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Bhabha, Cold War, nuclear technology, 1955: Dos and don't for India in AI

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Why Compare AI with the 1955 Nuclear Strategy?

India is hosting a big AI summit in New Delhi.

It draws a lesson from India's experience with nuclear technology during the Cold War (1955) to guide how India should handle AI today.

What Happened in 1955 at Geneva?

In 1955, Dr Homi J. Bhabha led India at the first UN Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy in Geneva.

India pushed for cooperation and peaceful access to nuclear technology for developing nations.

Bhabha wanted India to build its own scientific strength and cooperate internationally.

Lesson from the Nuclear Era

India grew nuclear knowledge at home while also seeking global partnerships.

Later, India lost momentum in nuclear exports because it did not maintain focus and strategic clarity.

This history shows that relying only on goodwill or universal cooperation does not guarantee success.

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What India Must Do for AI

The article suggests three key actions:

Boost National AI Strength

Increase computing infrastructure.

Expand research and training.

Clear and supportive rules for AI growth.

Partner with Advanced Nations

Continue collaboration with the United States and other tech leaders.

Keep ties open with multiple countries, not just one group.

Shape Global AI Rules Meaningfully

Take an active role in global governance debates.

Base India's contributions on practical experience, not only ideals.

Don't Repeat Past Mistakes

India should avoid confusion between global ideals and national interests.

The aim should be to build strong domestic AI capability first, then use it to benefit both India and the wider world.

Success in domestic development can help other developing nations too.

In Simple Terms

The Cold War nuclear story teaches that strength at home + smart global cooperation = success.

India's future in AI depends on growing its own skills and tech, partnering wisely abroad, and helping shape fair AI rules globally.