

WEEKEND LIVING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

MILDT GLOW



PHOTO: ABRAR SHAREQUE KHAN

HOW APPLE CHANGED THE WORLD OF TECH

DIGITAL BANKS, EXPLAINED
PAGE 8

The image displays three posters for the 'Hijab Ban' campaign, arranged vertically. Each poster includes a person, a car, and text in both Hindi and English.

- Top Poster:** A man with a beard wearing a red shirt stands next to a red car. The text reads:
 - Hindi: **हिराज बिन** (Hiraj Bin)
 - English: **हिराज बिन** (Hiraj Bin)
 - Hindi: **गार्डिंग ऑफ़** (Gardening of)
 - English: **गार्डिंग ऑफ़** (Gardening of)
- Middle Poster:** A woman wearing a black hijab stands next to a yellow car. The text reads:
 - Hindi: **हिराज बिन** (Hiraj Bin)
 - English: **हिराज बिन** (Hiraj Bin)
 - Hindi: **गार्डिंग ऑफ़** (Gardening of)
 - English: **गार्डिंग ऑफ़** (Gardening of)
- Bottom Poster:** A man with a beard wearing a blue shirt stands next to a yellow car. The text reads:
 - Hindi: **हिराज बिन** (Hiraj Bin)
 - English: **हिराज बिन** (Hiraj Bin)
 - Hindi: **गार्डिंग ऑफ़** (Gardening of)
 - English: **गार्डिंग ऑफ़** (Gardening of)

शार्ङ्गायजिः

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Symphony introduces Z60 Plus in Bangladesh

Symphony Mobile has launched its newest smartphone, Symphony Z60 Plus in Bangladesh. It comes with a UniSOC T616 octa-core processor with a 6.6-inch HD+ IPS display, 6GB RAM and 128GB of storage, which can be expandable up to 256GB. With full lamination and a punch-hole design, the display achieves 480 NITS brightness.

The device features a 50MP + 2MP portrait dual rear camera and an 8MP front camera. It also has a 5000mAh Li-Polymer battery with an 18-Watt fast charger. In terms of connectivity, Symphony Z60 Plus supports 4G/3G/Wi-Fi/BT/GPS-AGPS/OTG, providing internet connectivity and easy sharing of files. It also comes with Proximity, Light, and Gravity sensors for added convenience.

The Symphony Z60 Plus comes in 2 colours, Reflective Blue and Metallic Silver. It is priced at Tk. 11,999/-.



Facebook to block news access in Canada

Facebook will no longer allow news access on its site in Canada, due to a recent regulation that forces Facebook's parent company Meta to pay Canadian news publishers. The Canadian news restriction will also apply to Meta's other popular social media app, Instagram.

The legislation, known as the Online News Act, was approved by the Senate upper chamber earlier on Thursday and will become law after receiving royal assent from the governor general, a formality. The legislation was proposed after complaints from



Canada's media industry, which wants tighter regulation of tech companies to prevent them from elbowing news businesses out of the online advertising market.

"We are confirming that news availability will be ended on Facebook and Instagram for all users in Canada prior to the Online News Act taking effect," Meta said in a statement. Facebook had telegraphed such a move for weeks, saying news has no economic value to the company and that its users do not use the platform for news.

Twitter limits how many tweets users can read

Twitter has limited how many tweets per day various accounts can read, to discourage "extreme levels" of data scraping and system manipulation, executive chairman Elon Musk said in a post on the social media platform last week.

At the time of writing, verified accounts are temporarily limited to reading 6,000 posts a day, and unverified accounts will be limited to 600 posts a day with new unverified accounts limited to 300.

The temporary reading limitation was later increased to 10,000 posts per day for verified users, 1,000 posts per day for unverified and 500

posts per day for new unverified users, Musk said in a separate post on Twitter, without providing further details on when it would be implemented.



Musk had said that hundreds of organisations or more were scraping Twitter data "extremely aggressively", impacting user experience. Twitter was down for thousands of users last Saturday morning, according to the outage tracking website Downtime.com. Nearly 7,500 users across the social media platform reported issues with accessing the app during the peak of the outage.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Gearing up

On the 7th day of the 7th month of the year, we bring you this week's edition of Toggle.

From converting an Impreza into a WRX STi to highlighting how the world's first 3 trillion dollar company changed tech forever, we have plenty of stories for you to read. We also tackle the obstacles that you might face early in your career and discuss whether you should use AI in your university courses or not.

Happy reading!

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Xiaomi launches Redmi 12C smartphone in Bangladesh

Xiaomi has recently launched its latest Redmi smartphone in Bangladesh, the Redmi 12C.

Redmi 12C is equipped with a MediaTek Helio G85 Octa-core Processor and 128GB of storage. It offers 6GB of RAM as well. The device comes with a 6.71" HD+ display with 1650 x 720 HD+ resolution. Moreover, it has a battery capacity of 5,000mAh. In terms of camera functions, the smartphone has a 50MP AI dual rear camera and a 5MP front camera.

Redmi 12C is available in three colours, Graphite Gray, Ocean Blue, and Mint Green. It is priced at Tk. 15,999/- for the 6GB+128GB variant.



YouTube plans to launch in-app online games: reports

YouTube is planning on launching a product for playing online games, as per a recent report by The Wall Street Journal. According to the report, YouTube's parent company Google invited their employees to internally test an upcoming online games product called 'Playables'.

The Wall Street Journal report adds that this product called 'Playables' will have arcade games such as Stack Bounce, though a full list is not known at this moment. The 'Playables' games can reportedly be played from the YouTube website on desktop web browsers and will be made available on Android or iOS mobile devices.

Neal Mohan, CEO of YouTube, has



been planning on integrating online gaming on YouTube for some time, the WSJ report claims. Since the new product is still in its testing stage, YouTube doesn't plan on officially announcing it until it's ready for the public.

How to overcome obstacles early in your career



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

long run, enriching you with the ideas and motivation needed to avoid future obstacles. Keep in mind that professional networking is a two-way street - if you are taking help from others, be sure to offer support back and be as proactive as you can to keep yourself well-known in your professional circle.

Stay connected with the ones you work with

No professional network is complete without a close connection with your colleagues and employers. This means engaging in casual conversations with them during breaks and building a kinship with them whenever possible. People fondly remember a friendly face around the office, and maintaining an amicable relationship with the people you work with will keep you in everyone's good books. Being on good terms with your colleagues and employers also mean that once a random obstacle pops up, they will be more likely to help you out and provide you with the valuable assistance you require - a greatly appreciated form of support in any early-stage career.

Cultivate a strong work ethic

A strong work ethic is highly valued by employers, and can help you overcome obstacles that may appear early in your career. Demonstrating your proactiveness and reliability will also earn you points in the eyes of your higher-ups. While many new employees might find it hard to stay committed to a work that may feel unrewarding, keep in mind that it tends to get easier the more you get used to your work. As such, if you focus on building a strong work ethic from the early stage, you will feel more comfortable with your job as the months pass by. A good work ethic also entails good time management skills, something you should work on to effectively tackle random obstacles as your career progresses.

Maintain a good work-life balance

Many new employees tend to lose themselves in work, or conversely, find themselves too immersed in real-life issues to efficiently focus on work. Not having a good work-life balance is bound to cause unwanted challenges in your early career, and as such, you should learn to prioritise self-care and set boundaries soon into your new job. Make time for activities outside of work to rejuvenate you when work gets tough. Doing so will help you avoid burnout, which is a major obstacle both new and experienced professionals tend to face at some point in their careers.

If you're new to the professional world, chances are you have already faced your fair share of setbacks.

Career obstacles are a natural part of professional growth and development, and the early stages of a career are often filled with unique challenges that might seem very daunting at first. However, with the right mindset and strategies, it is possible to overcome these hurdles, and doing so will set your foundation for long-term success and help achieve your career goals. Here are some tips to keep in mind if you're looking to overcome obstacles that are popping up in your early, promising career.

Set clear goals

The first thing you should do to overcome obstacles is to have a proper game plan. What is it you want to achieve in your career? Is there a specific position or role you want to reach? Is there a certain level of experience you hope to achieve? Ask yourself these questions and establish clearly defined long-term goals. These objectives should align with your career aspirations and be used as a roadmap to guide your progress. Having a clear vision of where you want to go will ultimately help you stay focused and resilient in the face of obstacles.

Embrace a growth mindset

A growth mindset is a psychological belief in which individuals believe that their abilities, talents, and intelligence can be developed and improved over time through dedication, effort, and perseverance. If you gear your mindset to focus on your personal growth, you will be able to better navigate unforeseen challenges and setbacks. A growth mindset includes cultivating a positive attitude and believing in your ability to adapt and learn new skills whenever an opportunity arises. You should also try your best to not see obstacles as letdowns. Rather, learn from your mistakes

and see how you can improve in the future.

Review yourself

When you're new in your career, it is important to practice self-reviewing - which will help you adjust to obstacles in the long run. If you take ownership of your career development early on, you can identify areas you need improvement. Be sure to seek reviews and/or comments on your work from your employer and colleagues. See what they have to say about your work quality, and review on your own how you should improve. If there's an area of knowledge you feel you are particularly lacking, don't be afraid to ask a more experienced individual for help. The feedback you receive from others and the improvement you work on yourself will prepare you for most future challenges.

Build a professional network

While this may be obvious, having a reliable network will do wonders for your budding career. Building a professional network early in your career is not only good for future job opportunities, but it also provides a great support system to help tackle unprecedented challenges. Having access to professional experts and helpful mentors will give you valuable resources and information that will help you in the

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FROM MILD TO WILD

Converting an Impreza into a WRX STi

ABRAR SHAREQUE KHAN



PHOTOS: ABRAR SHAREQUE KHAN

Subaru Impreza WRX STi, the superior version of the Subaru WRX and the arch-nemesis of the EVOs, is a subdivision of Subaru known as Subaru Tecnica

International (STi). Established in 1988, STi handles Subaru's motorsport division. The first vehicle to bear the STi badge was the limited-edition rally car, the Subaru Legacy RS RA. In 1998, STi elevated the Subaru WRX to new heights and named it the Impreza WRX STi 22B, which is now famously known as the STi 22B. Limited to 400 units, it was exclusively available in the Japanese market. STi made a name for itself in the early 2000s with its success in the World Rally Championship (WRC), winning multiple titles with the Legacy and Impreza models.

Today, we present to you the successor of the 22B, the 2006 Impreza WRX STi, also known as the Hawkeye STi. The name 'Hawkeye' derives from its distinct and hawk-like headlight and front-end design. Owned by local car enthusiast Kazi Tahzid, this STi was originally

owned by one of his close friends and started as a 2007 base model Impreza. In 2020, using a CKD imported from Japan, it was converted into a 2006 Impreza WRX STi. Unlike the Evo counterparts, the conversion process is relatively straightforward, with most components being bolt-on, including body panels and shock towers, eliminating the need for cutting and welding.

After the conversion, Tahzid's friend drove the car for about a year before deciding to sell it. Unfortunately, Tahzid missed the opportunity due to being in Malaysia to finish his degree. In 2022, his friend repurchased the car, enjoyed it for a few months, and then decided to sell it again. Knowing Tahzid's strong desire for the car, his friend informed him before selling. Without hesitation, Tahzid purchased the STi, selling his

previous car, a 2012 Axio GT, just two days before Eid in July 2022. The engine, transmission, and turbo of the STi were in good condition with no crash history. However, attention was needed to the wiring, exhaust system, suspension, wheels, and cabin. Over approximately 7-8 months, Tahzid resolved all these issues and performed all the mandatory maintenance and replacement tasks required to complete after reaching the 100k km mileage.

Inside the car, the dashboard follows a driver-centric layout, providing easy access to controls and vital information. The instrument cluster features sporty gauges and additional gauges such as AFR, boost pressure, and oil pressure gauges from AEM's X series. A Prosport Evo oil temperature gauge has also been added. The steering wheel, typically wrapped in leather from the factory, has been upgraded to an Alcantara-wrapped steering wheel for a more premium feel and improved grip. In addition to the steering wheel, the shift boot cover, hand brake cover, gauge pod cover, and rear shelf are also wrapped in Alcantara. The factory WRX STi bucket seats, designed for comfort and lateral support during spirited driving, remain intact.

In comparison to the number of OEM parts that Tahzid bought, the aftermarket parts are insignificant as he prefers OEM parts, which Subaru still produces. Starting with engine mounts, transmission mounts, suspension components (both front and rear), new interior panels, and numerous other items that cannot be listed in a single paragraph.

Let's move on to the aftermarket parts installed in this car. First, the electronic boost controller is a Grimmspeed



3-port device. The Grimmspeed 3-port Electronic boost controller is essential for anyone seeking to extract more power from their WRX STi. This device allows precise control of the boost pressure produced by the turbocharger, resulting in a significant increase in power and torque output. Moving on to the engine modifications, this STi has a Turbosmart Dual Port Kompact BOV. It is currently set to be recirculated as that keeps the turbo stay spooled in between shifts. The stock BOV was replaced with the Turbosmart mainly because the OEM BOV ends up leaking boost if the car is not operating under its stock boost pressure. Since it boosts more than a regular STi, it also requires more fuel, which is why it has a Walbro 255 LPH Fuel pump.

An Apexi Power intake with a Laile Beatrush heat shield, paired with a Kakimotor Regu 06&R exhaust, is also installed. The intake is a high-

performance air intake system that supplies the engine with cool, dense air. The Laile Beatrush heat shield ensures that the intake air remains unaffected by the high engine bay temperature, leading to a more effective intake process. The exhaust is a high-performance system that not only enhances the sound of the WRX STi but also improves its power and torque output. It is designed to optimize exhaust flow, delivering a significant power gain over the stock exhaust system.

To provide a smooth ride and isolate vibrations, aftermarket bushings are installed, including driveshaft bushings from Torque Solutions, polyurethane shifter and rear differential bushings from Kartboy. For superior handling and high-speed stability, Tein Flex Z coil overs and Continental Max Contact6 tires are added, helping the car transfer more power to the ground. To achieve better overall wheel fitment and adjustability over the suspension setup, Whiteline

camber bolts are installed in the front and rear. For brakes, it has rotors from the DBA (Disk Brake Australia) Street series, new callipers from Brembo, and brake pads from the Stoptech Sport series for both the front and rear. Finally, a full underbody rubber coating is applied to prevent rust from occurring.

According to Tahzid, buying this car was a surreal experience. He was and still is a huge fan of Mitsubishi Evos, but since none were available for purchase, he decided to join Team STi and try out a new platform. To him, driving this car every day has been a pure delight. Within the first nine months of ownership, he was able to log over 10,000 kilometres. The car is quick and responsive when needed, but due to the AWD turning ratio, u-turns can be a major hassle.

In comparison to an Evo, the seats are significantly more comfortable, the suspension is much softer, and there is no juddering when cruising in any gear under or within 2k rpm. When he drives it in the city, fuel economy is around 4 km/l, dropping to 2 km/l during spirited driving, but on highways, it offers around 10-12 km/l, which is quite decent for a gas guzzler like this one. He can travel 450 kilometres on highways and 200 kilometres with a full tank. He says that if he plans to keep the vehicle, he will go for more performance-enhancing modifications, such as changing the turbo and improving the engine's internals.

The project car lifestyle is a unique one - you meet new people who help you with various aspects, learn new things every day, receive assistance from people worldwide through forums, and have friends bring parts from other countries, while keeping your car in good shape thanks to all the help received.



PHOTOS: ABRAR SHAREQUE KHAN



World's first USD 3 trillion company

How Apple changed tech forever

Tech giant Apple recently achieved a remarkable milestone by becoming the world's first corporation with a market value exceeding US \$3 trillion.

This significant achievement serves as a testament to the lasting impact and resilience of the iPhone, a revolutionary device that continues to transform both daily life and global commerce.

Apple's journey to this historic milestone has been an impressive one. In August 2018, the company became the first ever to surpass the US \$1 trillion valuation mark. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Apple further cemented its dominance by reaching the US \$2 trillion mark on August 20, 2020. And now, it has become the first company in the world to achieve a staggering US \$3 trillion valuation.

The roots of Apple can be traced back to its humble beginnings in 1976 when Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, and Ronald Wayne founded the company in a garage. From those early days of producing personal computers, Apple's journey has been anything but smooth sailing. However, under the leadership

of Tim Cook, who took over as CEO from Steve Jobs in 2011, the company's shares have quadrupled, propelling it into the trillion-dollar territory. The path Apple has taken could have been vastly different had it not been for pivotal events such as Steve Jobs' resignation and subsequent return, the acquisition of NeXT, and Cook's takeover.

So, what lies behind Apple's extraordinary success?

One of the secrets to Apple's triumph lies in its relentless pursuit of creativity and innovation. The company places immense value on pushing the boundaries and creating products that are truly revolutionary and disruptive. Apple was the first to introduce a phone, music player, photo editor, and game console, thereby setting new standards in these industries. While they were not the first to enter the smartphone or MP3 player market, Apple's offerings were revolutionary in design and performance, forcing competitors to play catch-up.

Another key factor in Apple's success is its ability to stay ahead of the competition. By bringing future products

into the present, Apple maintains a lead over its rivals. Through their creativity and innovation, Apple has consistently introduced products that the world had not seen before, effectively placing them ahead of their competitors.

Moreover, high-quality products have always been a hallmark of Apple's brand. The company's commitment to designing and making better products is evident in its flawless performance and impeccable design. One of Apple's renowned designers once stated that their goal was to create superior products, and if they cannot make something better, they simply won't do it. This dedication to quality has allowed Apple to expand beyond personal computers and dominate various sectors.

Understanding their customers' needs and integrating seamlessly into their lives has been another crucial element in Apple's success. By prioritising consumer experience and offering simple, user-friendly products, Apple has created a strong bond with its audience. With limited choices and minimal complications, Apple's products provide a sense of fulfilment and belonging to their users. The brand has

built a legacy of trust, making customers willing to pay a premium for anything bearing the Apple logo.

In summary, Apple's success can be attributed to its exceptional marketing strategies, the development of revolutionary products, prioritisation of consumer needs, effective branding, and unique leadership style.

The company has remained steadfast in its core values, and any deviations from these values have come at a significant cost. Currently, Apple generates 52% of its revenue from iPhone sales, with an additional 19% coming from its services. Macs, wearables, and iPads contribute to the remaining 19%. By branching out into different sectors while maintaining its core values, Apple continues to reap the rewards of its bold steps.

As the world's first US \$3 trillion company, Apple stands as a shining example of how a relentless pursuit of innovation, quality, and customer satisfaction can drive unparalleled success in the ever-evolving world of technology.

Should you use AI in your university courses?

MD. RIDWAN SAKIB ANJUM

In most Bangladeshi universities nowadays, an unusual sight can be seen which was foreign even a decade ago: students huddled over their laptops, engrossed in their screens. It's as if our screens have replaced traditional textbooks and notebooks. And now, they're equipped with an invisible but powerful tool: Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI has been a hot topic in education for years, but the conversation has taken on a new urgency as AI tools become more sophisticated and accessible. Students can now use AI in various ways, from ChatGPT to help them write essays to Tome.ai to help them make presentation slides.

This remarkable level of accessibility and proficiency exhibited by AI tools has rendered them an omnipresent fixture in virtually all conceivable fields. With that arises the question that has educators, students, and tech enthusiasts engaged in vigorous debates: should university students use AI in their courses?

An invisible ally

Ishika, a first-year finance student at BUP and fintech enthusiast, is one of the many who have embraced AI. "I use AI tools to help me with my essays or correct my coding," he says. "It helps me brainstorm ideas, check my grammar, and suggest edits. It's like having a personal tutor."

Ishika is not alone. A recent study conducted by EduCause found that over 60% of university students have used an AI tool in their coursework in the past year. The use of AI is not limited to writing; students are also using it for problem-solving in fields like Physics, Mathematics, and Engineering.

And this is not a sentiment exclusive to students. Md. Nafizur Rahman, a lecturer in Finance at Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP), extols the virtues of AI in academia: "AI can help bridge gaps in learning by identifying areas where a student is struggling and providing customised resources to help improve. It's not about replacing human interaction but enhancing it through a more personalised approach."

By leveraging these capabilities, educators can infuse their teaching materials with fresh perspectives and cutting-edge information. AI-assisted content creation enables instructors to stay at the forefront of their fields, constantly updating their course materials to reflect the latest advancements and discoveries. With the help of students, educators can promote teamwork, creativity, and effective collaboration by utilising the potential of AI technology.

The double-edged sword

Yet, the integration of AI into education is not without its critics. Like any technological advancement, AI can be both a blessing and a curse. Concerns about data privacy, the digital divide, inaccurate information, and the loss of human touch in education are frequently cited. Some argue that reliance on AI might hamper the development of critical thinking and



problem-solving skills, as the machine does most of the heavy lifting.

Even faculty members who support the integration of AI, such as Nafizur Rahman, added, "Universities serve as a foundation for personal development. While AI can bring about advancements and enhance performance, it has the potential to impede our analytical skills alongside our ability to conceptualise."

But perhaps the biggest concern is that in a rush to embrace AI in academia, we risk losing the essence of personal connection and warmth at the heart of education. Traditional classroom learning is not merely an information transfer; it's a rich tapestry of interactions, discussions, and shared experiences. It's also about learning empathy, comprehending diverse viewpoints, developing social skills, and effectively expressing oneself through eloquent writing. These are elements that an AI, however advanced, might be unable to replicate.

Dr Ziaur Rahman, an associate professor at Bangladesh University of Professionals, highlights another concern: losing the human touch in education. He says, "While AI can certainly aid in learning, it's essential not to lose sight of the human element. Education is not just about information absorption or calculations." He further questions, "When it comes to helping with calculations, an AI tool can be optimal, but will it be able to offer the human touch regarding writing?"

The automation of grading and feedback by AI systems is another contentious issue. While it may offer efficiencies, critics argue it can't match human educators' nuanced understanding and feedback. Even though Bangladesh currently is far from this worry, the

responsibility of grading efficiently and properly lies on the shoulders of our faculties.

A question of equity

Not all students have equal access to technology, and using AI in courses could inadvertently widen the digital divide, further disadvantaging students from underprivileged backgrounds.

When talking with Md. Nafizur Rahman, he voiced his concern: "As much as I love technology and AI, I think Bangladesh is far from being able to embrace it due to the digital divide." His words highlight a shared concern among educators about the need to ensure all students have equal opportunities to benefit from integrating AI in the classroom. He also added that while AI has the potential to enhance learning experiences, the transition should be made thoughtfully, with a keen eye on equity. For Bangladesh, that might take the next 10-15 years.

Striking a balance with AI in education

Despite these concerns, it's undeniable that AI is here to stay. As such, it's essential for universities to strike a balance, integrating AI into their courses in a way that enhances learning, supports student success, and ensures ethical standards.

To achieve this balance, universities must approach the integration of AI with an educator and student-centric lens. Instead of adopting technology for technology's sake, decisions should be guided by the question: "How does this serve our students, and can our educators handle it properly?" This involves ensuring that AI tools complement traditional teaching methods rather than replace them.

Beyond the classroom

Moreover, equipping students with AI skills and literacy is no longer a luxury but a necessity. As industries increasingly adopt AI, graduates entering the job market will be expected to have a basic understanding of AI, regardless of their field of study.

As industries increasingly adopt AI, graduates entering the job market will be expected to have a basic understanding of AI, regardless of their field of study. This understanding isn't simply about knowing how to use AI tools or about being able to code. It's about understanding the ethical implications of AI, its societal impacts, and its limitations.

Concerning this particular subject, Md. Nafizur Rahman articulated, "Our role as educators isn't just to prepare students for the job market; it's to prepare them to be ethical, thoughtful contributors. It is important to educate students that while AI can be a helpful tool in academia, they must also uphold ethical standards." Universities are uniquely positioned to foster this understanding. And educators have to be the ones to take charge of this enhancement in learning.

Navigating the AI revolution in higher education

As the debate rages on, one thing is clear: AI's role in higher education is a complex issue that requires careful consideration and discussion among educators, students, and policy-makers.

As we navigate this AI revolution, it's crucial to remember that technology should serve as a tool to enhance human potential, not replace it. With the right approach and a well-rounded sense of responsibility, AI can be a powerful ally in our quest for knowledge, innovation, and progress.



JACK MA IN DHAKA

What could his surprise trip mean for Bangladesh?

Renowned co-founder of Alibaba, Jack Ma, made an unexpected stopover in Dhaka, Bangladesh, leaving industry observers and enthusiasts alike speculating about the purpose and implications of his visit. With his track record of entrepreneurial success and influence in the technology and e-commerce sectors, Ma's presence in the country has sparked curiosity, especially given the recent series of swift visits he has made across South Asia.

Arriving in the bustling capital city before heading to Nepal on Tuesday, June 27, Jack Ma chose to stay at a prominent five-star hotel in the affluent Gulshan area, adding an air of intrigue to his already enigmatic visit. Despite claiming that these trips are personal in nature, the inclusion of notable figures in his entourage, including a delegation of seven businessmen comprising Chinese, Danish, and American nationals, has only fueled speculation about the true purpose behind his journey.

Moreover, during Ma's stopover in Pakistan, Muhammad Azfar Ahsan, the

former Chairman of Pakistan's Board of Investment (BOI), took to Twitter to confirm Ma's presence in the country, leading many to believe that his travels across South Asia may indeed harbour significant business interests.

While Ahsan maintained that Ma's visits were personal in nature, the fact that the former Chairman publicly acknowledged the Chinese entrepreneur's presence raises eyebrows and suggests that there may be more to these encounters than initially claimed. This revelation adds a new layer of significance to Ma's visit to Dhaka, Bangladesh, and implies the possibility of a business-related agenda.

If Ma's visit to Pakistan had business implications, it stands to reason that his journey to Bangladesh would likely follow a similar vein.

While the exact motive for Ma's visit to Dhaka remains undisclosed, several industry insiders believe that Bangladesh's burgeoning business and startup landscape could be at the center

of his interest. As the South Asian country continues to make significant strides in various sectors, particularly in technology and e-commerce, Jack Ma's presence suggests a potential collaboration or investment opportunity.

Bangladesh has been experiencing remarkable economic growth in recent years, with its burgeoning tech industry gaining recognition on a global scale. With a growing population, the country offers a vast consumer base hungry for innovative solutions. Moreover, a welcoming environment for startups and entrepreneurship has recently attracted significant international attention.

Ma's expertise and experience in building a technology-driven empire like Alibaba could prove invaluable for Bangladesh's emerging entrepreneurs. His visit may signify a desire to explore partnerships, mentorship programs, or even potential investment opportunities in the country's promising startup ecosystem.

Furthermore, Jack Ma's previous critical

remarks about Chinese authorities, which led to a decrease in his public appearances, may have compelled him to seek new avenues outside of China to extend his influence and further his entrepreneurial goals. By exploring untapped markets such as Bangladesh, Ma could potentially diversify his business ventures and contribute to the growth and development of the local economy. However, if that proves to be true, Ma's involvement in Bangladeshi business landscape may also irk Beijing as China looks to embolden its bilateral relationship with Bangladesh across several sectors.

As Ma's visit to Dhaka remains shrouded in secrecy, industry insiders eagerly await further information regarding the outcomes of his interactions with local business leaders, government officials, and aspiring entrepreneurs. His enigmatic journey across South Asia, encompassing Dhaka, Kathmandu, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan, only adds to the intrigue surrounding his activities.