

Be a cyborg, download your dreams

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How about transmitting your thoughts and ideas directly to the mind of your friend? Or downloading your memory and even dreams into a computer? The next generation humans with super-intelligence and memory? Human brains that have parallel processing capabilities like computers?

Science fiction it may seem, but, Prof Kevin Warwick of Aston University, believes his recent experiments on the man-machine interface have indeed opened up this seemingly impossible world for human exploration. Dr Warwick, perhaps better known as the "world's first cyborg" for his endeavor of surgically implanting a 100-electrode silicon chip into his arm, was here in the City in flesh and blood and enthralled a jam-packed audience at the National Institute of Advanced Studies with the countless implications of relationship between man and ma-



'World's first cyborg' Prof Kevin Warwick at the NIAS in Bangalore on Friday.

chine. Prof Warwick took the audience on a journey into the "mind of the machine" in a talk spiced with live demonstrations with robots, video clippings slides, extracts from his latest book *I, Cyborg* and wit and humour.

In March this year, the 48-year old Prof Warwick effectively

became the world's first cyborg - part human and part machine - by having a miniature computer implanted into the main nerve canal of his arm. "By linking the nervous system to technology via an implant, humans could control and interact with this technology simply by thinking about

it! For example, if a car and individual were linked, the car could be driven by thought alone - think left, turn left," explained Prof Warwick.

Earlier in 1998, Prof Warwick had showed that silicon chip implanted in his arm could operate and give signals to a computer

which in turn could open doors or even control the lighting systems of his house. "We have taken only a small step, but it surely has opened up a huge unexplored world," he said pointing out that application of the technology ranged from medical help for people with spinal injuries, vision to the blind to augmenting human brains with super intelligence.

Readings from the two progressive experiments, Prof Warwick said, have helped to encode movements and store them in computer memory for use in robots. He now plans to implant a silicon chip in his brain which he plans to experiment when is 60. "My main aim is to get an implant in the brain which would enable even thoughts to be exchanged and increase memory and calculation capacity", he said. Those who have missed his talk can listen to him on Saturday when he talks on "from robots to cyborgs" at the Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum on Kasturba Gandhi Road at 9:30 am.