



# HUAWEI NOVA 3i



Huawei's entry in the midrange market of Bangladesh was on the back of the widely acclaimed Y series and GR series. The Y series still caters to the entry-level midrange crowd now while Huawei launched another series to cater to the upper mid-range segment last year—the Nova series. It entered the market with a nova 2i and was an instant hit. Nearly a couple months back, Huawei introduced the latest gadget of nova series: nova 3i. We were able to test out the device for nearly a month. And this is our take on the nova 3i:

Starting with the design, Huawei has already hacked into the winning formula: put a sleek big screen, add glass on the back, put a metal bezel around the phone, and of course, you can't miss the notch. The nova 3i isn't an exception. Rather it has more: a purple to blue colour gradient which we loved. In short, the design is stunning but nothing groundbreaking. And once you slap a case over the phone, the glamour tones down even more.

The gorgeous display of the phone might make you mistake the nova 3i as its more expensive siblings. The tall 6.23 inch IPS LCD display comes with a resolution of 1080 x 2340 pixels and 409 ppi - almost identical to the recently reviewed OPPO F9. The screen worked flawlessly in most cases with native and third-party apps. Some apps were a bit weirded-out thanks to the unorthodox 19:9 ratio of the display. The lack of a high contrast ratio, of the AMOLED screen is overshadowed by the sharp and accurate rendering of details. Like all the phones with a notch, Huawei tried to make the most out of it by putting up notifications up there. Also, you can hide the notch. But as it isn't a super AMOLED screen, the blacks aren't true



## VERDICT

Nova 3i is a stripped down version of Huawei's current flagship, while retaining its core design features and hardware. Not only did it retain the best features, it improved the overall built from the typical midrange. It comes with a big screen, great new processor, battery life reaching well into the second day and plenty of memory and storage. Retailing at 29K BDT, this phone is worth considering if you are looking for a midrange phone to buy.

## SPECS

**Display:** 6.3", FHD+ 2340 x 1080, 409 PPI  
**OS:** EMUI 8.2 based on Android 8.1  
**CPU:** HUAWEI Kirin 710  
**GPU:** Mali-G51 MP4  
**RAM:** 4 GB RAM  
**ROM:** 128 GB  
**Camera:** Rear- 16 MP + 2 MP dual; f/2.2 aperture, Front- 24MP+2MP camera  
**Features:** AI Chipset, Elevator Mode,  
**Battery:** 3340 mAh  
**Price:** Tk. 28,990/-

black thus the notch sticks out like a sore thumb.

This nifty device packs a 3340mAh battery. Being a smartphone with a humongous screen the phone doesn't drain the battery at the rate you might expect it to. If you are not glued to your phone playing PUBG or other GPU hogging games, then a full charge should last you an entire day. The review unit of ours didn't come with a charger so we couldn't check it out.

The Huawei nova 3i comes with quad-cameras. In fact, it's one of their key selling points. On the rear, the phone comes equipped with 16MP f/2.2 primary sensor coupled with a secondary 2MP monochrome sensor. The camera comes loaded with way too many options and features that are bound to confuse amateurs like me. But the UI of the camera has

improved significantly over the years. The most common features can be scrolled from left to right. Following the footsteps of its western counterparts, Huawei has introduced several AR capabilities in the camera. If you are creative enough, you can play around with Qmoji and 3D Objects and have fun with it. The video feature of the camera is maxed at 1080p but it does offer Pro mode on video which is kind of rare in most smartphones these days. The selfies were sharp and over-blown on colours and saturation with AI on. But if you zoom in, you will see that the photos lose a lot of the details.

The nova 3i offers an above decent performance. The HiSilicon Kirin 710 in its debut device performed really well. 12 nm chipset paired with the 4GB ROM was able to play most regular apps stutter-free. But upon heavily taxing the phone with Asphalt 9, I was seeing sudden frame drops which aren't 'unexpected' in a basic octa-core like Kirin 710. The phone heated noticeably up after playing for just 15 minutes or so. I used Huawei P20 Lite (powered by a Kirin 659) and this one is a significant improvement over that. The phone comes with a 128GB ROM of which only 108GB is readily available. To be honest, this should be more than enough for an average user. If you need additional space you can always resort to the hybrid SIM tray by inserting micro SD cards. Speaking of the SIM tray, you can use dual SIM cards on 4G. Moreover, you can also forward the phone calls to the on-call SIM if someone is calling you on your other SIM.

The operating system of the phone is Emotion UI 8.2 based on Android 8.1. Huawei has kept all the usual bloatware and added a few interesting new ones i.e. Netflix, Camera 360, Booking.com and several other very uninteresting games.

WORDS AND PHOTOS  
SHAHHRIAR RAHMAN

# FACEBOOK PORTAL and the awkward timing of its launch

ASIF AYON

Facebook has recently unveiled a glorified video chat peripheral called the Portal and the timing of it could not be worse. Off the back of a major security breach and a year full of privacy concerns, the Portal comes off as a way of blindsiding people from their handle over private data. But are the features enough to offset the risks of having a sentient Facebook camera peering into your home?

I use the word sentient because the Portal is being dubbed as an AI video calling device. All you need to do to start a call is say "Hey Portal", obviously. The device isn't however just limited to voice recognition but it also comes packed with Amazon's voice

interface, Alexa which will give users the ability to shop or control household appliances.

The Portal comes in two sizes, a 10-inch 720p display which retails at \$199 and a 15-inch 1080p display will go for \$349. Facebook's pitch with the Portal is optimized to provide the smoothest video calling experience out there. The software around the front camera has been worked on extensively so that it can encompass 140 degree field of view or, fit the whole family and the beige couches into the frame.

Now, the Portal in actuality, is a very solid device. But the issue comes up on two fronts. One, are the shambles that Facebook's reputation with private data is in and the other is that it's still just a glorified webcam. Mix the two together and you are almost giving away the key to your house to Russian spies. While it's easy to digress my last statement, it is fact that Facebook is an easily breach-able platform and so, despite the Portal having multiple safety lids for its camera and microphone, despite the fact that the built in AI runs locally on individual devices and that calls are encrypted, are still not worth the bargain of actually having a hacked webcam with a full field of view of your living room. The device looks solid however the company's reputation does not.



# A bombardment of innovations at Google's Pixel Launch 2018

ASIF AYON

So Google has revealed the Pixel 3 and Pixel 3XL at their latest event and it is exactly as the internet had predicted. The Pixel 3 is a 5.5-inch device, and the 3XL is a 6.3-inch device. Both devices retained the single rear camera from the Pixel 2 but is now packed in with even more intuitive software and quirks. The only notable hardware change is the addition of another camera on the front of the display for wide angle selfies.

While each of those products were given a lot of attention during the event, it was the Pixel 3, its new camera features and the Android Pie updates which stole the show. The most exciting updates include the introduction of Google's Duplex AI voice calling system. The automated Google Assistant voice caller was showcased at Google's I/O developer conference earlier during the year but people were finally allowed to see the feature in action which will be exclusive to the Pixel 3 and Pixel 3XL.

Aside from the Pixel 3, Google also unveiled three new products at the event – the Pixel Stand, a new Chrome OS tablet called the Pixel Slate and the Google Home HUB. The Pixel Stand is a fast charging dock and a mini Google Home, and will launch alongside the Pixel 3 retailing at \$79. The Pixel tablet will start at \$599, going all the way up to \$1699 depending on the specs. Google will also be selling the Pixel Slate keyboard as a \$199 accessory and a \$99 Pixelbook Pen. The Pixel Slate, which is running Chrome OS feels like a really smooth device for multitasking, and with an 8MP front camera it's a great device for video calling.

The last product unveiled was the Google Home HUB and simply put, it's a Google Assistant device for your home.

The cameras also come packed with a lot of updated changes which include the aforementioned wide angle selfies, high-resolution digital zoom and a low light mode called Night Sight. The newly added Top Shot mode takes a burst of images on top of one and it lets you choose the best picture. The camera also comes optimized with the newly added Motion Auto Focus, which can now focus on objects in motion when capturing video. The last

two additions include a Photobooth mode which enables the Google's AI to take a picture when you smile or change your expression. To add fuel to the smart phone war flame, Google's come out with their own version of AR emoji animoji with Playground. This mode essentially lets you add AR-powered characters, stickers and more to scenes — and these "Playmoji" characters will react to your expressions too. Google confirmed that the Playground mode will come to older Pixels as well.

The Pixel 3 and 3XL will start rolling out to consumers from November for \$799 and \$899 respectively. The latest flagship will come in three colours – Clearly Black, Clearly White and Not Pink. After making fun of the iPhone notch for one full generation, the Pixel 3 is biting the dust hard now with their own notch on the Pixel 3XL and it's the worst looking notch yet. But all of that aside, the Pixel 3 and 3XL is the smartest phone with the best camera and despite its look, it maintains the consistent form factor that we expect from Google's Pixel.

