



BEST MONITORS TO BUY WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK

A monitor is essential for getting the most out of your gaming sessions and photo and video editing. While some curved 4K monitors can cost upwards of Tk. 50,000 to Tk. 100,000, today we're going to be looking at the best bang for your buck in the world of smart monitor investments.



Dell S2218H

Price: Tk. 10,500
Display Size – 21.5" IPS
Contrast Ratio – 1,000:1
Resolution – 1920x1080
Response Time – 6ms
Aspect Ratio – 16:9

VERDICT: The Dell monitor has ultra thin bezels on its sides with a 1cm chin to fit the logo. The speakers are downward pointing making the small speakers pack a punch. The monitor is flexible as well, with plenty of back tilt and a little bit of forward tilt. While the screen is reflective it is not nearly as much as some and of course this does show finger marks but as it is not a touch screen there is no real reason to touch the screen.



LG 22MP68VQ-P

Price: Tk. 11,000
Display Size – 21.5" IPS
Contrast Ratio – 1,000:1
Resolution – 1920x1080
Response Time – 5ms
Aspect Ratio – 16:9

VERDICT: This budget monitor comes with freesync technology which ensures smooth gameplay by fixing choppy and image tearing. The no-compromises factor for this monitor is further reinstated with the inclusion of LG's Black Stabilizer feature which allows users to improve the visibility of dark scenes in games, photos and videos. And with a 72% colour gamut, this monitor can generate almost true colour with the right settings. It also allows for split screen functionality making it a great monitor for multitasking. But what really sets this monitor apart that too at its price point is the fact that freesync allows the monitor to unlock the 75Hz refresh rate as opposed to its competitors which run g-sync. The only noticeable downside of this monitor is that since it's an IPS display, there are the usual IPS glows. But overall, this monitor is great for gamers and beginner photo and video editors.



Samsung C27F390FHW

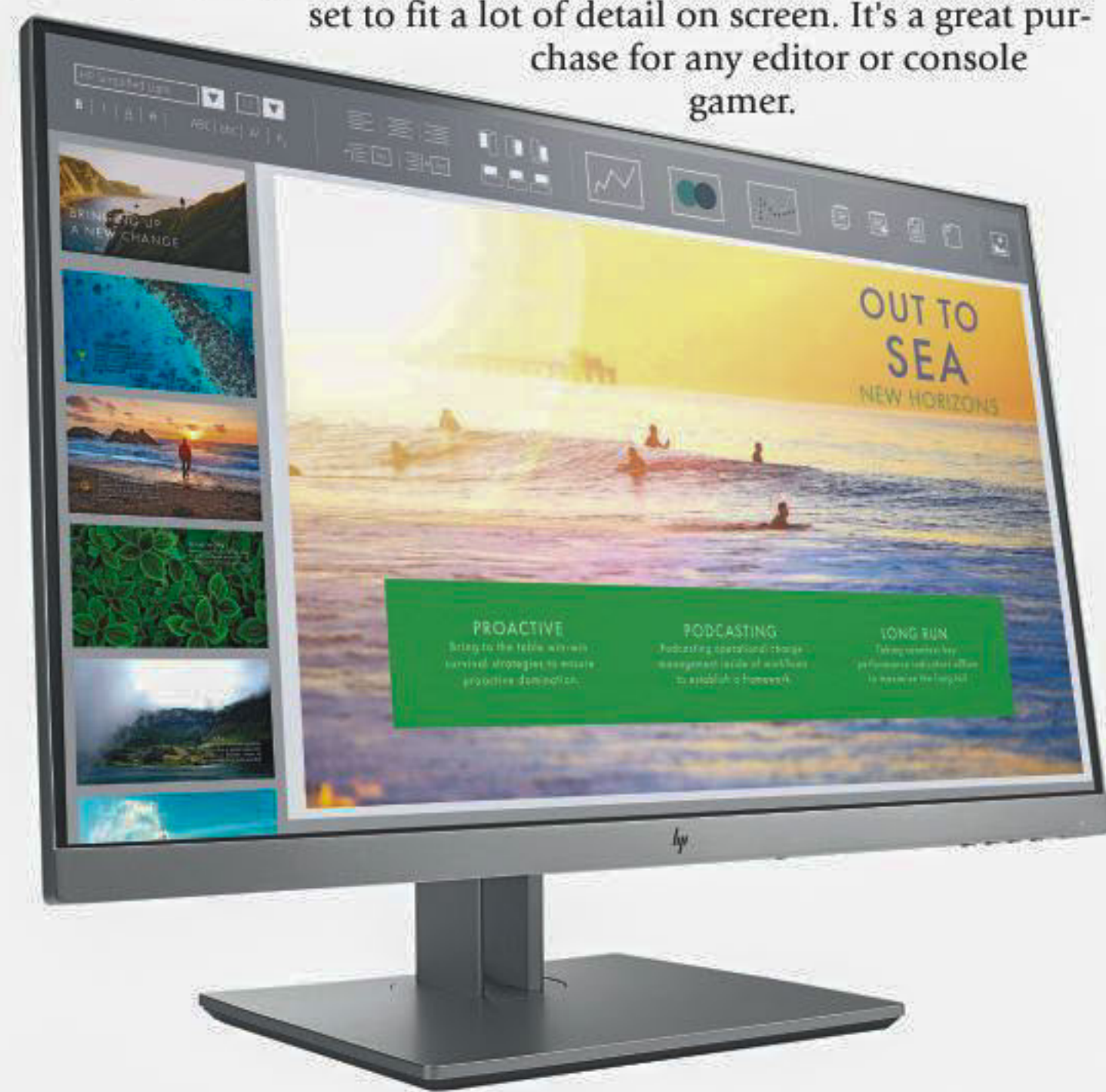
Price: Tk. 27,500/-
Display Size – 27" Curved
Contrast Ratio – 3,000:1
Response Time – 4ms
Resolution – 1920x1080
Connectivity – HDMI, Headphone

VERDICT: This LED display from Samsung comes with a deep immersive curve 1800R screen. If you are into gaming then you are in luck. The AMD FreeSync ensures you get a flawlessly smooth gaming experience in this slim profile display. The display comes with a HDMI port and a headphone jack. No other ports... not even a USB port. With the Samsung Magic Bright display option, you can also get preset optimised option for watching movies.

HP EliteDisplay E223

Price: Tk. 13,500
Display Size – 21.5" IPS
Contrast Ratio – 1000:1 static; 5000000:1 dynamic
Response Time – 5 ms
Resolution – 1920 x 1080
Refresh Rate – 60Hz

VERDICT: With a sleek and compact design, the HP EliteDisplay is a wide-angle monitor with ultra thin bezels. The Full HD LED Backlit display is easy on the eyes, making for a comfortable viewing experience. The monitor comes with native Xbox and Ps4 support. The monitor however lacks adjustability controls, so unfortunately no pivoting or height adjusting. You get the usual problems that come with an IPS display in the form of IPS glows. But the monitor is premium looking and its default viewing angles are set to fit a lot of detail on screen. It's a great purchase for any editor or console gamer.



BenQ Zowie RL2455

Price: Tk. 19,500
Display Size – 24" LED
Contrast Ratio – 1000:1
Response Time – 1ms
Resolution – 1920 x 1080
Refresh Rate – 75Hz, 60Hz - optimised for console

VERDICT: The BENQ Zowie is easily the best budget monitor for gamers. The monitor comes with presets for RTS games making it a good choice for playing strategy games like DOTA 2 and StarCraft II.

It also comes with a Movie mode, an energy-saving Eco mode and three "Gamer" presets, making the monitor a spectacle of modes which can change your viewing experience at the literal flick of a switch.

The monitor however has no height adjustment is a huge downside for gamers.



ViewSonic VX2476-SMHD

Price: Tk. 21,500
Display Size – 24" IPS
Contrast Ratio – 1,000:1
Response Time – 14ms
Resolution – 1920 x 1080
Aspect Ratio – 16:9

VERDICT: Coming in the thinnest bezels and chin on this list, ViewSonic's monitor has an IPS display and yet it comes with a full HD display and LED Backlights. The monitor has wide viewing angles, supporting 178° wide-angle viewing. The monitor is best for home users who are in the market for a bright monitor to game on. The ultra slim design makes for an immersive experience.

ASIF AYON

Is 4K worth it?

If you're in the market for a TV today, chances are that you have glanced over to the section with the 4K TVs. Even if you could afford one, should you go for it? The short answer is no. There's a lot of detail to be covered here but it all starts with what you're viewing and whether the image is coming to you in 4K resolution.

Right now, there are virtually no dish operators who can support 4K in Bangladesh, thus making a 4K TV obsolete for those who are cable news enthusiasts. But then what about Netflix or YouTube? In both cases, while there are a handful of shows and videos which do support Ultra HD or 4K, you'd need a top of the line internet connection to properly stream the content. Before getting into gaming and 4K Blu-ray movie discs, let's assume that you do have the means to afford the pixels and the bandwidth; can your eyes perceive the extra details that your pocket cashed in?

To put it simply, if you do end up purchasing a 4K TV, you'd have to sit really close to it while watching UHD content to notice any difference between 4K and 1080p. The market is ripe with 4K TVs right now but there are only a handful of blockbuster films that come out every year with 4K Blu-ray support. So if you already own a good 1080p TV and you



already sit far away enough from your TV, then it isn't worth spending the extra Tk. 40,000 for a 4K TV since you won't benefit much from the upgrade.

The most viable consumer base for 4K TVs right now is gamers. With the Ps4 Pro and Xbox One X offering "4K" there is some hope for these high budget TVs. But even then you realize that the Ps4 Pro only upscales original 1080p with the use of checkerboard patterns. The Xbox One X however truly delivers on the promise of 4K with a lot of support for previously

released titles with "enhanced" visuals. But is the image processed better on the Xbox One X and a 4K TV? Studies point to yes and it's evident too when you look at Forza Horizon 4 on the Xbox One X.

But with that being said, 4K still has a long way to go till it becomes universal and so the only reason to buy a 4K TV right now is if you're interested in features such as local dimming, OLED, and HDR.

ASIF AYON

Pathao under pressure

Homegrown ride-hailing service Pathao has been the centre of attention in social media last week. Pathao was slapped with two grave allegations: improper hogging and storing of private data from users including SMS and contact list, and illegally charging extra fare from the passengers. For today, let's look at the data privacy issue:

The first revelation of the improper fetching and storing of SMS and contact list data came to light after Ashik Ishtiaque Emon, a self-proclaimed security researcher uploaded a video showing how Pathao has been fetching and storing information. According to the video, Pathao is forwarding the sensitive information of the users which includes hardware details to a third-party server in California. Storing and forwarding of these information abroad is a violation of the newly minted ride sharing guidelines. The most alarming part is fetching of information (such as installed apps) without even getting the approval of the user. Another thing Emon pointed out is that Pathao only informs the user about location seeking information but when the permission box pops up (a Google safety protocol to ensure users consent), it sneakily takes location, and SMS and contact access related permission. You might be wondering whether this happens

every time you install the device and the answer is no. It happens every time you open the app and it will fetch all the new info (i.e. could be all the new SMSs you got since the first install). The implications of these data fetching might be catastrophic. Imagine your banking, social media, MFS, email related OTP will get fetched to Pathao. If this was done by a social media app, then the entire process would have still raised eyebrows but would have been still been understandable. But for a ride-hailing service, unwarranted fetching and storing of these data is totally uncalled for and violates all ethical practices. After the video was uploaded, it has been shared several thousand times online and the drama didn't stop there. Later Emon removed the video from his social media pages.

In an interview later with Ekushey TV, he said that he did it as Pathao wanted to come 'to an arrangement' with him. Initially, he agreed, but later he realised that he would be able to forgive his conscience hence he re-uploaded it again. We contacted Pathao about this but they didn't deny or confirm anything as of today.

In a press brief issued later, Pathao said they are ensuring the optimum security of the stored data and they are following all the best practices. We didn't get a response either when we approached Pathao regarding what data privacy and security compliance certification or standards have the ride-hailing company has obtained so far.

SHAHRIAR RAHMAN

