then interviewed on what they thought about the story. A random group of people were then selected to be briefly and regularly reminded that they were being recorded. This group of people were shown to have a massive increase in “self-censoring”, a little over 83%, as opposed to the control group’s less than 6%. When interviewed by the *Washington Post*, Elizabeth Stoycheff, the leader of the group who conducted the study, and an assistant professor at Wayne State University, said she was quite disturbed by the results of her study. “So many people I've talked with say they don't care about online surveillance because they don't break any laws and don't have anything to hide. And I find these rationales deeply troubling,” she said. She also said that in the study, people with this same opinion were usually the ones that had the greatest amount of “self-censoring”. She elaborated on why “self-censoring” was harmful to society by stating “It concerns me that surveillance seems to be enabling a culture of self-censorship because it further disenfranchises minority groups. And it is difficult to protect and extend the rights of these vulnerable populations when their voices aren't part of the discussion. Democracy thrives on a diversity of ideas, and self-censorship starves it.” As you can see, surveillance is a huge problem in society today. It promotes self-censorship, and tears down the very fabric of democracy; having your voice heard. It



makes it even harder for minorities to have their voice heard, and further disenfranchises them. Finally, and most importantly, it makes people feel like they can't talk about controversial topics if they want to be part of the social norm. If this somewhat mild level of surveillance has such a profound effect now, just imagine what will happen as the inevitable progress of technology furthers itself.

Samsung Executives Jailed Over Alleged Destruction at CDMO Unit

By: Sumant Anantha

In 2019, Samsung Biologics, a South Korean company that manufactures Biopharmaceutical products like hormones, had Executives accused of letting employees destroy and get rid of the evidence. The Evidence was part of the accounting practices at CDMO (Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization) according to Yonhap, a South Korean news agency.



These accounting Practices refer to a system of procedures and controls that an accounting department uses to create and record Business Transactions. The Executives were taken to court in South Korea where they are accused of hiding evidence. A supposed cover-up where Computers, Notebooks, and Computer servers were hidden under the facility floors owned by Samsung Biologics, revealed by the accused executives. Earlier in the case, the court learns from Korea Biomedical Review about how the accused executives deleted data. The Accusations towards the executives were rounded up with a critical observation from Korea Biomedical Review of Samsung Biologics' reckoning practices which caught the focus of the Financial Supervisory Service (FSS), a South Korean financial regulator. In 2018, an FSS probe led to the accusations of Samsung Biologics breaking the rules for reckoning practices. The company denied the allegations even knowing the FSS probe reached its

conclusion. This case is similar to many Corporate scandals like Volkswagen, who ran Engineers acting like angels in commercials. Company officials were setting up detailed systems to lie to customers and get through pollution controls. When Volkswagen revealed in September that it had installed software on millions of cars in order to fool the Environmental Protection Agency's emissions testers into thinking that the cars were more environmentally friendly than they were, Investors started to leave the company due to this. Another Corporate Scandal Similar to Samsung Biologic would be Fifa. Fifa was charged by the FBI due to the Fifa individuals participating in Racketeering, Fraud, and Other offenses. FIFA officials had long been under suspicion of taking bribes in exchange for giving out broadcasting rights for games and hosting privileges for events like the World Cup. So, in this case, Samsung Biologics is a corporate scandal because of the executives convincing Employees to stash Computers and servers in factory floors as part of the executives' scheme to hide evidence from authorities investigating the alleged fraud at Samsung Biologics, according to prosecutors. Knowing the company's actions, the court sentenced the Employees a year and six months and the Vice President 2 years behind bars, without passing a statement on whether Samsung Biologics had followed the accounting rules.

Muslim Woman Files Discrimination Charges Against Target After a Starbucks Barista Wrote 'ISIS' On Her Cup

By: Shrihan Dadi

Aishah, a 19 year old Muslim woman, filed a discrimination charge against Target after she got a drink with 'ISIS' written on it instead of her name. She is being represented by CAIR-MN, the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. She believed that she was singled out by the barista because she wore a hijab and felt humiliated for being treated with disrespect. The barista claimed that she heard Aishah's name incorrectly, but it seems that there is no way the barista could have heard her name as 'ISIS.' Aishah repeated her name



multiple times to the employee. When Aishah spoke to the employee's supervisor, she felt that her concerns were dismissed: she was simply given a new drink and a \$25 gift card. A spokesperson for Target apologized and mentioned that the Target team believed that the employee did not write 'ISIS' deliberately. CAIR-MN demands the firing of the two employees involved in the incident, a thorough investigation, and employee training on bigotry and Islamophobia.

Reflecting back on History: July 10th

By: Aaryan Kumar

In today's age, people have been focusing on the tragedies and unfortunate outcomes today, that they have forgotten the far more dangerous events of the past. This article will show that although the date of July 10th has been another day of tragic loss to the Coronavirus, it is rather insignificant compared to other events in the past, showing that if humanity could survive those events, surely we can survive more recent ones.

On July 10th, Julius Caesar, a brilliant Roman General and a Dictator of Rome, suffered one of his closest setbacks where he narrowly avoided defeat against his rival, General Pompey and managed to conduct a military retreat from what is today Greece to Albania. Caesar's logistical errors resulted in him possessing a fraction of the men his rival had and although Pompey "won", many historians give the victory to Caesar. Caesar managed to survive a military catastrophe with his life, which is much harder than not falling prey to a disease if you ask me.

There were other notable events on July 10th, particularly during the Second World War, which showed the horrors but also bravery during the conflict. 1940 and 1941 saw British Victory in the Battle of Britain and the Invasion of the Soviet Union by German and Finnish forces as they pushed to northern Russia, resulting in the Siege of Leningrad. 1942 saw a particularly horrible

event which saw SS Leader Heinrich Himmler oversee the sterilization of the Jewish People, a ghastly scar on the Jewish Population that was never shed.

1943 saw the height of the war and the start of the tide that would shift the war into the Allies favor. On July 10th the Battle of Kursk raged which oversaw the participation of over 2,000,000 soldiers in a single battle and the disputed loss of about 750,000 men. The same day the Allies launched the famed Sicily Campaign which led to the small steps that eventually helped them end the Second World War

When such things are put into perspective, one cannot help but notice the horrors and loss of humanity in the past and contrast it with a rather weaker and safer crisis today, and a much greater chance to live.

Greener way to recycle our tech!

By: Harvik Kolla

Just in the past week, Scientists in Birmingham have found a way to recycle electrical components in everyday technology; these metals are found in our phones, watches, computers and more. These components are magnets, which are everywhere in our tech gadgets. These magnets are made up of earth metals which make up our phones to our laptop's hard drives.

The traditional way of recycling these was deemed impossible: One would have to break apart the device and then sift through what's left and look for what one wants. This is where it becomes tricky: Rare earth magnets shatter right as you start shredding the device and stick to any piece of metal it can

find. The end result is a bunch of tiny chunks of earth metal impossible to retrieve from the mess.

But recently, Professor Rex Harris from the University of Birmingham found out a clever solution to all this. He discovered if



you shoot hydrogen over a rare earth magnet, the magnet expands and transforms into a powder. The ingenious part is that the resulting powder isn't magnetic at all! Now for a long time this was just an interesting fact about an interesting group of elements. But as rare earths grew to become such a key part of modern technology, it became apparent that this interesting fact could be the secret to recycling them. Now, Dr Alan Walton and his team at the University of Birmingham have now managed to recycle rare earths on a scale where industry has begun to take notice.

As well as being greener and better for the environment, it also offers companies to help save waste and save money. All of this has been proved to work on a commercial scale, so the hope is to get companies interested in the technology and using it within the next year or so.

We should all know what happens to our tech gadgets once we stop using them, and most of us simply don't care. The everyday utilities we use can actually damage the environment to a tremendous scale when not being properly recycled. With this new ingenious creation, We can safely discard our tech after use and not worry about it damaging the environment!

Read more at :

<https://ceramics.org/ceramic-tech-today/new-simpler-recycling-process-extracts-rare-earth-magnets-from-discarded-electronics>

The Effects of Covid on Asia's Garment Industry

By: Pranay Koneru

For years the vast majority of Asian countries have relied on garment production to sustain millions of their citizens. So when Covid-19 began to rapidly make its way through the west, many large clothing manufacturers had no choice but to close thousands of their stores and file for bankruptcy. This led to the cancellation of orders worth billions of dollars which, consequently, left hundreds of thousands of garment workers unemployed. Unable to find other means through which they could sustain themselves,

these workers were forced to borrow money and reduce their consumption of basic necessities such as food.

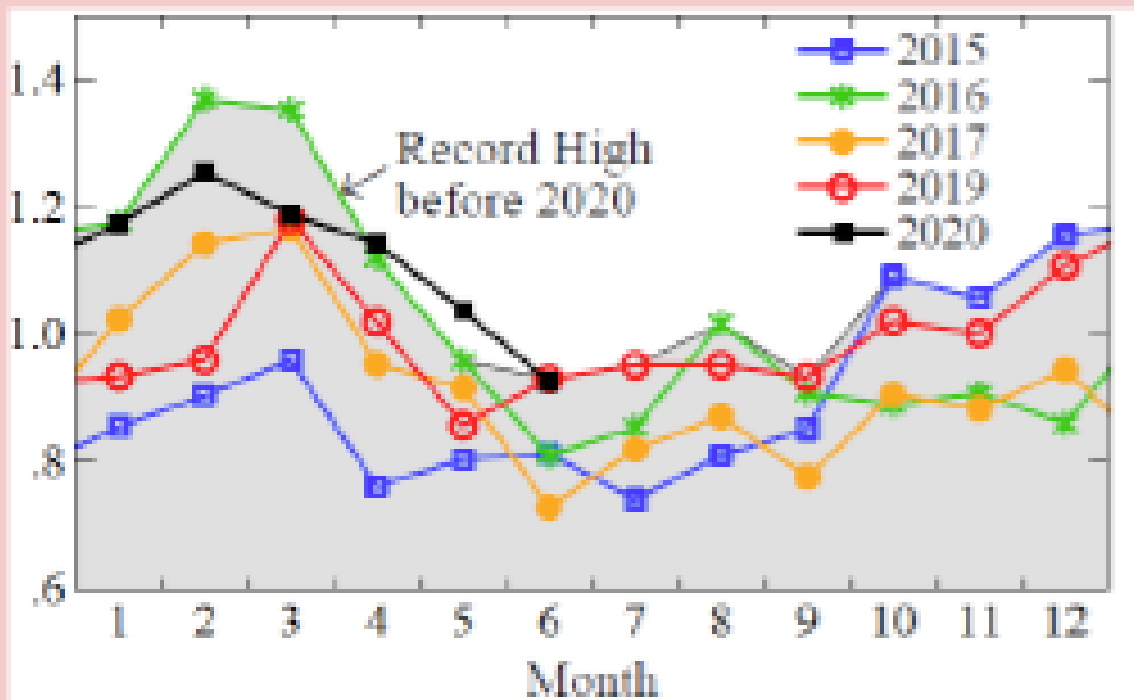
The current situation does not represent only a temporary disruption in the Asian economy, but rather an expansive issue that will continue to plague future generations. A large number of western companies have indicated that they intend to move sizable portions of their production to Eastern Europe and North Africa for the European market, and to Mexico for the North American market, a practice known as “near-shoring”. What does this mean for unemployed workers and the struggling economies they support? Well countries like India and Bangladesh rely heavily on garment production with clothes making up 85% of the latter’s export earnings. Indian garment exports have more than tripled in the last 20 years going from \$11.15 billion in 2000 to \$37.22 billion in 2017. Asian countries as a whole employ over 43 million garment workers. Garment manufacturing jobs enable employees to support their families and if we, as privileged individuals who can continue to work from the comfort of our homes, are unable to acknowledge the consequences our country’s deplorable response to the current pandemic has had on their well-being an entire continent’s economy may forever be in shambles.

Rising temperatures continue to shatter heat records even during the midst of the pandemic.

By: Arya Bharti

Recent data from NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies confirmed that the 6 month period between January and June was the second hottest on record. During the heatwave of 2020, Death valley in California, USA recorded the hottest temperature on Earth this year. With 128 degrees Fahrenheit (52.8 Celsius), the record was off by a single degree to take the world record of the most reliable temperature ever recorded in history. Humanity continues to pump billions of tons of CO₂ into the atmosphere making the past few years claim the highest levels in at least 800,000 years.

Currently, 2016 was the hottest year ever recorded in the past almost 1 & ½ centuries. 19 of the hottest years out of 20 have all occurred since the turn of the century as our population continues to explode and demand continues to rise. Humanity doesn't have much time as the UN have stated that an increase of 1.5 Celsius since 2015 could lead to the worst environmental disasters in history as the ice sheets melt, oceans rise and crops around the world begin to fail. The 1.5 C warming mark is now fast approaching and we've already seen the horrible consequences this year, such as the Californian and Australian fires. But as the pandemic from the coronavirus has gripped the world, heat records continue to rise as carbon emissions persist. Scientist have stated that there's an over 75 percent chance that 2020 will go down as either the warmest or second warmest year on record.



Countries Will Pay Tourists to Visit After Coronavirus Pandemic

By: Sruthi Anne

There are many countries and places that have decided to take responsibility for starting tourism again and bringing visitors back after the coronavirus pandemic, and gallivanterers will be the ones to benefit most.

If you haven't realized, popular tourist and holiday destinations around the world are struggling a lot because of the COVID-19 pandemic. International travel is not frequent anymore and borders remain closed internationally. While international travel may not be available anytime soon, many countries are making sure that they are the first port of call post-pandemic, by offering deals to pay for some of your travel and holiday costs.

1. Sicily, Italy

Sicily, the largest Mediterranean region, is trying to bring back tourists by offering to pay for some of their stay. For every 3 nights a person pays for a hotel, they will not have to pay for the 4th night and will be given free archeological and museum tickets.

2. Cancun, Mexico

According to theyucatantimes.com, the Association of Hotels in Cancun (AHCP) is offering two nights free for every 2 nights paid, and some discount on the plane ticket when travelling with a companion.

3. Japan

As per thesun.co.uk, the Japanese government would pay half the price of the plane ticket in return for getting more travellers to recede, and are also considering eliminating other travel costs.



Candidate Vaccine Advances to Phase III Trials

Pavitra Madala

An investigational candidate vaccine, known as mRNA-1273, was designed by biotechnology company Moderna to protect against SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. According to the World Health Organization, this is one of the 23 COVID-18 candidate vaccines in clinical trials across the globe. The phase I trial of this vaccine brought hope to many researchers as it is perceived to be safe and induced a promising immune response in 120 healthy volunteers. In turn, researchers plan on taking the next step by conducting a larger study that determines whether the vaccine really protects against the coronavirus. These larger studies will reveal the true safety profile of this vaccine as well as its capability to prevent infection or increase a person's risk for severe disease. Moderna plans on conducting phase III trials this month with thirty thousand adults enrolled at 87 study sites across the United States. If these studies are successful, Moderna claims to confirm its candidate vaccine by the end of this year.