

'Can't miss the electronics manufacturing bus, again'

Our Bureau

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External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday said that electronic manufacturing — semiconductor, 5G, artificial intelligence, commercial space launches, satellite fabrication — is the future and the country needs to get on the fast track after having first missed the bus.

"We missed the bus the first time, but I think we have a chance of boarding, may be not the same bus, but certainly a significant sort of opportunity for manufacturing...it all depends on how smart we are about it," he said here at the Global Technology Summit organised by Carnegie India.

He said technology should be

given substantial weight in deciding India's geopolitical positioning as it would play a key role in striking alliances in a multipolar world.

TECH CAPABILITY

"The rise of India is deeply linked to the rise of technology — it could be semiconductor, 5G, artificial intelligence, commercial space launches, satellite fabrication," he said.

"We are grossly under-manufacturing. When I hear people saying 'our future is in services', I mean that's simply not true. Our future is also in services definitely, but you cannot say that 'we will grow to be a major power and we are going to give manufacturing a pass'. That is why PLI scheme for example, is the strong support which is

today given to different domain of manufacturing," he noted.

He said the principle of economic strategic autonomy will hold the key to global re-balancing and big players will constantly strive to be more capable technologically. "We cannot be agnostic about technology. We have to stop thinking that there is something neutral about technology...more and more things are technology driven and we need to understand that there is a very strong political connotation in-built into technology...we, especially in India in the last two years, have woken up to the fact, where does our data reside, who processes and harvests our data and what do they do with it? That is a very very key question," Jaishankar added.