

Speech by FS at Digital Entertainment Leadership Forum 2024 (English only)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the Digital Entertainment Leadership Forum 2024 today (August 16):

Simon (Chairman of the Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited, Mr Simon Chan), Rocky (Chief Executive Officer of the Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited, Dr Rocky Cheng), 第二級青少年事務專員 (Second-level Inspector of Youth Department of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Mr Zhang Guolai), Lilian (Under Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Ms Lillian Cheong), distinguished speakers and guests, ladies and gentlemen, here at Cyberport and online,

Good morning. I feel excited to be here with you all at the opening ceremony of this year's Digital Entertainment Leadership Forum. Since 2014, this Forum has become a flagship event to foster the growth of digital entertainment – or "digitainment". It is a prominent platform for industry experts, entrepreneurs and investors to connect, engage, and explore together the cutting-edge trends and boundless possibilities in digitainment.

This year, the Forum is drawing over 3 000 industry leaders and enthusiasts, along with more than 60 distinguished speakers. Its popularity and the diversity of its participants are compelling illustration of Hong Kong's status as a digitainment hub.

The global entertainment and media industry has been growing steadily after the pandemic. New technologies, particularly AI (artificial intelligence) and Web 3.0, are deeply transforming the industry. They are redefining the interactions and applications across gaming, television and movies, and even arts and sports. For instance, generative AI is reshaping gaming development, reducing costs, and empowering artists and innovators to create more enriched, personalised, and immersive experiences for consumers. Technologies are enabling the industry to generate new values and revenue streams.

The theme of this Forum, "AI-powered Entertainment in the Web3.0 Era", is therefore all the more relevant. The event is gathering leading experts to discuss the latest trends and issues that are crucial to the future of the digitainment business. It also addresses a set of highly pertinent issues, such as driving sports and cultural tourism through digital experiences, enhancing arts and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) education with technology, and nurturing talent for the AI and Web 3.0 era. I look forward to your insights which I am sure will inspire policy makers to better understand what needs to be done in the fast-evolving age of digitalisation.

I am also eager to see the exciting displays of products developed by our local innovators here in this Forum, ranging from metaverse applications to AI humanoid robots. They are splendid demonstration of a thriving digitainment ecosystem here in Hong Kong. Indeed, Cyberport is home to more than 160 digitainment companies, over 250 Web3 firms, and over 200 AI and big data-related start-ups. Among them is a gaming unicorn.

The HKSAR (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) Government is actively supporting digitainment development, including supporting the Cyberport in building a vibrant Web 3.0 ecosystem. A proof-of-concept subsidy scheme was launched, which has enabled some 45 projects to commercially adopt Web 3.0. They span across arts, culture, telecommunications and other domains.

We are also building an AI Supercomputing Centre, and our target is to commission its first-phase facilities later this year. In this year's Government Budget, we have announced a subsidy scheme to support local universities, research institutes and business enterprises to use the Centre's computing power. We will nurture more talent and attract more such enterprises and projects to Hong Kong.

For those of you coming from abroad or watching this event live, I wish to emphasise that Hong Kong is where you want to be for growing your business. Here, with a free, open, multicultural and international environment, innovative peers, supportive government policies, and a vibrant financial ecosystem, you can find business partners and funding to turn your ideas and ambitions into reality.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish this year's Forum a great success and your experience here truly rewarding. My gratitude goes to Cyberport for hosting this event and for their unwavering support to the development of digitainment sector. May I also wish all of you the best of health, business and innovation in the time to come. Thank you very much.