

Speech by S for IT at Digital Entertainment Leadership Forum 2019 (English only) (with photo)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang, at the Opening Ceremony of the Digital Entertainment Leadership Forum 2019 today (July 16):

Peter (Chief Executive Officer of Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited, Mr Peter Yan), EQ, Charles, Eunice (Legislative Council members Dr Elizabeth Quat, Mr Charles Mok, Ms Eunice Yung), distinguished guests, friends, ladies and gentlemen.

Good morning. Welcome to Cyberport! It is my great pleasure to join you this morning at the Digital Entertainment Leadership Forum, or DELF 2019, to witness the opening of this new e-sports competition venue here at Cyberport.

As the founder of DELF back in 2004, I am certainly no stranger to the forum. This year's DELF 2019 marks a significant milestone in promoting the development of e-sports as an emerging industry for Hong Kong.

Three years ago, I discussed with a group of young enthusiastic Hong Kong e-sports entrepreneurs at great length, as to whether and how Hong Kong should seize the opportunity to enter the global e-sports arena. Hong Kong was certainly not among the early movers, nor did we have a strong local culture in e-sports. In fact, most Hong Kong folks thought e-sports was just playing video games, not realising that the e-sports industry drives and thrives on innovation and technology. Here in Hong Kong, we do have a world-class ICT infrastructure, which is necessary for the e-sports industry. And we also have excellent experience and a track-record in hosting large-scale international events. After asking Cyberport to conduct a study on the e-sports industry, confirming its scale and future potential, we wasted no time. We announced in the 2018-19 Budget Speech the allocation of \$100 million for promoting the early stage development of the local e-sports industry, which includes the construction of a dedicated world-class e-sports competition venue at Cyberport. I am pleased to see the effort and resources put in by the Government and Cyberport bearing fruit, with the first official e-sports competition to be held at this great new venue this coming weekend.

Following the Government's \$100 million injection in 2018, Cyberport has swiftly set up the 'e-sports Industry Facilitation Scheme' and the 'e-sports Internship Scheme' to help the industry organise competitions and events and to provide funding support for interns. You should all be impressed by this e-sports venue, which is among the best in the region. It has state-of-the-art facilities – a combat arena, advanced lighting and audio system, the ultra-high resolution screen together with the large outdoor screen at the podium. It also provides adjacent storage spaces for the

convenience of competition and event organisers. I am confident that this venue will develop into a flagship e-sports-cum-digital entertainment centre in Hong Kong.

As the theme of DELF 2019 suggests, a vibrant ecosystem is instrumental to the development of the e-sports industry. Over the past year, Cyberport has invited various key players and stakeholders to join the ecosystem, be they e-sports associations, game owners, e-sports venue operators, hardware and software companies, e-sports gadget manufacturers, gamers, live streaming companies and higher education institutions. Today, I am pleased to see that Cyberport will enter into more strategic partnerships with the Hong Kong e-sports Premier League, and Team Hong Kong enters the Robot Fighting Championship of World Cyber Games.

Promoting the development of e-sports will bring new opportunities for our young people. This was a key consideration of the Government to drive the development of the e-sports industry three years ago. It is still true today and for the foreseeable future, as e-sports presents many new alternative career paths for youth, from professional players, technical experts/consultants, game developers, directors, coaches, promoters and commentators, to start-up entrepreneurs in this exciting Internet-driven economy.

I would like congratulate Cyberport on its accomplishments, in providing a fertile breeding ground for Hong Kong's very own e-sports industry. With continued efforts from all the stakeholders and most important of all, strong support from the community, I look forward to seeing a thriving e-sports industry, not just players and game developers, but also a wide range of innovation and technology professionals in digital marketing and live streaming etc in the years ahead.

I wish today's forum every success, and all of the participants a fruitful and enjoyable experience. Thank you very much.

