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BUSINESS

IBM boss warns of dangers of AI

Jim Armitage in New York

The chief executive of computer giant IBM has warned that fears AI could be a threat to national security were “well founded”, and said the technology could be used to interfere with the democratic process by weaponising fake news.

Speaking ahead of the government’s AI Safety summit at Bletchley Park, Buckinghamshire, Arvind Krishna said: “Are people going to misuse AI for terrorism, bioterrorism, attacks on infrastructure, cyberattacks? That is a good topic to worry about.”

He said AI could be used to create a new generation of misinformation by targeting fake news at individuals, particularly ahead of elections. “Now you can use AI to craft the message exactly to a particular person

if you know who they are,” he warned. “That is an amplification of intensity we have not had before.”

He said newspapers and television had been regulated to prevent biased reporting, but media rules have not caught up with the potential of AI. However, he dismissed as “far-fetched” the idea that AI-led systems could conspire to attack humans.

IBM is developing secure AI for businesses and will be one of about 100 companies, academics and other bodies at the summit establishing guidelines to promote “responsible capability scaling” of the technology.

Dario Amodei, the chief executive of Google and AI firm Anthropic, has said the chance of an AI system going “catastrophically wrong” was 10 per cent to 25 per cent.