Jelly Bean another feather to Android's crown

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It's been just over a month since Google officially announced the latest version of Android operating system code named Jelly Bean. The latest Android OS implements new technology from Google's 'Project Butter' to enhance performance and visuals, along with a new search experience. Already the latest flavor of Android has been installed on 0.8% of Android devices in the market, according to the search giant Google.

Let's have a brief look into some of the new features of this latest OS.

Jelly Bean is smoother than its predecessors, thanks to Google's 'Project Butter' feature. Do not get confused with its name. Project Butter has nothing to do with dairy products; rather it makes Jelly Bean run butter-smooth. With the triple-buffered graphics environment Jelly Bean gives android devices a better fluid user experience to its user. It lets the CPU and graphics run faster and has a big impact on both real and perceived speed on sufficiently fast hardware.

One of Jellybean's awesome features is its advanced predictive keyboard. It is a great blessing for the lazy users. The keyboard not only does auto complete, but also predicts the next few words or phrase based on what you are typing out. This feature predicts the next couple of words using contextual analysis. Also, with its offline Voice Command feature you can dictate a text message without any data connection at all. In addition to predictive input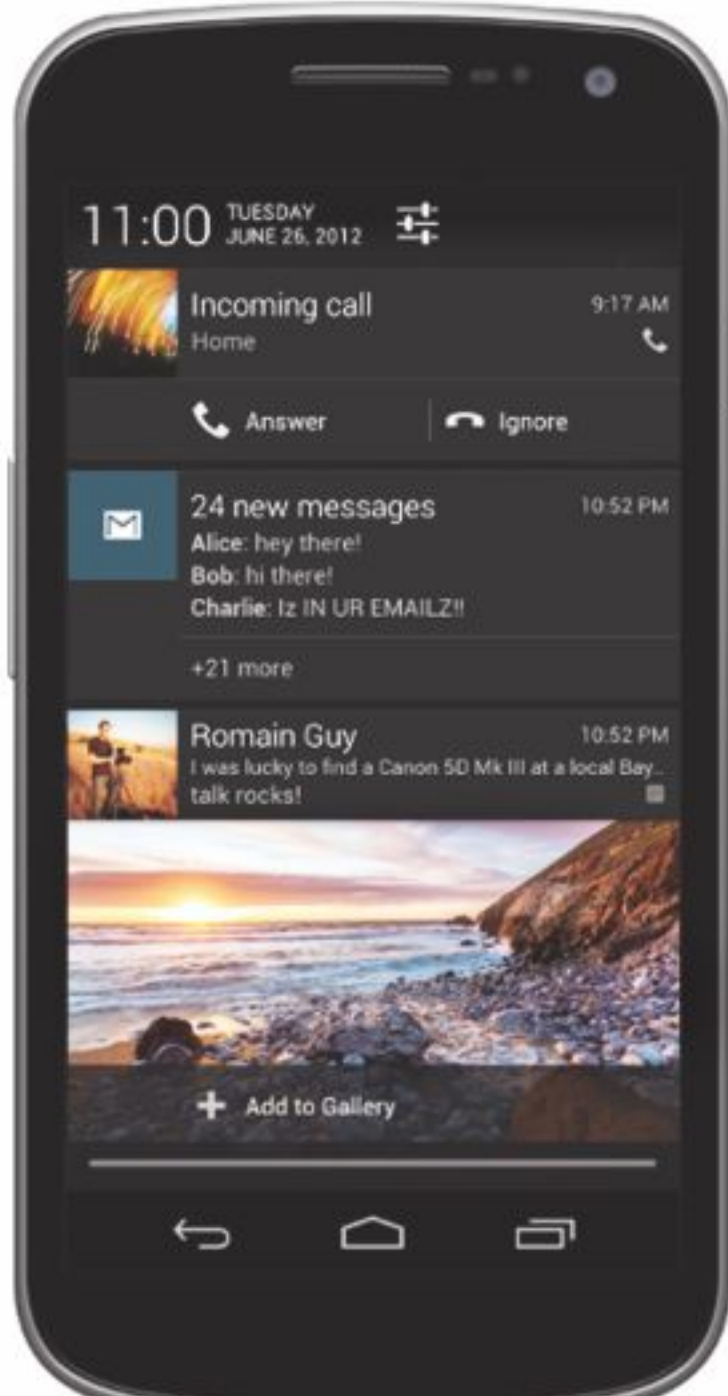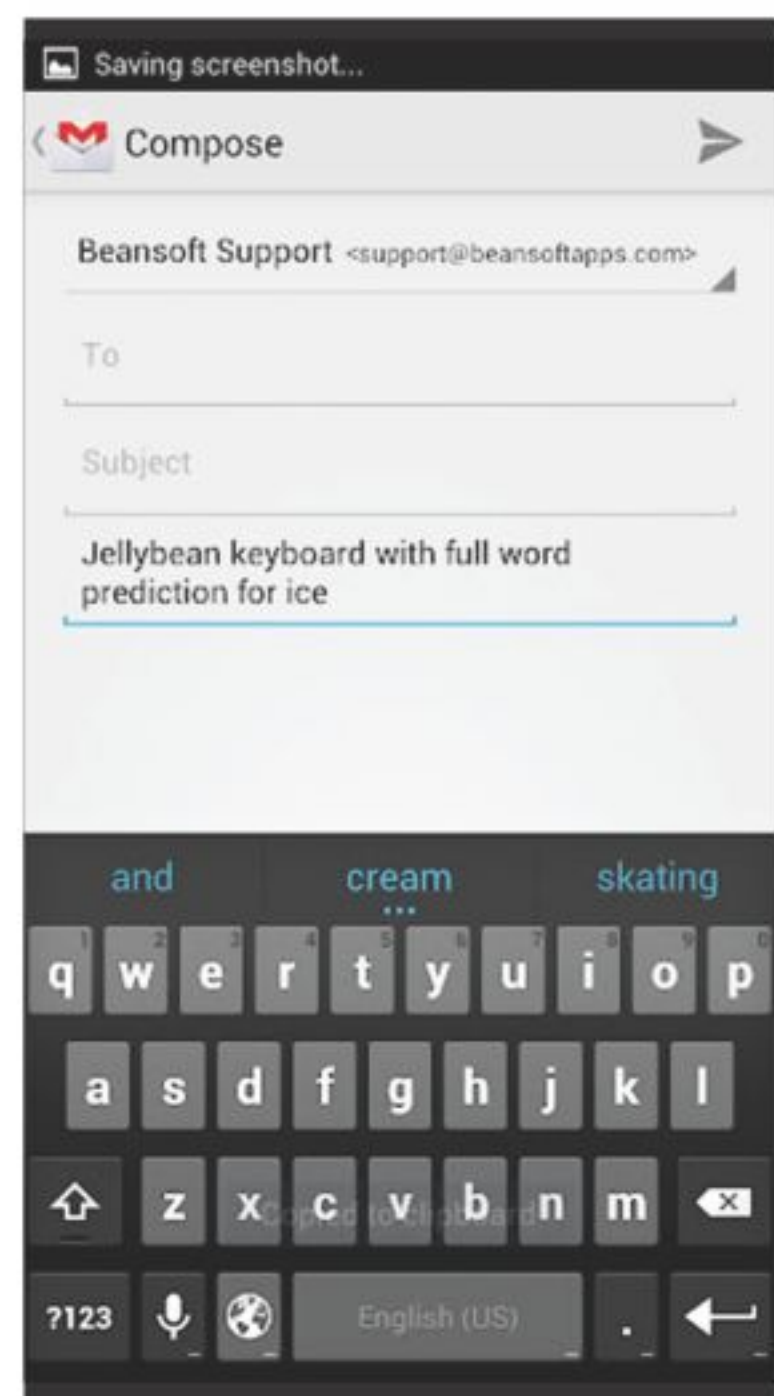, user also gets the chance to customise the keyboard design depending on language preference for better typing experience. Though the user dictionary does not work in its current version, the prediction and auto-correction is much more improved.

Android notifications have always been awesome. Jelly Bean brings richer notifications that can be expanded or collapsed with a simple gesture. Now developers can make better use of this vital area of the user interface with new APIs of Jelly Bean. The increased size of the notifications along with some built-in apps makes reading easier for the user. Users who are time-cautious can find current time, days of the week at top left of the screen. The advanced notification features allow you to set alarm or email directly from the notification list.

With help of Google Now, Jelly Bean acts as an intelligent and smart personal assistant of its users. Google Now is Google's answer to iPhone's Siri, which has definitely thrown a strong challenge to its competitor. Google Now suggests various useful information such as which dish you should have at a restaurant based on your GPS location. It can also be an immensely useful tool to help users keep up with their schedules. For example, it keeps user updated with flight status of upcoming flight and even tells what time he/she needs to leave from current location to catch the flight on time plus shows the traffic info. Users can also ask questions such as 'How tall is the Eiffel Tower?' To which it will present an attractive card with your answers. All in all users will now find a true virtual assistant in their latest Android phone through Google Now.

With all the exciting features for the end users, Jelly Bean has not made developers unhappy. Starting with Jelly Bean, Google Play will help protect application assets by encrypting all paid apps with a device-specific key before they are delivered and stored on a device. Smart app updates is another new feature of Google Play that introduces a better way of delivering app updates to devices.

When developers publish an update, Google Play delivers only the bits that have been changed to the devices, rather than the entire APK. This makes the updates more light-weight on Jelly Bean compare to other versions, so they are faster to download. Eventually this feature will be integrated to previous Android versions. Google is planning to help developers by integrating Google services such as authentication and Google+ into their apps delivered through Google Play.

Android 4.1 Jelly Beans is the fastest and smoothest version of Android yet. And it should dominate the android devices with its advanced features, as a massive range of devices manufactured by different companies run on Android platform.

The article has been compiled from various internet sources.

Databiz wins mBillionth award

IT & TELECOM DESK

Databiz Software Limited, a leading software house in Bangladesh, has won the prestigious mBillionth Award South Asia 2012.

The award has been given by the 'Digital Empowerment Foundation' in association with Vodafone. This award is considered as the most sought-after award in mobile arena in the South Asian region. This award honours the most promising mobile initiatives in South Asia.

Databiz was awarded in the 'm-Business & Commerce and Banking' category for its innovative 'Dhaka iATM Explorer' solution.

This application enables a user to find an ATM of any bank in Dhaka city. It comprises important, basic features: how to find the nearest bank or its branch, locating an automated teller machine (ATM) via a convenient, categorised search and the route to the desired location.

By writing the location name in the location search box, user can view all the bank and ATM locations in that particular area.

It is also a banking and financial point information application and can be used by any community. The application is mainly targeted at executives working in financial institutions.

With gradual increase in the number of iPhone users in Bangladesh, this iPhone-based service is likely to have a greater impact on the lives of the inhabitants of Dhaka.

Databiz is one of the only two Bangladeshi organisations to receive this award so far.

The award giving ceremony was held on July 21, 2012 in New Delhi, India.

Rashed Kamal, chief executive officer of the Databiz Software Limited received the award.

A total of 253 projects were submitted for the award from the SAARC countries. Out of them, 21 innovations were awarded in 10 categories- m-News & Journalism, m-Infrastructure, m-Entertainment, m-Health, m-Environment, m-Inclusion, m-Governance, m-Business & Commerce/Banking, m-Travel & Tourism, m-Education & Learning, while two other entries received Jurors' Distinction award.

Rashed Kamal receives the award at the event.

Asus introduces new laptop

IT & TELECOM DESK

Asus has introduced its A43E laptop in the local market.

The laptop features 14-inch display with a resolution of 1366 x 768, Intel HM65 chipset and 2.4 GHz speed of Intel 2nd Generation Core i5 processor.

With a sleek metal design and elegant color scheme and textures of aluminum, the laptop offers a combination of technology and expressive style. The laptop is also equipped with Intel GMA HD graphics, 500 GB HDD, 802.11 b/g/n wireless LAN, 2 USB 2.0 ports, 1 USB 3.0 port, an HDMI port, RJ45 LAN, VGA port, memory card reader, webcam.

It's really powerful enough to provide pleasant performance for business and home users. The laptop also features Palm Proof technology for improved typing precision, Asus IceCool technology for comfortable typing for longer hours, and an ergonomic Chiclet keyboard.

The laptop has a price tag of Tk 49,000.

Dropbox details security breach that caused spam attack

BBC ONLINE

Online storage service Dropbox has given details of a security breach that led to many of its members receiving unsolicited emails.

A stolen password had been used to access an employee's accounts allowing a "project document" containing user emails addresses to be copied, it said.

The US company added that usernames and passwords stolen from other sites had also been used to sign in to some of its members' accounts.

It has adopted new security measures.

These include automated systems to spot suspicious activity and a new page allowing users to examine earlier log-ins to their account.

It has also advised users to create a unique password for each internet site and service they sign up to, and is offering its members the option to use two-factor authentication - which could involve using both a password and a code texted to their phone to gain access.

The problem came to light last month after hundreds of its users complained they had received unsolicited email via the addresses they had registered their Dropbox account to.

The firm said at the time that it had called in a third-party to investigate.

The problem comes at a challenging time for the firm. Google recently launched Drive - its own online storage service offering more "free" space to new sign-ups who only apply for a basic service.

Microsoft is promoting its rival Skydrive service by integrating it into its new Outlook.com webmail product. Apple has introduced iCloud storage to Mac owners who have downloaded its latest system.

Microsoft revamps Hotmail as social-friendly Outlook

REUTERS, Seattle

Microsoft Corp unveiled a revamped, Facebook-friendly version of its free, online email service on Tuesday in an attempt to reverse market share losses to Google Inc's fast-growing Gmail.

The world's largest software company is renaming its Hotmail service Outlook, giving it a sharp new look, social network links and new features for handling the tide of junk and mass mail that swamps many users.

Hotmail was still the world's largest online mail service as of June, according to the latest comScore figures available, with 324 million users, or about 36 percent of the global market.

But it is losing customers to Google's Gmail, the fastest-growing rival, which now has about 31 percent of the market. Yahoo Mail is static with about 32 percent. (For a graphic showing webmail market share, click on link.reuters.com/ded79s)

In a bid to recapture growth, Microsoft is renaming the service Outlook, a name familiar to most corporate workers who use Microsoft's Office email application, and sprucing up the whole experience. Hotmail users will be prompted to switch over to the new service over the next few months.

Hotmail, launched in 1996, was one of the first online email services, but it has not been updated by Microsoft for eight years.

"A lot has changed in the last eight years, and we think it's time for a fresh look at email," Chris Jones, Microsoft's corporate vice president of Windows Live, said in a blog post.

The new look is clean and uncluttered, featuring lots of white space, reminiscent of Google's recent makeover of Gmail. Relatively unobtrusive advertisements appear in a column to the right of the screen when looking at folders. They do not appear when a message is open.

TECHPHOTO

Engineer Kogoro Kurata (C) walks in front of Japanese electronics company Suidobashi Heavy Industry's newly unveiled robot "Kuratas" at the Wonder Festival in Chiba, suburban Tokyo on July 29, 2012. The Kuratas robot, which will go on sale with a price tag of one million USD ,measures four meters in height, weighs four tons and has four wheeled legs that can either be controlled remotely through the 3G network or by a human seated within the cockpit.

PHOTO: **AFP**