PRD - Turn off chat history in WhatsApp

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1. Document Purpose

The purpose of this document is to elaborate on the functional workflow for the proposed "Turn off chat history" feature in WhatsApp with respect to one to one text chats in mobile. This document does not discuss turning off chat history workflows with respect to group chats, sending any files other than text and WhatsApp web.

2. Feature Objective

This feature should enable users to turn off saving of viewed chat history. Turning off chat history should result in the sender and recipient not being able to go back and view old conversations after the set time period as they would be deleted.

3. Feature Components

Below are the important components required when implementing the "Turn off chat history" feature:

3.1. Following new options should be included in the ellipsis menu:

3.1.1. "Turn off chat history "or "Turn on chat history" based on if chat history is off or on. Chat history should be on by default.

Figure 1: Ellipsis Button in individual chat windows which opens the menu with multiple options

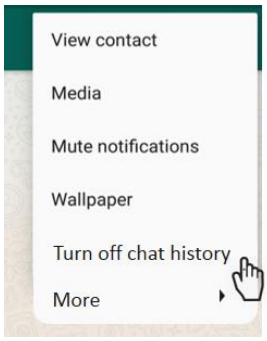


Figure 2: "Turn off chat history" option in the ellipsis menu when chat history is turned on

3.1.2. Delete Chat Timeframe - This button should be visible only when chat history is turned off above “Turn on chat history” option

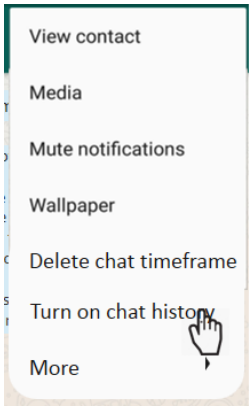


Figure 3: "Delete chat timeframe" and "Turn on chat history" options in the ellipsis menu when chat history is turned off

3.2. “Delete Chat Timeframe” pop up with radio button options to select when the message has to be deleted. This pop up should come when users turn off the chat history or when they click on “Delete chat timeframe” button. The options in the pop up should be:

3.2.1. Delete Immediately after viewing

3.2.2. Delete after 1 hr. of viewing

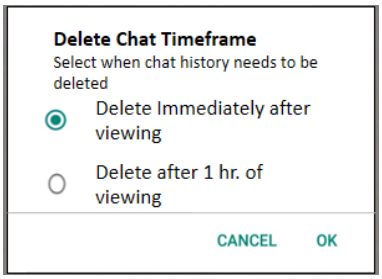


Figure 4: "Delete Chat Timeframe" pop up

3.3. Notification messages to be shown in the individual chat windows informing both the sender and recipient that their chats will be deleted based on the set time period. The various scenarios and notification messages to be shown in those scenarios should be as in the table below:

No	Scenario	Message
1	Turning off Chat History with “Delete Immediately after viewing” option selected	<user name> has turned off saving chat history* New chats will be deleted immediately after viewing the message and exiting this chat window. You will not be able to back up, archive, add star, copy or forward new chats. You can change this setting from the menu if required.
2	Turning off Chat History with “Delete after 1 hr. of	<user name> has turned off saving chat history*

	viewing" option selected	New chats will be deleted after 1 hr. of viewing this message; the messages will be deleted only after you exit the chat window. You will not be able to back up, archive, add star, copy or forward the below messages in this chat. You can change this setting from the menu if required.
3	Turning on Chat History	<user name> has turned on saving chat history * New chats will no longer be deleted unless user specifically deletes them. All restrictions on backing up, archiving, adding star, copying and forwarding new chats has been removed. You can change this setting from the menu if required.
4	Changing Delete Chat Timeframe setting to "Delete Immediately after Viewing" from "Delete after 1 hr. of viewing"	<user name> has changed the Chat Delete Timeframe * New chats will be deleted immediately after viewing the message and exiting this chat window. You will not be able to back up, archive, add star, copy or forward the below messages in this chat. You can change this setting from the menu if required.
5	Changing Delete Chat Timeframe setting to "Delete after 1 hr. of viewing" from "Delete Immediately after Viewing"	<user name> has changed the Chat Delete Timeframe * New chats will be deleted after 1 hr. of viewing this message; the messages will be deleted only after you exit the chat window. You will not be able to back up, archive, add star, copy or forward the below messages in this chat. You can change this setting from the menu if required.

*<user name> will be populated with the name of the user who made the changes when being viewed by the person who did not make the change. The person who made the change will see the first part of the sentence changed to "You have" instead of "<user name> has"

4. Feature Rules

4.1. By default, all chat history will be turned on
4.2. Chat history can be turned off only for users which have enabled "Read Receipts" option in privacy settings; if a user has disabled this, then that user will not see the option to turn off chat history and other users will not be able to turn off chat history for that user
4.3. Users have to select chat delete timeframe after turning off chat history
4.4. Chat delete timeframe can be edited only if chat history is turned off
4.5. The chats will be deleted only after the user exits the chat window; i.e. if a user has turned off chat history for a particular recipient and he/she sends or receives a message and message is viewed by the recipient; that message will be deleted for sender and recipient in their respective phones when they exit the chat window.
4.6. Users on both sides of the message can turn on or off chat history at any time. Whatever is the last applied option will be what reflects for users on both sides; i.e. if a user has turned off chat

history for a particular recipient, the chat history will also not be saved on the recipient's side unless the recipient switches it on

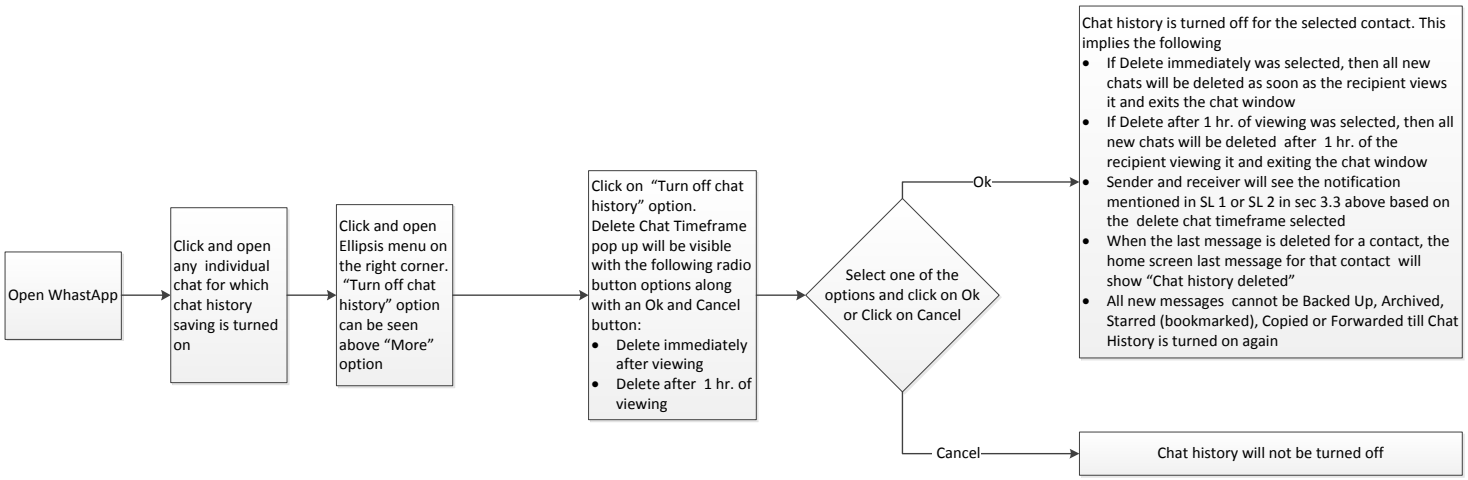
4.7. Users on both sides of the message can change the delete chat timeframe at any time when chat history is turned off

4.8. A message is considered viewed when the message tick turns blue

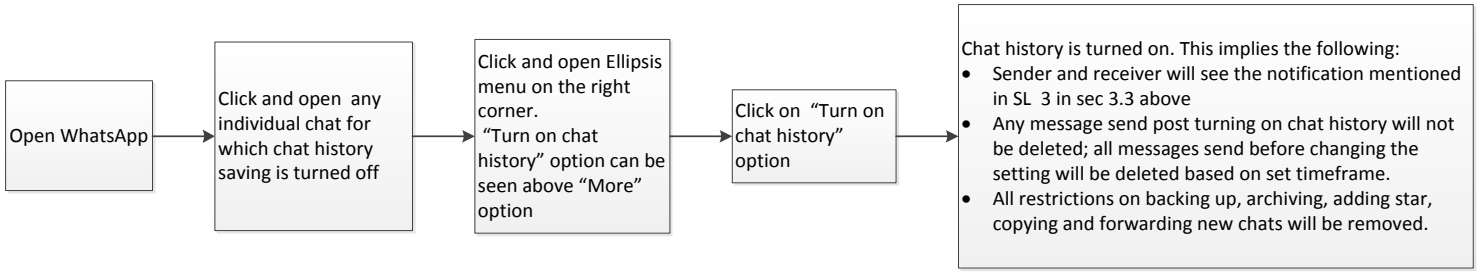
4.9. Chat History backup, Archiving, Bookmarking, Copying and Forwarding functionalities when Chat History Saving is turned off

5. Important Workflows

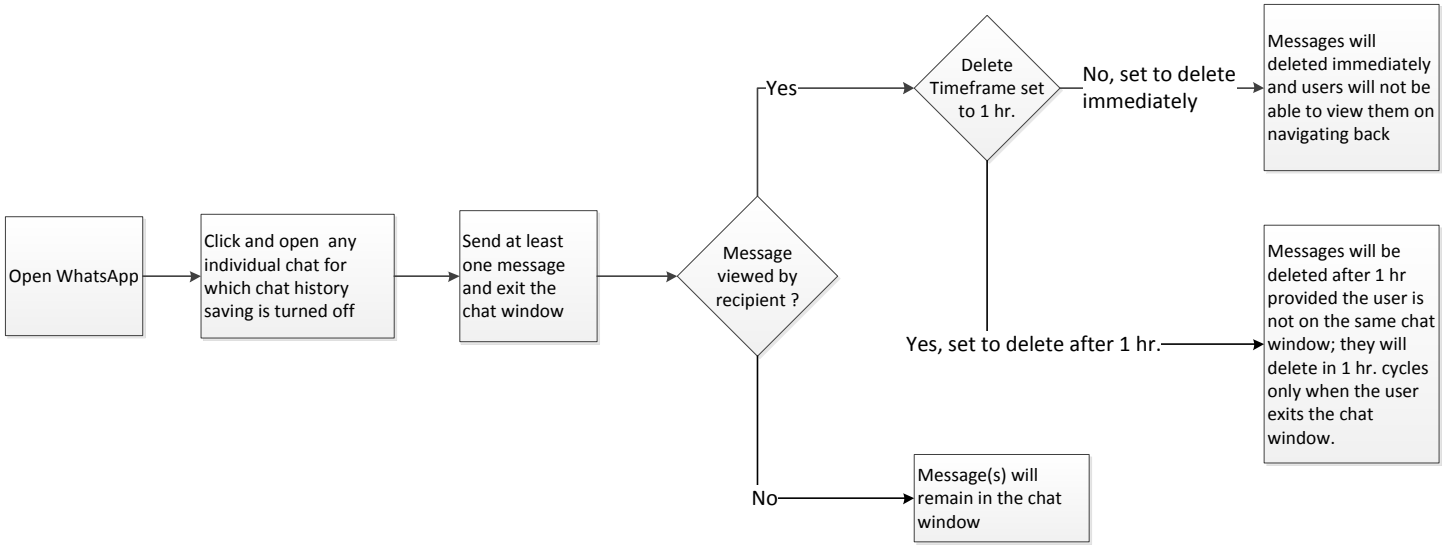
5.1. Workflow 1 – Turning off Chat History



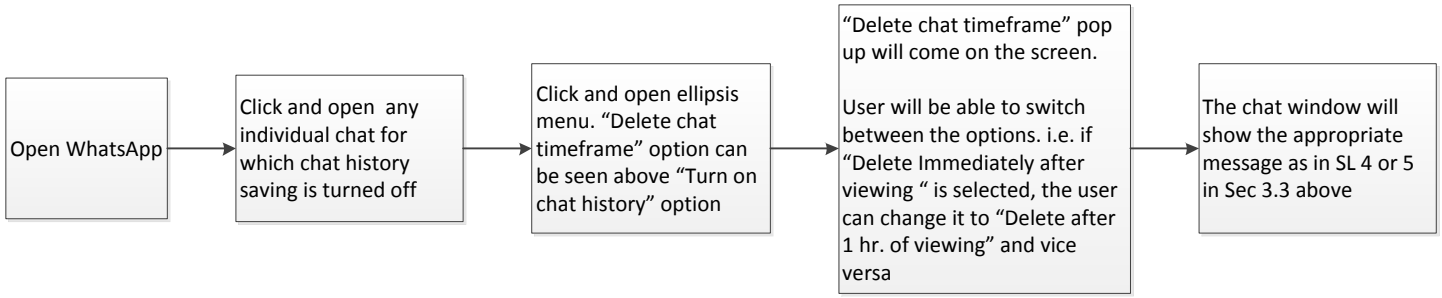
5.2. Workflow 2 – Turning on Chat History



5.3. Workflow 3 – Chat History Deletion



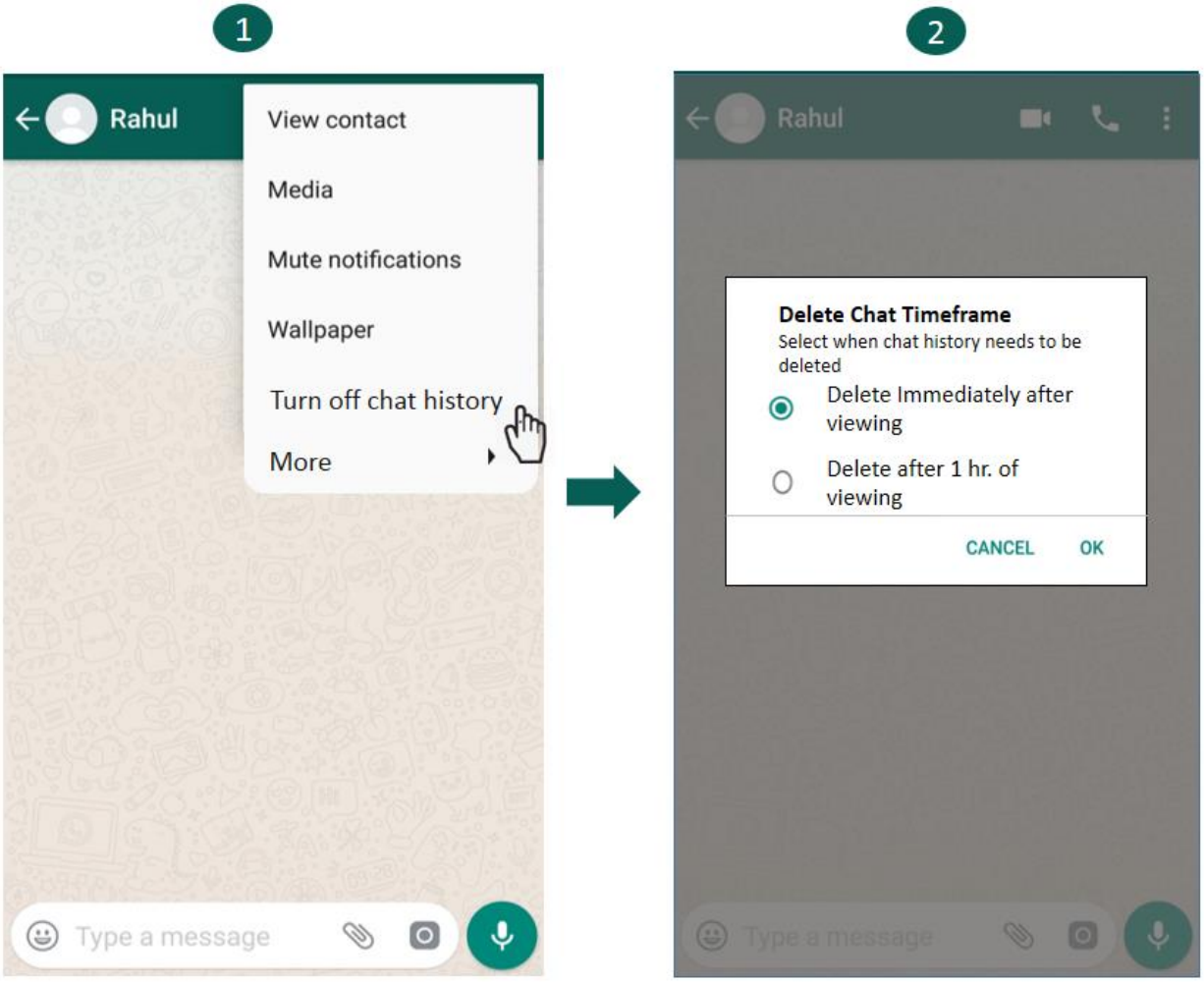
5.4. Workflow 4 – Updating Chat Delete Timeframe Settings



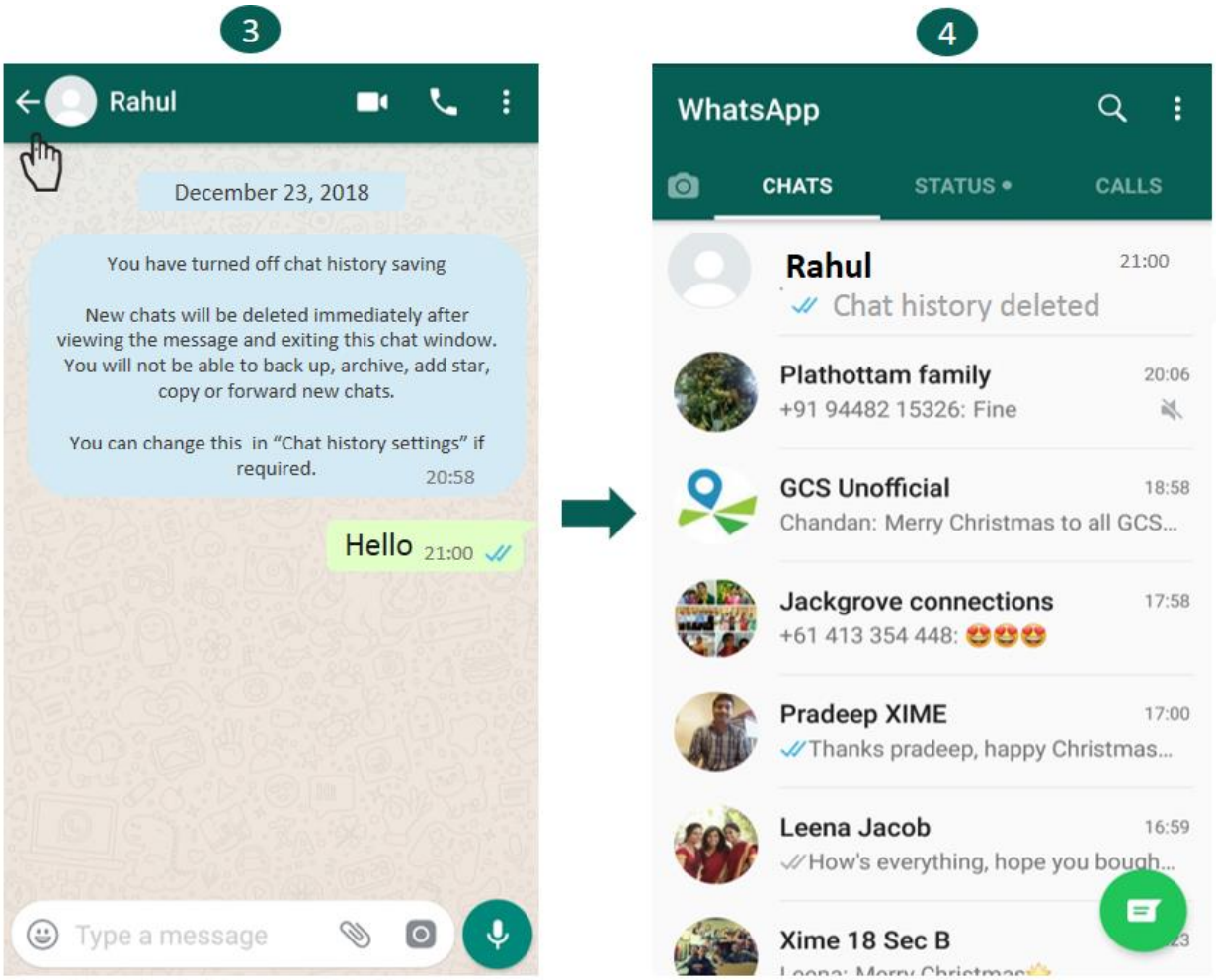
Appendix – Wireframes

The following wireframes cover switching off/on of the chat history and a single conversation between two users - Rahul and Raj.

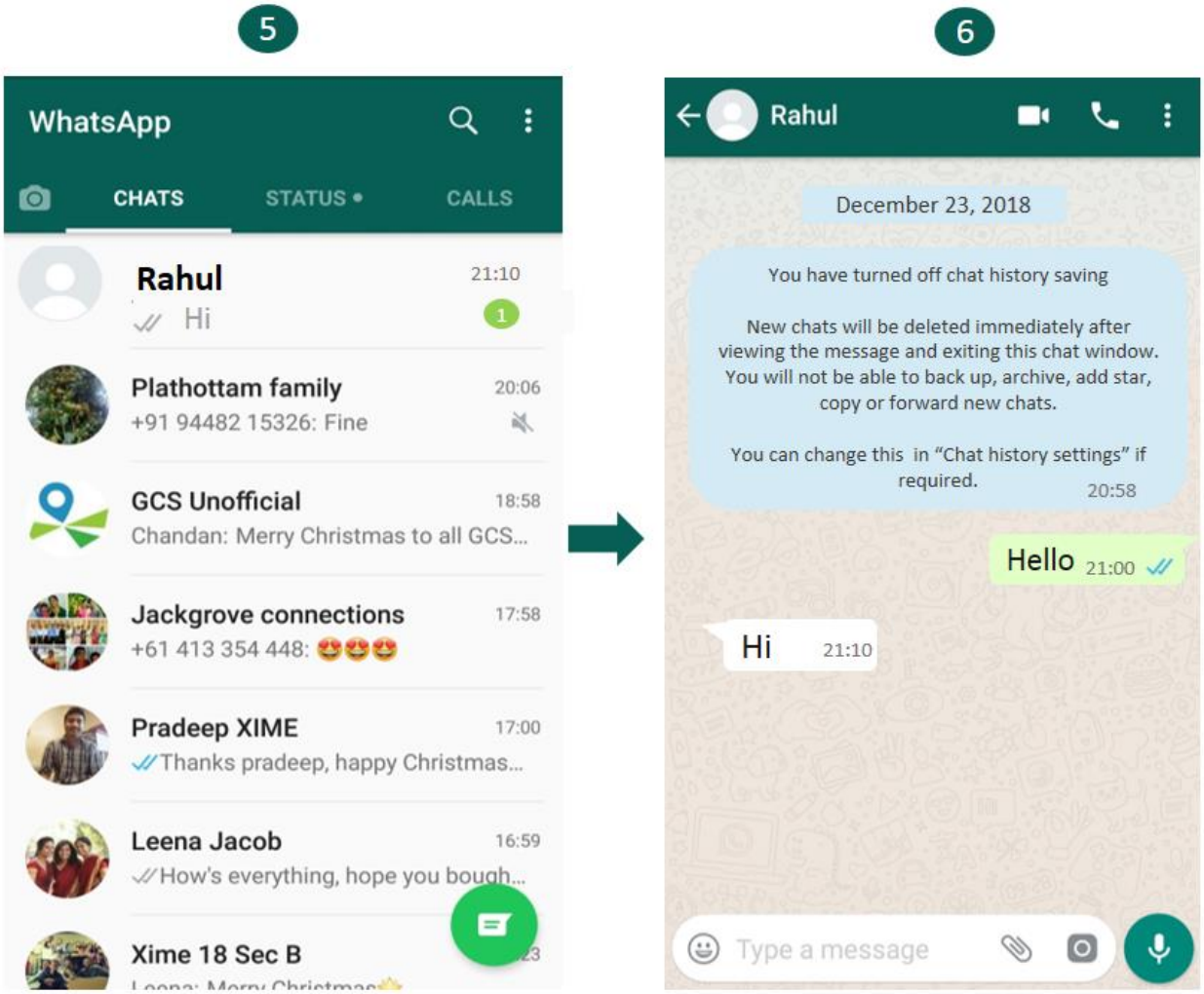
The first 6 screens are from Raj's phone and the next 5 from Rahul's phone



1. In Wireframe 1, Raj has selected the chat window for Rahul and has opened the ellipsis menu which has the new option to turn off chat history
2. Raj clicks on "Turn off chat history" and views the "Delete Chat Timeframe" pop up which is shown in wireframe 2. Raj selects the first option and applies it by clicking on Ok button.

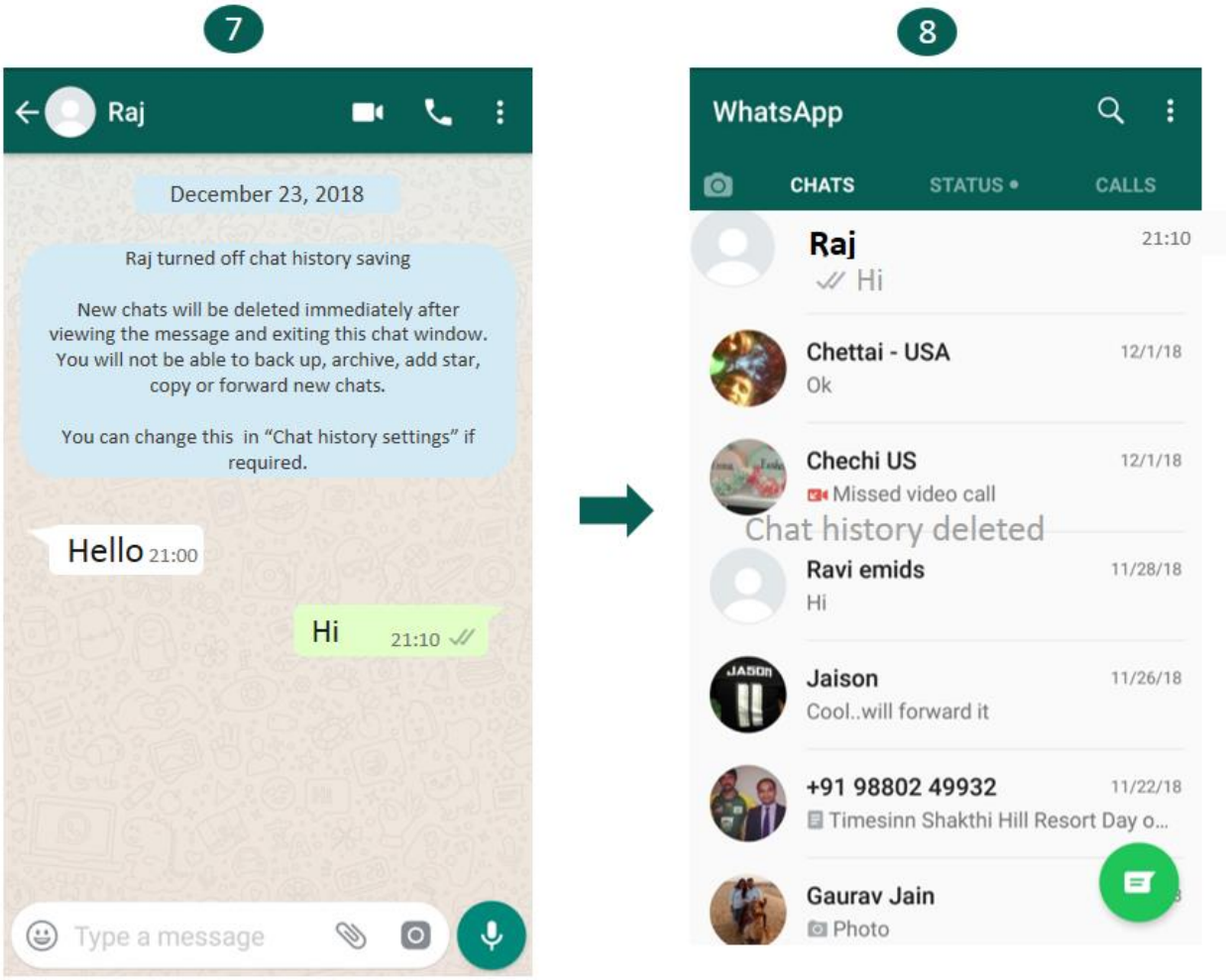


3. Raj has send a message to Rahul after turning off chat history; you can see the notification indicating Chat history has been switched off and that the message has been read by Rahul in Wireframe 3. Raj exits this chat screen thereafter.
4. Raj's chat with Rahul was immediately deleted after Raj exited the chat window as the send message was viewed by Rahul; this can be seen in wireframe 4. This chat has been deleted in Raj's phone.

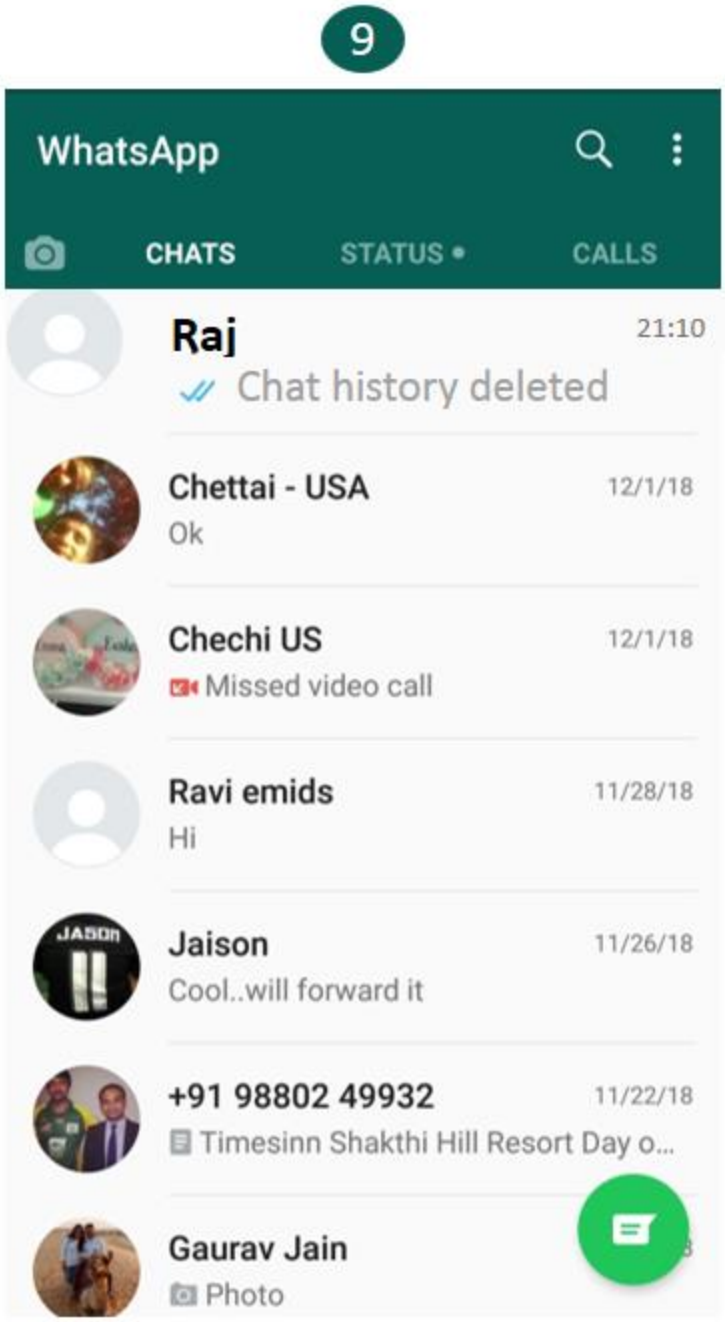


5. Rahul has send a follow up message to Raj and it is not viewed yet as shown in wireframe 5. Wireframes 7 and 8 will show what happens on Rahul's screen when a message is not viewed
6. Raj has read Rahul's follow up message later; this is depicted in wireframe 6. The effect of this can be viewed in wireframe 9

The next 5 screens are from Rahul's phone.



7. Rahul views Raj's message instantly and messages back after 10 minutes of staying on the same screen; this is shown in wireframe 7
8. The follow up message is not read by Raj instantly because of which, even after exiting the chat window the message is not deleted; this is shown in wireframe 8



9. Raj views the message from Rahul some time later because of which the message gets deleted on refresh of Rahul's home screen; this is shown in wireframe 9.

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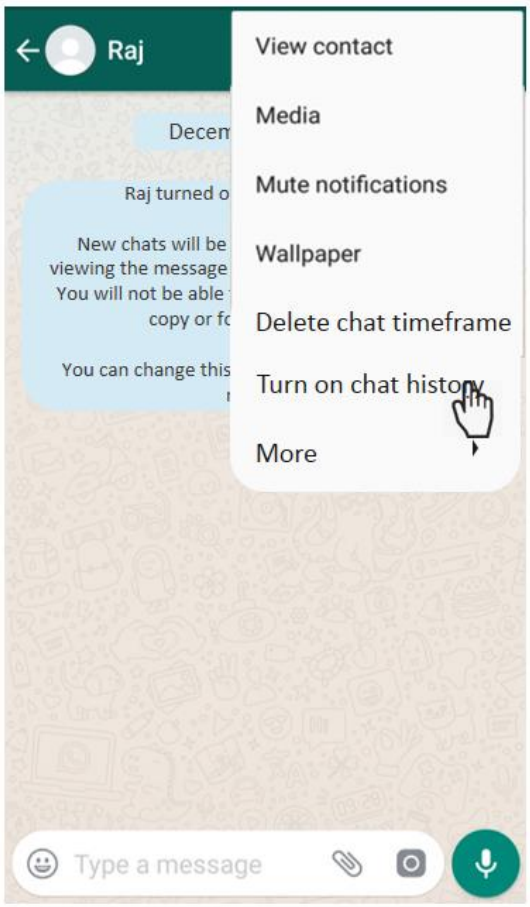

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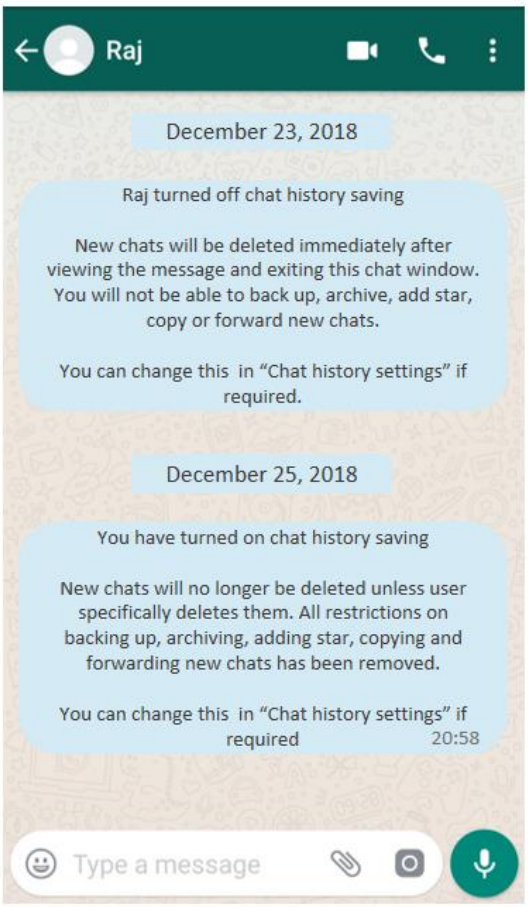

10. Rahul decides to turn on chat history after a few days (on Dec 25th) as depicted in wireframe 10. There will be a "Turn on chat history" option and "Delete chat timeframe" option in the ellipsis menu when chat history is turned off
11. After chat history is turned on, a notification is shown in both Rahul's and Raj's phone. Wireframe 11 depicts this notification on Rahul's phone; this is the notification on Dec 25th