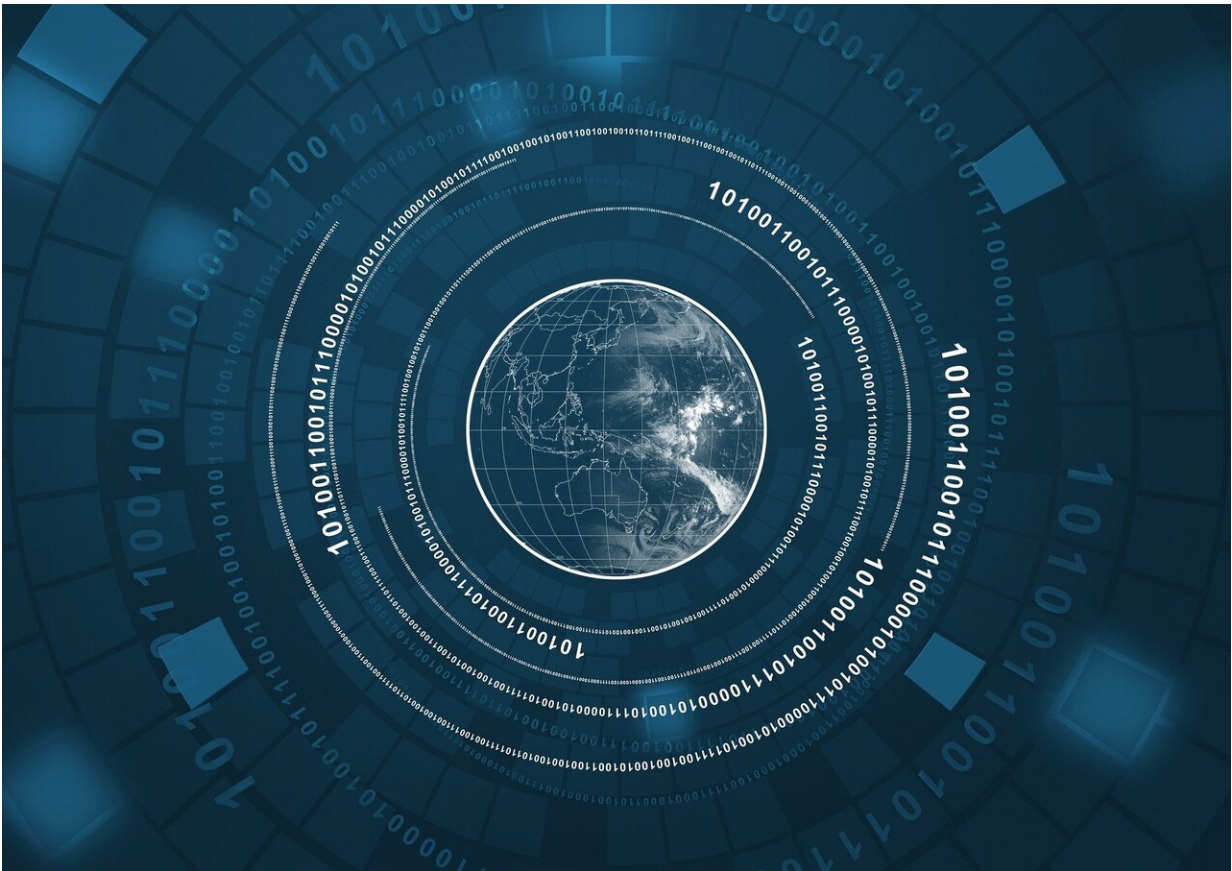


# SoftBank's Son says AI will surpass human intelligence in a decade, urges Japanese firms to adopt it

October 4 2023, by AYAKA MCGILL and MARI YAMAGUCHI



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Softbank CEO Masayoshi Son on Wednesday said he believes artificial

intelligence will surpass human intelligence within a decade, urging Japanese companies to adopt it or be left behind.

Son, speaking at a corporate conference in Tokyo, said "artificial general intelligence will surpass the total intelligence of humankind by 10 times in 10 years."

It will affect every industry, from transportation and pharmaceuticals to finance, manufacturing, logistics and others, and the companies and people that work with AI will be the leaders in the next 10 to 20 years, Son said.

Son, who founded SoftBank and is a leading figure in Japan's business world, has enjoyed both victories and defeats in his array of technology investments. He latched on to the potential of the internet decades ago, and now is seeking to invest in AI-related companies.

"I want to be on the side of progress," he said.

"It would be sad to be on the side that gets left behind, like an old, shuttered high street," he said, and called on Japanese companies to "wake up" to his vision of a future led by AI. "The youth of Japan, let's wake up."

At the Hiroshima summit in May, Group of Seven leaders agreed to promote reliable AI, and Japan's government is seeking to be part of an international rule-making to achieve reliable use of AI.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, at a science forum in Kyoto on Sunday, said he acknowledges a big potential for generative AI and hopes it will contribute to an even more convenient society. But he also noted the need to address concerns of disinformation and risks to privacy and copyright.

Son said Japan should not repeat its past mistake of falling behind in the internet age, warning against reluctance of some companies due to fear of data leaks and other possible risks.

SoftBank recently expanded on the Nasdaq listing of its chip subsidiary Arm Holding Plc, which Son acquired in 2016. Son said the British unit will be key to AI development.

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