

HANDS-ON REVIEW

Huawei Mate 20 Pro

The good, bad and ugly one month later

What is it?

Huawei's psychedelic hued flagship is a heavily specced out device that could make it the best smartphone of 2018. It has the fanciest camera, in-display fingerprint scanner, face detection to rival Apple's version and fantastic battery support. And that is just the first four that came to mind. The list goes on. Is it possibly the best though?

Build

Glass front and back with beautifully curved edges make it a joy to hold albeit a little slippery. The back has a 2x2 grid arrangement housing three camera lenses and a flash. All of that is wrapped in a gradient of iridescent blue and purple for the back. Some like it, others hate it and I love it. Black is so pedestrian. What I don't love so much is having to wipe it regularly because the mirrored finish is a nasty fingerprint magnet. Hide it under a case and it's gone. Huawei also has a textured back that glows and glistens as you twist it under the light. The design is clean and minimal. An example being the speaker grill being nonexistent sort of. It's hidden inside the USB C port. All that minimalism also means the headphone jack has gone extinct like the recent Western Black Rhinoceros. It's sad but then, I always prefer wireless headphones over a typical tangled up mess.

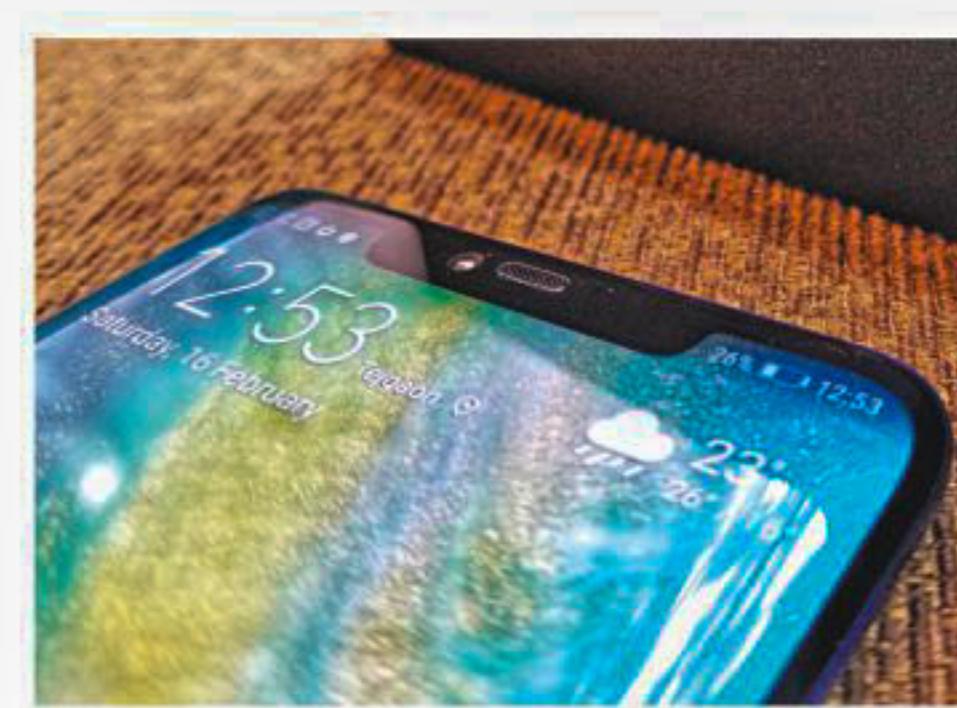
The cool gimmicks

This is the first time Huawei is offering an in-display fingerprint scanner freeing up the back from any more grooves.

Then there is the hideable notch.

Apparently, if you hate notches the way millennials hate their bosses and baby boomers, you can hide it. Necessary? Not quite.

The 3D face recognition means you have more security because it cannot be fooled by a photo. But you can only store one face.


Display

The AMOLED display is an exact 6.39 inches compared to the Note 9's 6.4 inches. The 19.5:9 wide aspect ratio offers an impressive and at this point undistinguishable, super sharp pixel count of 537ppi. Needless to say that is a gorgeous screen.

Software

The EMUI 9.0 isn't my favorite because it isn't the smoothest. But they have cleaned it up significantly while running on the latest Android Pie. Layout is now simpler and does offer a few more visual flourishes over stock Android's plain interface.

Camera

Three lenses: a wide 40-megapixel f/1.8, an ultra-wide 20-megapixel f/2.2, and an 8-

megapixel f/2.4 telephoto. The last one offers 3x optical zoom which is surprisingly clear despite minor shakes. This seems to be a thing here for a lot of new devices. The Samsung A9 has four lenses in similar fashion of diversity but that doesn't quite work half as well.

The photography is helped out by something called the Master AI system which tweaks and boosts certain things as you shoot. Most of the times it works very well but sometimes it brings in unwanted image smoothening. While this eats up a bit of the natural effect, it makes it hugely appropriate for the Instagram crowd. The 24MP selfies on the other hand, while not outstanding, look more natural. But, you can tweak them up on-screen just how you want.

Battery

Wow. A 4200mAh battery is squeezed somewhere in that very narrow body and it lasts almost two days. I really did not believe it at first when they mentioned this but on typical usage, this phone will easily cross one day and into the next. You can tweak the power savings modes and you can stretch it further. That is amazing performance in a phone this capable. But your PUBG session will not help. But the fast charging can help you get back into action with 0-70 percent in about 30 minutes.

Performance

The Mate 20 Pro uses Huawei's very own Kirin 980 chip while every other flagship runs on the Qualcomm's Snapdragon 845. Now in the real world usage, you simply won't notice the

SPECS

Display: 6.39 inches, OLED, 3120 x 1440 pixels
OS: Android 9.0, EMUI 9.0
CPU: Huawei Kirin 980 7nm Mobile AI Chipset
 2 x Cortex-A76 Based 2.6 GHz + 2 x Cortex-A76 Based 1.92 GHz + 4 x Cortex-A55 1.8 GHz
RAM: 6 GB
ROM: 128 GB
Camera: Leica Triple Camera with Ultra Wide Angle Lens, Back- 40 MP, f/1.8, 20 MP, f/2.2, 8 MP, f/2.4, & Front- 24 MP, f/2.0
Features: 3D Face Unlock, In-screen Fingerprint, IP68 Water Resistance
Battery: 4200 mAh
Price: Tk. 89,990/-

VERDICT

Amazing performance, great looks, debatable colours and a fantastic camera make it a great flagship device. Being able to last more than a day makes it a killer device. The EMUI does take away a few points. The best? Almost. It ticks most of the boxes. In most cases it goes neck and neck or beyond other competing flagships. If the camera is the main reason you buy it, it falls just short of the Pixel 3. But 'just short' is still high praise.

difference between these processors. These are blazingly fast doing away with tasks like a vegan dismissing the meat menu at a restaurant. The geeks will love the subtle differences where each processor has its own pros and cons. The Huawei Kirin has a big pro with its 7nm architecture. In non-geek speak, everything is smaller than the competitor, with distances reduced between each transistor. Less mean faster here.

The 6GB of RAM should also help keep things fast also which will be more visible 8 months to a year down the line.

WORDS AND PHOTOS:
 EHSANUR RAZA RONNY



Team Olik from SUST wins the NASA Space Apps Challenge 2018

Out of 1395 teams and 18,000 participants from around the world, Team Olik has won the award in the 'Best use of Data' at NASA's International Space Apps Challenge 2018. The team, which is from Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST), are set to visit NASA. Team Olik is comprised of Sabbir Hasan, S. M. Rafiq Adnan, Kazi Mainul Islam, Abu Sabiq Mahdi and Coach Biswapiyo Chakrabarty.

Olik won the award for a VR application titled Lunar VR. The application lets users immerse themselves in their own space odysseys, such as, taking part in the landing of the Apollo 11, experiencing a solar eclipse from the moon and orbiting over

the moon with LRO satellite. The team collected the 3D models and other assets from NASA.

The NASA Space Apps Challenge is an ongoing international hackathon and it is in its 8th year. Two teams from Bangladesh, Atto-Unmesh and Team Englatas were nominated for the People's Choice award in the NASA Space Apps Challenge of 2017. But no team from Bangladesh had won an award in a category at the competition before. And Lunar VR is available for download on Android. However, the program is usable for only open testing to further the development of the application.

GROUND CONTROL TO OPPORTUNITY MISSION COMPLETE

After 15 years of being the bedrock of NASA's research on Mars, Opportunity was put to rest on February 13, 2019. In a statement published by NASA stating, "No response from Opportunity since Sol 5111 (June 10, 2018)" shows the last picture the rover would ever send – a pixelated jargon of radio static, signifying its passing. NASA's best attempts at trying to re-establish communications with Opportunity would be in vain. And when NASA finally said mission complete on behalf of Opportunity, they bid adieu to their crowning achievement, Opportunity.

The team at NASA affectionately called Opportunity "Oppy" and it was only meant to last for 90 days. Its mission was to check for past signs of water activity on the dusty dunes of Mars. Oppy's journey began on the night of July 7, 2003, and it would reach Mars on January 25, 2004. The Red Planet is a barren and tumultuous planet with never-ending dust storms and harsh winters. But the little golf cart-sized rover managed to traverse 45KM of Mars in its lifetime, collecting heaps of data along the way. Opportunity even found the weathered rocks called "aeolian rocks" – iron-rich spherical shaped mineral deposits nicknamed as "blueberries", and the first meteorite on another planet known as Heat Shield Rocks.

Afterwards, Opportunity ventured into a deep crater called Endurance and spent two years exploring Victoria Crater, both of which showed the watery pasts of a Mars foregone. But Oppy's greatest feat came on December 8, 2011, when the rover found bright veins of a mineral deposited by water, on the edge of the Endeavour Crater. This gave NASA what they needed, signs of freshwater on the Red Planet.

By March 2015, Oppy had completed its marathon of 42KM of Mars. A life on Mars which began at Eagle Crater ultimately ended in 2018 on the outskirts of Endeavour Crater. Opportunity will go down in history as the most travelled off-world rover. But there were a lot of factors involved in Opportunity's

success story and it starts with its batteries.

According to John Callas, of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), Oppy's main battery has had 5,000 charge-discharge cycles in its lifespan and still had about 85% of its capacity left when the mission-ending dust



storm had finally hit. And the rover would have probably survived this dust storm too had it not been for Oppy's glitched heater. The heater on Oppy's robotic arm had been stuck in the "on" position ever since it landed on Mars and for all these years, scientists at NASA would have to shut down everything on the rover, even the crucial survival heaters every night so that its one bad heater wouldn't drain away crucial bat-

tery power.

Oppy finally lost communication with NASA during the penultimate sand storm, which messed its mission clock up, preventing it from going into deep sleep.

Opportunity had survived many a sand-

storm during its life on Mars till finally becoming undone. No thought was spared from NASA's behalf, but at the end of the day, they couldn't reach Opportunity. But maybe in 100 years, we just might be able to get to the little rover ourselves and thank him for all that he has done for science and humanity.

ASIF AYON

