

HANDS-ON REVIEW

A week with the new Oppo A9 2020

Oppo's been churning out quite a few good smartphones as of late and the new Oppo A9 2020 is no exception. While the triple rear camera setup and the dazzling back plate make some delectable statements out of the box, would that be the A9 2020's only claim in the "budget-premium" category or does the device have more to offer than its predecessors and competitors?

BUILD

The back of the phone has the same eye-catching colour tricks you'd find on other Chinese smartphones, but unlike most of these finishes, the space purple finish is subtle and the shimmering is kept to a minimum. While the back is made of plastic, Corning Gorilla Glass 3+ covers the

VERDICT

The Oppo A9 2020 is a solid device and perhaps a strong contender in the sub 30,000/- category. Great battery life, reliable performance, the phone has all the basics covered. If you're looking for a bang for your buck kind of device, then this could be the device for you, if of course you're willing to adapt to the minor hiccups that come with "budget premium" devices of this sort.

LCD display. The display was bright and better than what you'd find on lower tier smartphones. Adaptive brightness settings were responsive too, adjusting the screen's brightness to the lighting conditions of your surroundings. Oppo claims that the phone has an 89% screen-to-body-ratio and



looking at the chin on the bottom of the screen and the teardrop/waterdrop selfie camera, I think that about checks out. My biggest gripe with the design of the phone would have to be the positioning of the volume buttons and the power button. While I understand why the power button is placed in the middle of the phone, since no one would want to reach high with their thumbs, and therefore, having it in the middle makes it easier; placing the volume buttons on the same position on the other side has led to many unintentional screenshots with this phone. Having the volume rockers placed a tad bit higher on the other end would have solved the problem. Moving over to the back of the phone we have the neatly organized cameras and the fingerprint sensor, the latter not being as satisfactory as I would've liked it to be. The fingerprint sensor, despite being responsive most of the time still struggled whenever it thought it was dirty and it

registered my fingers as grimy, when neither of which were the case. It was fast and functional when it did work. The cameras however did feel as advertised.

CAMERA

The phone features a primary 48MP lens, 8MP wide angle lens, 2MP mono lens and 2MP portrait lens, and so naturally, pictures taken in natural light have a pronounced sense of depth and clarity to them. The camera app has the same cookie-cutter interface you'd find on last year's Oppo devices, portrait mode, beauty mode, expert mode but the addition of a wide angle lens now let's you capture wide angle selfies and pictures. The portrait mode, while nowhere near the top flagships, is serviceable and works well on tiny objects and such. While the colour grading and sharpness of pictures all have a touch of AI beautification to them, it doesn't go overboard with corrections like we saw with some of the

Chinese AIs from last year or the year before. And while, most of the camera did perform as advertised, I was disappointed with night mode. Despite not going in with any expectations (given the fact that the phone isn't a flagship) I still felt like I should have been getting more light out of the pictures, instead it was the same grainy pictures you'd find on phones without night mode.

PERFORMANCE

At the heart of this phone is a Snapdragon 665 processor, Adreno 610 GPU and yes it can run PUBG and other demanding games. While PUBG defaults to medium settings on the device, it ran smoothly and the phone was cool to the touch. The battery had drained about 8 to 9 percent during an hour long game. The phone remained lag free, fluid and functional for almost all the time, except for the one time when it hanged on the camera app for a solid minute. Aside from nit-picking, the A9 2020 has been a really smooth operator with virtually

no performance hiccup on any app. Split screen viewing also pairs really well with the gigantic 6.5 inch display.

BATTERY

The A9 2020 comes with a 5000 mAh battery and that's not just a buzzword to get you to throw money at it, this phone lasts. Like over 24 hours in my case with standard usage for 15 of those hours. I'm also glad that it features a USB-C port and not micro USB, meaning that the phone charged fast too.

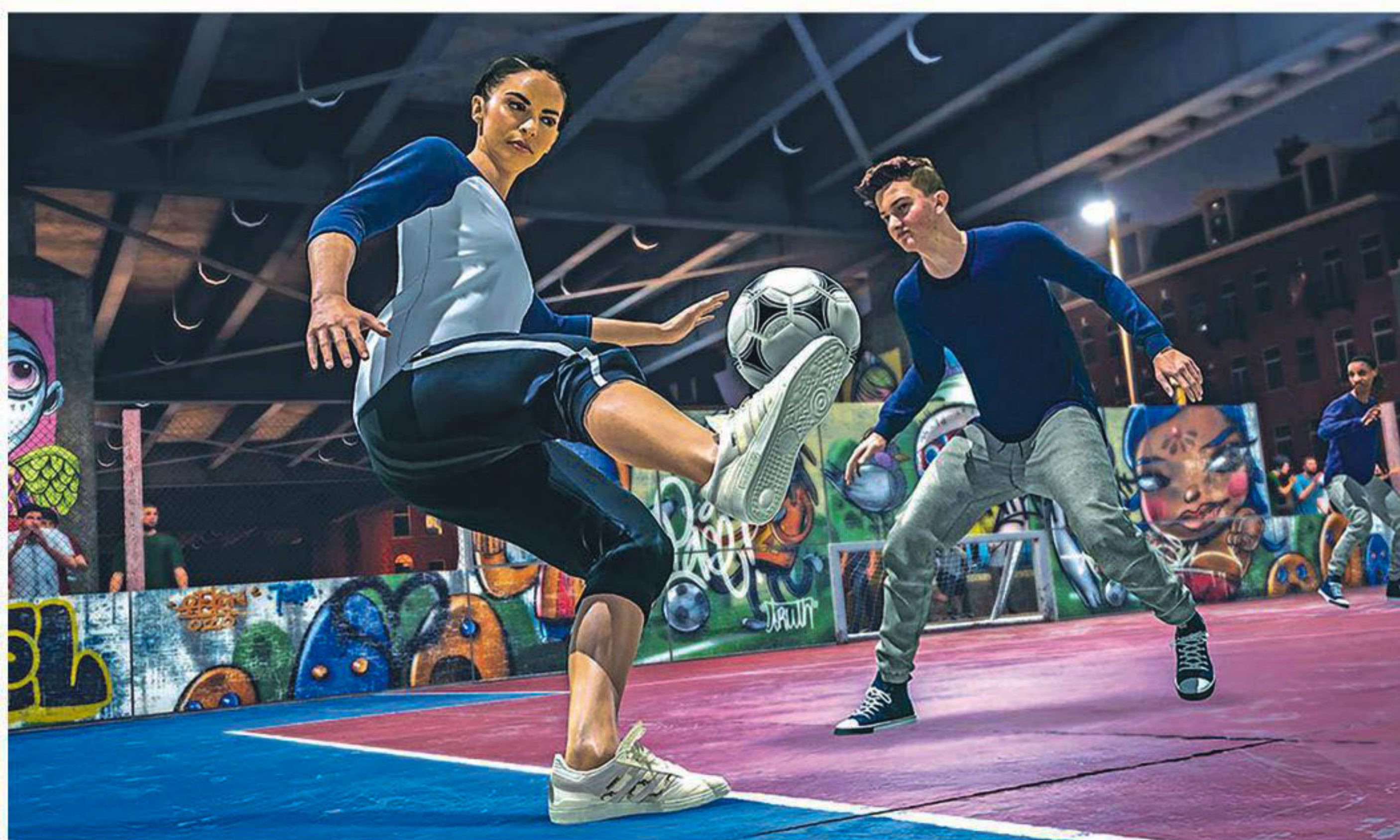
To be frank, I did not expect the battery life to be as good as it was but I was pleasantly surprised when I would come back home after a full day to only find that the A9 2020 had only lost about 20% charge. If you're

SPECS

- Processor:** Snapdragon 665
- OS:** Color OS 6.0.1, Android 9
- GPU:** Adreno 610
- Rear Camera:** 48M (f/1.8) + 8M (f/2.25) + 2M (f/2.4) + 2M (f/2.4)
- Front Camera:** 16-megapixel (f/2.0)
- Display:** 6.5-inch IPS LCD, 1600x720 pixels
- Memory:** 8GB RAM
- Storage:** 128GB internal
- Battery:** 5000mAh lithium-ion
- Price:** BDT 24,990/-

looking for a phone in this price range with a good battery, then this phone is a strong recommendation from yours truly.

WORDS: ASIF AYON
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FIFA 20 – finally delivering on the "simulation" promise?

Of all of Electronic Arts' cash grab games (just being honest), FIFA is probably the only game that is seemingly untouchable and beyond reproach by fans and onlookers alike. With very little else on offer in terms of licensed footballing fun in video game format, FIFA's yearly releases are followed by a frenzied rush as older iterations are discarded like used tissue. FIFA Ultimate Team (FUT) is just as annoying as ever, but none of the people buying the game are complaining about the loot-box structure either. For a money hungry corporate like EA, FIFA is a gift that keeps on giving. So what's the new one like?

For one, it's closer to the tag of "footballing simulation" that has been latched on to FIFA ever since the heady days of the battle for dominance between them and Konami's Pro Evolution Soccer (PES) on the PlayStation 2. Pro Evo was called "arcade-y" and "unrealistic" at the time as reviewers, swayed by the polished, streamlined menus of FIFA, kept pushing EA's product down consumers' throats. Fast forward fifteen years and PES has almost disappeared from collective consciousness

while FIFA has increasingly incorporated elements from that "unrealistic" Japanese game and labelled them as innovations (jockeying, tactical defending and timed finishing were all PES features back in the day). However, their inclusion in recent years with specific developments for 20 in areas like defending (game now favours manual control and focuses on interceptions rather than final tackling), passing (passes through semi-crowded areas are more likely to be intercepted) and set-pieces (you can add spin, determine strength and direction of your free-kicks and as penalties) make the game more realistic overall, if not more difficult. With FIFA 20, players are tasked with re-learning these elements, and the slightly increased difficulty makes for a more challenging and ultimately rewarding experience.

The biggest change comes not in granular gameplay dynamics but in an all new game mode: Volta. Volta is FIFA's way of bringing back and incorporating the much adored FIFA Street games, and places a group of street footballers right in the middle of a fairly engaging story mode (albeit with

extremely annoying, obnoxious characters) while adding locations and gameplay to the Kick Off mode for some instant multiplayer fun. Volta is a fluid, fun experience that takes you beyond the repetitive 11-a-side matches of regulation football to put you in highly creative, extremely stylish and easily binged 3v3, 4v4, 4v4 rush and 5v5 scenarios. Volta adds another aspect of "simulation" gaming that FIFA sorely lacked in the past—similar to how Forza Motorsport makes you want to drive a Ford GT around a racetrack, an hour's worth of back to back Volta matches makes you want to call your mates and head to the futsal pitch.

Overall, FIFA 20 is as polished as ever—the music, the ambience and the general feeling of a licensed product (except for Juventus, who are now called Piemonte Calcio in game due to an exclusive rights deal signed with Pro Evo) makes the game a clear winner. As much of a winner as Manchester City, anyway. Just goes to show that if you throw enough cash at something, you'll win eventually.

SHAER REAZ

The gift of 5000 classic bangla songs

Tired of what's on the radio these days? Do you long for the olden days of Bangla music? Then this is the Bluetooth speaker you have been waiting for. The Saregama Carvaan 6 resembles a relic you'd find in your father's collection of old pictures and tapes, the unit is a thing of beauty. But what it offers is something that's hard to come by, a full 5000 song collection of classic Bangla songs from artists like Lata Mangeshkar, R. D. Burman, Bhupen Hazarika, Manna Dey and others. It even comes with a separate button on the front for mood selection and also Tagore, a playlist of classic Rabindra Sangeet songs.

The side panel lets you choose between Saregama, FM, Bluetooth and USB meaning that you can listen to your own choice of songs too. The other side has a volume slider while the front houses buttons labelled artiste, mood and of course Tagore. There's a big round knob in the middle of the device which you can use to sift through songs, moods and radio channels. There's an LCD display on the front, indicating battery life and the song that's playing.

Strangely enough, the sound itself is truly unlike modern bass heavy Bluetooth speakers so it makes listening to the pre-existing 5000 song playlist feel like a back to the past kind of scenario. There is a lot more emphasis on the mids with a kind of crackle



to accompany it. I cannot however recommend this speaker for people who just want a standard Bluetooth speaker but for anyone who wants to relive the classics, this is a must buy. The speaker is available in India for approximately Rs. 6,500/- (Rupees) and also in Bangladesh at Fahim Music for BDT. 16,000/-. Saregama also has a mini Bluetooth speaker and speakers preloaded with other playlists, such as, Hindi classics, exclusively Tagore, etc.

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