

Microsoft couldn't resist buying Activision, here's why

On Tuesday, Microsoft announced that it was acquiring gaming studio Activision Blizzard in a \$68.7 billion all-cash acquisition deal. The deal is all set to become Microsoft's biggest deal ever—nearly three times of the 2016 LinkedIn acquisition—and will make Microsoft the new owners of acclaimed titles like Call of Duty, World of Warcraft and Candy Crush, to name a few. With this deal, Microsoft is also kicking off a new division—Microsoft Gaming, to be spearheaded by Phil Spencer, former Xbox boss.

For Activision, the deal is, in fact, a rescue as Activision CEO Bobby Kotick has recently been named in multiple allegations of discrimination, sexual harassment and maintaining a toxic work culture. Bobby will, however, continue to serve as Activision CEO, at least until the deal closes.

For fans of Activision's popular titles like Call of Duty, the deal potentially means they can continue playing their favourites without worrying about the studio shutting down. But above everything, Microsoft is the one entity that's set to reap the most out of this deal as it looks to strengthen its foothold in the gaming industry.

The deal will essentially turn Microsoft into the world's third largest gaming studio, right after Tencent and



Sony. It also catapults Microsoft right into the mobile gaming industry where Microsoft had little to no foothold. With Activision's Candy Crush, one of the world's most popular mobile video games ever made, Microsoft is presented with an opportunity to take things forward in the fast-growing mobile gaming arena.

With this deal, Microsoft is also looking to boost its Metaverse and GamePass portfolio. Microsoft has already set gaming as one of the key cornerstones of building its own version of Metaverse. The Activision acquisition gives Microsoft more

materials to play around with. As for GamePass, the deal will bring around a new 400 million monthly active players on GamePass, boosting it significantly against its competitors in the market.

Microsoft is looking to build a bigger empire. Activision acquisition is one more step towards that goal. As for gamers, prospects look bright as Microsoft aims to "bring the joy and community of gaming to everyone, across every device." For independent studios, however, things are less hopeful as giants shake hands to take them on.

WhatsApp to reportedly support Android to iOS chat migration

WhatsApp might introduce a brand new feature that will allow users to migrate chat history from Android to iOS platforms, according to latest reports.



This cross-platform feature was first reported in the WhatsApp iOS beta version 22.2.74 and Android beta version 2.21.20.11. While no official announcement from WhatsApp has been made yet regarding this new feature, it is expected to be launched in a new update.

Screenshots of the feature in the Android beta version show a typical permission window before beginning the chat history transfer. The app will also ask the user to keep WhatsApp running and the phone unlocked while the data migration takes place.

WhatsApp began allowing chat migration features from September 2021, initially from iOS to Samsung and then iOS to Google Pixel and Android 12 devices. It is currently unconfirmed which Android and iOS devices will support this Android to iOS chat migration feature.

Symphony starts exporting Bangladesh-made smartphones to Nepal

ZAKIA SAMEEN NOOR

Symphony Mobile announced that they have begun exporting locally assembled 'Made in Bangladesh' smartphones to Nepal. The announcement was made on January 22, at their factory premises near Ashulia, Dhaka.

This export will be done through Apex Group Nepal. According to Symphony Mobile, the export began back in October 2021, and about 15,000 handsets of three models were sent in the first batch of exports. Symphony Mobile is planning on sending 10,000 phones of different models every month.

Mr. Mostafa Jabbar, Minister of Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, Mr. Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, Secretary, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications and Mr. Shyam Sundar Sikder, Chairman, BTRC, Mr. Zakaria Shahid, Managing Director, Symphony Mobile were present during the announcement.

Zakaria Shahid said, "The factory is run by around 15 hundred people and in addition to this more than fifty thousand to one lacs, people are directly or indirectly involved in the production activities. Apart from Nepal, we are also planning to export our mobile phones to Nigeria, Sudan, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka by 2022."

Mostafa Jabbar said, "I would like to see Symphony Mobile in 50 more countries very soon. The Bangladesh government will extend any kind of help if needed". He also inspected the factory's various assembly lines where he engaged with the young employees.

Symphony Mobile, a brand of Edison Group, launched its assembly plant in 2018. The plant has produced around 12 million phones every year. They also produce chargers, batteries and earphones, with plans for launching 'Made in Bangladesh' tablets soon.

In addition to smartphones, Symphony is also making various parts and accessories for mobile phones. According to the Symphony authorities, Symphony's factory is producing 8 lakh chargers, 8 lakh batteries and 8 lakh earphones per month. They are planning to increase the number in near future.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Mind over matter

Ever seen those post-apocalyptic sci-fi movies where the collective consciousness of the human race is under the control of machines? Or maybe even X-Men? Charles Xavier using his brainwave amplification device 'Cerebro' to detect mutants across the globe? What if I told you technology like that is soon on its way to reality? Much sooner than you think.

Jokes aside, we, fortunately, do not live in a fictional comicbook. However, recent advancements in neuroscience research have made technology such as brainwave scanners and brain-to-brain synchronicity devices possible. Check out this week's Cover Story to find out what UIU's Brain Computer Interface (BCI) Research Lab has been developing. From EEG headsets to machines that can measure your attention level, you would be surprised to find what strides have been made to improve the fields of neuroscience research and machine learning in Bangladesh.

In Shift, we talk about the history of the Lancer Evolution cars, and how they might have devolved over the years. If you're looking for a new gaming mouse, we have a brand new buying guide in Bytes. To make your professional life more efficient, try out some of the apps we recommended this week in Tech Tips.

Please remember to maintain proper protocols during the ongoing restrictions.

Stay safe everyone. Have a great weekend.

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