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# Meet this part man, part machine

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bangalore:** Playing psychologist to robots is his passion. Having 100 silicon rods fired into his nervous system and moving a robotic arm 4,000 miles away through internet by moving his own arm... Thrilling!

Meet Prof. Kevin Warwick, the world's first cyborg — part man, part machine. A professor at University of Reading in UK, he was in Bangalore on Friday to deliver



Warwick

started in March allows Warwick to have an electrical connection from his nervous system, to a

talk on 'Cyborgs Unplugged' at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS). NIAS Director Prof. Rodham Narasimha released his book, — *I, Cyborg*.

computer and further to a robotic hand so that his brain signals control the robot hand movement. "I regard the implant as part of me."

He and his wife are the world's first to establish a direct connection between two nervous systems. He rubbishes the idea that computers and machines are 'programmed' but says they can learn.

The project is now poised at linking the brain to the computer to see if thoughts can be commu-

nicated. "My experiment now is an open ball game. Can we record dreams to play them back, download memories, transfer ideas?"

These are not crazy ideas, but concepts that find applications. Paraplegics with implants in their brains can control their environment and blind people can 'see'. He said 'upgraded' humans can perhaps perceive the world in a 20-dimensional way than three-dimensional.

The world's first cyborg — part man part machine — Prof Kevin Warwick with his 'Learning Robots'. He believes machines can learn. He demonstrated his robots' capabilities in Bangalore on Friday.

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## To be or not to be cyborg

**Bangalore:** Many scientists see that in 20 to 30 years, humans are going to face a distinct danger because of the intelligence of robots, says Prof. Kevin Warwick. The big question is can we still control them?

Warwick's own research has reached the region of the brain, working with motor neurons and exploring memory. "Personally, I would be happy to have a brain implant, but only when I'm 60, worn out and ready for it. Now

I'm 48." Nearly half million dollars has been pumped into his research and the implant costs 1,000 dollars.

There have been no objections to his experiment from the point of view of ethics. "The question may arise when you have to choose between being normal and 'upgraded'." He gets at least one new volunteer a day for implants. "Of these, 10 per cent are crazy, 10 per cent are scared. But the remaining believe this technology will help." TNN