

TOGGLE

WEEKEND LIVING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

A publication of *The Daily Star*



Scan Please

Hotline: 16267
waltonbd.com

WALTON
Smart Fridge

BIGGER

BETTER

SMARTER

12 YEARS GUARANTEE

100% COPPER CONDENSER

PHthalate Free Gasket

ecoZON

NAANO

INVERTER

TiO₂

Real Tempered

CB

CE

RoHS

Energy Star

Green Mark

ISO 9001

ISO 14001

ISO 45001

UL

ULC

ULCS

At Walton we stand for **NUSDAT-UTS**

AMENDED Super Awards 2020

eplaza.waltonbd.com for online purchase

SpaceX to test its Super Heavy Booster rocket

US commercial aerospace company SpaceX has announced they're to flight test the Super Heavy booster part of its "Starship" Launch System.

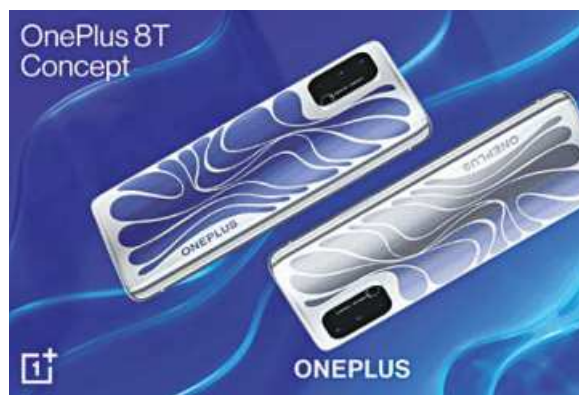
On Twitter, the company's CEO and founder Elon Musk noted that they are planning to make use of both of its launch pads at its Boca Chica development facility, with test starting as quickly as "a few months".

Starship, previously known as the "Interplanetary Launch System" is a two-part superheavy rocket system designed to carry a large payload into orbit. The eventual goal of this system is to carry colonists to Mars. Recently, the SN8 prototype of the crewed part of



the system successfully flew to an altitude of around 40,000 feet and then executed a crucial belly flop

maneuver. Although the unit was lost upon landing, SpaceX considers that test to be a major success.



OnePlus' new concept phone changes color to communicate with its user

Chinese smartphone manufacturer OnePlus' has unveiled a new concept phone capable of changing its body's colors.

Named the 8T Concept, the back of the phone is coated with an "Electronic Color, Material and Finish" (ECMF) film. When voltage is applied, the film changes from dark blue to light silver. Additionally, the phone can use mmWave technology to capture a user's breathing pattern and can apply the same pattern to its ECMF film.

The company claims their designers "took inspiration for these colors from the multi-hued flowing water in the hot springs of Pamukkale, Turkey.", and by "drawing inspiration from Pamukkale and other natural elements, we can craft new interaction experiences that are more natural, intuitive, and effortless."

Oneplus suggests the technology can be used to notify the user of incoming calls, messages, and other updates.

Realme rolls out the narzo 20 smartphone in Bangladesh

Chinese smartphone maker realme has officially launched the narzo 20 smartphone through an online launching event on Monday, December 28th.

3-finger screenshot, dark mode soothing and a lot more. The new UI will also enable better battery backup with super power-saving mode. The Dual Mode Music



The latest phone of the narzo series, the 20 features the Helio G85 processor, 48 MP AI triple camera on the back and an 6,000mAh battery with Type-C 18W quick charge. The phone's 6.5-inch mini-drop display has an 88.7% screen-to-body-ratio while the AI triple camera with big aperture can capture low light photos.

The Helio chipset is optimized with upgraded Realme UI and comes with

Share to enjoy the same song or video in more than one device. It also has a Focus Mode to isolate from all the noises of the outer world and relax.

In contrast to the previously launched entry-level C series smartphones, the narzo series focuses on powerful gaming at a more accessible price point. The narzo 20 will be released in two colours —Silver Sword and Blue Blade—, with an asking price of BDT 13,990.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Bring it on

Wow. That went fast. 2020 was a blur of "will it, won't it" questions. Everything we knew went flying in the wind. We had to relearn how to live and survive. Thank you but no thank you, Covid.

Except, it shook us out of our complacency. We learned to be more efficient. We spent more time with family, not to mention perhaps also fight more than before. But we grew closer to family, no doubt. And youth groups stepped up to offer fast solutions to problems that no one faced before.

Will we survive? Here we are at the new starting point. It's all about doing more with much less.

We definitely grew up in 2020. So here's to some more.

Bring it on.

-Ehsanur Raza Ronny, Editor

TOGGLE

Editor and Publisher
Mahfuz Anam

Editor (TOGGLE)
Ehsanur Raza Ronny

Team
Zarif Faiaz
Rahbar Al Haq
Nahaly Nafisa Khan
Shahriar Rahman

Graphics
DS Creative Graphics

Production
Shamim Chowdhury

Published by the Editor from Transcraft Ltd, 229, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1000.

TechBits



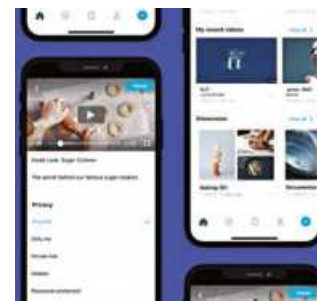
New York Times launches AR-enabled crossword on Instagram

NASA opens new launchpad at Kennedy Space Center for commercial customers



China probes Alibaba over alleged anti-competition practices

Vimeo to become independent, parent company IAC announced



Nikola terminates its contract to make 2,500 electric garbage trucks

Watch the perfect webinar

FAISAL BIN IQBAL



With all the seminars and recently webinars happening around you every month, how can you decide which ones you should attend and which ones you could miss out on? Here's a set of questions you should be asking yourself before you decide to sign up for a seminar as an attendee.

What's it about?

The first thing you need to take note of is the title or topic of discussion. Go through the content the seminar plans on covering. If it's something that is related to your field of study or work or interests you in any other way, feel free to go for it.

Does it add to your existing knowledge?

Always try to attend seminars that talk about the latest trends in your line of work or study. Go for the ones that will expose you to new ideas or things you were previously unaware of. As long as the seminar has something valuable to add to your existing knowledge, you can give it a shot.

Who's speaking?

There's a high chance that the speakers at the seminar aren't that well known or famous on social media. But that doesn't mean that what they've to offer will be valueless. If you're not familiar with the speaker/s, you can always Google them. You're sure to find something about them. In case you don't, you're free to have your doubts. However, the case for motivational seminars is a bit different. You can never know who or what can really motivate you until you hear them out. Can you manage the time?

Take a good look at the date and time of the event. See if you can make time for it or not. If you're really

looking forward to the seminar, you should be able to manage the time for it no matter how packed your schedule is.

Is it worth your money?

Seminars don't usually charge you money for taking part in them, especially if they're arranged by the institution you're studying or working in. However, there are many seminars that will cost you a certain amount. Whether the seminar is worth your money or not will once again depend on who'll be speaking, what you can take away from the seminar, and what impact it will have on you. The venue of the event, and other amenities the seminar plans on providing, will also influence the price of the tickets. But when it comes to such knowledge-sharing events, it's better to determine the event's value based on what it's going to provide you from a knowledge point of view, rather than the materialistic gains. However, no matter how good the speakers or amenities are, avoid attending seminars that will trouble your wallet.

THE BOSSMAN

BY E. RAZA RONNY

ER, WHY YOU HIDING UNDER THE TABLE DURING NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS?



I DON'T WANT THE TERRIBLE 2020 TO FIND ME HERE IN 2021.



YOU BETTER PREPARE FOR MAKING ME SOME BIG BUCKS. YOU WON'T ALWAYS SEE BAD THINGS LIKE A BAD YEAR COMING AT YOU.



শাৰাশ বাংলাদেশ!

স্বপ্নের পদ্মা সেতুর শুরু থেকে শেষ
আমরা ছিলাম, আছি, থাকবো অনিশ্চেষ্ট।

দেশের ১ নম্বর স্টিল এক্সপার্ট

BSRM
building a safer nation

Six exciting EV's coming to market in 2021

RAHBAR AL HAQ

Mazda MX-30

Let's start with something that has a slight chance of making it here. The Mazda MX-30 is the company's first foray into the electrified car market, and in many ways is a distant cousin of the beloved RX-8. How? Well aside from sharing its suicided door with the rotary legend, MX-30's design priorities sportiness over range. The

35.5-kWh battery gives the car a range of approximately 262 kilometers, while the 107 kW motor makes 145 HP and 271 Newton meters of torque. 0-100 takes 9.7 seconds and Mazda's G-Vectoring Control gives this relatively lightweight EV actual sporty handling. Granted, the \$35,000 sticker is a bit high, but it still has better odds of making it here than all the cars in this list, BUET willing.



Mustang Mach-E

While Mazda made their SUV sporty, the blue oval made theirs confusing. Not the car itself per se, but rather its nameplate. The Ford Mustang Mach-E shares its name with the legendary family of ICE muscle coupe, despite not having a single thing common with it. With that said, the five-door compact

crossover is very well equipped and quite a looker for what it is. Moreover, the car's two electric motors generate a healthy 346 HP and 428 pound-feet of torque with a 0-100 of 4.8 seconds. The sticker price of \$44,000 is only slightly under a Mustang Bullitt, which can reach 0-100 in 4.2 seconds. Maybe Ford was right to call this a Mustang after all.



Audi RS e-tron GT

From confusing to mysterious, we have a car from Audi that has yet to make its official debut but has already entered production. What we do know is this four-door luxury sedan shares its platform with the Porsche Taycan and will be the first EV actually built in Germany. The twin-motor powering this machine outputs 684 HP and 612 pound-feet of torque,

with a 0-100 of 3.5 seconds. To keep all that power on the road, Audi also borrowed Taycan's four-wheel steering and complemented three-chamber air springs with multiple adjustable modes. There are rumors of a three motors version on the pipeline, but until that becomes official, this is the fastest electric Audi you can buy. Assuming you can afford the \$100,000 price tag.



Lucid Air

Moving from mainstream brands to startups, the new California based EV Automaker Lucid is set to release its first production sedan to market this year. Dubbed the "Air", the car was meant to be a better Model S, designed to be faster, quicker, and most importantly, luxurious. And if reports are to be believed, they

succeeded. The interior is fitted with bigger screens, better seats, and the largest cabin in its class. As for performance, the \$165,000 launch edition will make around 1,000 HP with a 0-100 of 2.5 seconds. It seems one of the "Tesla killers" finally made it past the development hell and keep good on its promise, though at double the price of a base model S.



Tesla Cybertruck

Speaking of Tesla, Elon Musk's personal pet project is set to hit the market this year. There isn't much more we can say about this stainless steel battering ram that hasn't been said already, but here a refresher. The truck looks nothing like anything else currently on the road, and that's mainly because of how it was built. Unlike a normal car, the has not of unibody construction

but an exoskeleton made out of 30X Cold-Rolled stainless-steel. This literally bulletproof material is really hard to change shape, meaning the designer had to make some aesthetic compromises. On the bright side, they have ended up with a \$39,900 truck that will wreck through anything, and can probably withstand the storms on Mars. Maybe that was Elon's plan all along?



Lotus Evija

Switching the flavor of crazy, Lotus's first electric Hypercar will finally come out this year. Delayed by Corona, the 1,973 HP quad motor, carbon fiber monocoque, limited edition ride will be the faster Lotus ever made. 0-100 is reported to be under 3 seconds and

a top speed of over 300 km/h. Lotus is only planning to make 130 of these lightning fast beauties, each going for somewhere between \$1.8 and \$2.5 million. And if you think the price is astonishing, better sit down, because all the car coming out this year has already been sold out.

The biggest tech flops of 2020

NOMROTA SARKER

2020 was a year when people got closer to technology more than ever, solely due to the coronavirus pushing the mass to get acquainted with it. Work from home, upsurge of mobile and PC gaming, increased usage of social media platforms has integrated tech into almost everything we do. But if anything this year has helped us see clearly, is the fact that the internet and the global tech community has been more divided than ever, over feuds on Android vs. iOS, shutdowns vs. opening of the economy, masks vs. anti-masks and a lot more.

Coronavirus has infected over 70 million people around the world, and forced an economic shutdown eliminating jobs and shutting down businesses for good. While the global tech industry saw a ray of hope during the beginning of this year, its backlashes equally generated some intense chaos, riots and much more.

Here's a list of some of the biggest tech flops of 2020 that made headlines and affected lives, businesses and had all of us talking about it.

The spread of misinformation in social media platforms

In the beginning of lockdown and during the whole quarantine period, the spread of misinformation and hoaxes is worth mentioning. The borderline mass hysteria had cost businesses, communities and individuals go through unnecessary difficulties. But soon after the companies became cautious about this and responded by introducing new policies to combat these occurrences. But some of these hoaxes had gained so much traction that news portals had to 'debunk' them and only the trusted and verified sources were allowed to make such content. For a walk down memory lane, some of the misinformation included:

Bill Gates somehow being the person behind coronavirus or using the pandemic to implant microchips into people. This was particularly jarring because he has spent years supporting causes to fight diseases and helped develop a faster COVID-19 test.

5G being linked to the spread of coronavirus

Conspiracy theorists claiming coronavirus being an elaborate hoax itself Facebook, Twitter and YouTube sincerely tackled this and got more aggressive during the US election, flagging posts from anyone - including the US President Donald Trump - who reportedly tried to spread misinformation. Some drama!

Twitter's scary hack and 'racist' algorithms

With hackers being active this year more than ever, one of the biggest and scariest hacks of this year is undoubtedly the hack of high-profile Twitter accounts that snagged Bill Gates, Barack Obama, Elon Musk, Kanye West and other noteworthy tech executives, entertainers and politicians. The hackers reportedly perpetrated this massive hack to push a Bitcoin scam.

Twitter ended up locking down all

verified accounts before getting a handle on the incident. While this attack was just about money, it raised the question of what would've happened had someone even more nefarious had taken control of either of the president's Twitter accounts. The company, for its part, announced stronger privacy and security policies later on.

On the other hand, the company also had to publicly apologize for its "racist" image cropping algorithm, after users discovered the feature was automatically focusing on white faces over black ones. Twitter has long automatically cropped images to prevent them taking up too much space on the main feed, and to allow multiple pictures to be shown in the same tweet. The company uses several algorithmic tools to try to focus on the most important parts of the picture, trying to ensure that faces and text remain in the cropped part of an image. But it was cropping out black faces while keeping the white ones in the photo only.

Microsoft's letdowns and Intel's fall

Microsoft made waves when it signed

companies in Asia to manufacture chips to client specifications.

The more transistors that a chipmaker can fit into the same space, the more efficient a chip is. Currently, Intel ships chips with 10-nanometer transistors, but dedicated foundries, like TSMC, are now making 5-nanometer chips, which are technically superior. With Microsoft and Apple moving on with their own processors, will Intel be able to gain back its momentum?

Apple's many moods

2020 was a big year for Apple as it had released macbooks with its own M1 processors and a line of iPhone 12 phones.

But what has some consumers more worked up is the company's decision to omit a power adapter and EarPods in its line of iPhone 12 phones. Apple argued that it was about being environmentally friendly and that consumers already have older EarPods and power bricks lying around at home. But ironically, Apple was making its transition to a USB-C cable this year, meaning those older power bricks are



esports and streaming star Ninja to a \$50 million exclusive deal to play on Mixer. The next time 'Mixer' was mentioned was when it was shut down in June, freeing Ninja and other high-profile streamers to go back to Twitch.

The heavily hyped Microsoft Surface Duo, a "foldable" phone made of two discrete displays that was years in the making and was set to potentially start a new mobile device trend had also let its followers down. The unique design was paired with "lots of rough edges and unsatisfying experiences," according to tech reviewer Scott Stein.

According to CNBC, Intel shares dropped as much as 6% on the 18th of December after a Bloomberg report that Microsoft plans to design its own chips for its Surface laptops and desktops as well as servers. The report came after a month of Apple releasing their own M1 processor, instead of using Intel chips. Intel has had challenges with manufacturing its chips in recent years. Intel controls its own chip factories, called "fabs," as compared to other chip designers, which contract with

useless.

Apple also made a big deal of all the advances that come from its M1-powered MacBooks, but it somehow missed out on upgrading the webcams that are the same old 720p resolution. In the new normal being all about Zoom, Google Meet and frequent video calls, having a front-facing camera on par with the iPhone would've been really helpful.

The latest iteration of Apple's MacOS, Big Sur, also uncovered that a security feature sent user's IP addresses to the iPhone maker each time they opened an app, effectively tying the user's location to data about their computer usage. Worse, the information was sent to Apple without encryption.

The discovery sparked an understandable furor, in part because VPNs couldn't be used to defeat the IP address collection. Apple subsequently said it would stop collecting IP addresses through the security feature and delete any that it had collected.

Next Generation Consoles

2020 was supposed to be a big year

for gaming. With the arrival of the PlayStation 5 and Xbox Series X and Series S, and the long awaited release of Cyberpunk 2077, it is. But that doesn't mean the gaming world didn't see its share of flops. The next-generation consoles were poised to be hot items this holiday - but maybe too hot. The limited supplies might make gamers wait for a bit too long. The PS5 went on preorder without any notice, despite Sony saying it'd give ample warning. Moreover, the new standard price for next-generation games appears to be \$10-\$70 more than the previous generation. That too, in a world dealing with recession and massive unemployment. On the other hand, Microsoft's big launch title for the Series X, Halo Infinite, was delayed after initial gameplay was widely termed as 'unpolished and incomplete'.

Marquee AAA title Cyberpunk 2077 getting delayed was bad enough, but gamers were heated up enough to send death threats to the developers. Moreover, the game hasn't lived up to the hype it created for eight years, according to gamers and reviewers. There was light-hearted mockery of the respective designs of the new consoles as well. The PS5 is definitely a statement piece, while the Xbox Series X was content to make memes with.

The "Epic" battle with Apple and Google Epic set up a direct payment system for its Fortnite users that cut out Apple and Google. This enraged Apple and Google and the giants responded by pulling the game from their respective app stores. According to CNET, this triggered a lawsuit and a campaign from Epic shedding light on the industry-standard practice of charging developers up to a 30% commission for being on the stores. Apple and Google reportedly argued that Epic had violated the guidelines put in place to ensure a safe app store experience.

Regardless of it all, the consumers had to suffer, with no new access to Fortnite. The trial likely won't happen until July 2021, according to California Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers in an interview with CNBC.

Samsung's Neon AI

A Neon is an artificially intelligent digital avatar that was meant to mimic real human appearance and emotions. It's envisioned as a highly lifelike companion that has its own personality and can converse and behave like humans. Neons can also remember and learn.

Being one of the most buzzed-about names at CES 2020 - the extravagant trade show, that feels like a lifetime ago. Samsung partly funding this event along with its promise of ultra-realistic-looking computer-generated people helped people to remember and talk about this event.

The actual demo found them to be less realistic, and more creepy and janky, with the CG models offering stilted AI answers, according to a report published in CNET. So much for the hype of AI.

Five cool techs from the world of Cyberpunk 2077

RAHBAR AL HAQ

Under all the bugs and glitches, the world of Cyberpunk is filled to the brim with amazing technology. From the bionic arms to massive flying ships, the technology of Cyberpunk almost makes you forget about the dystopic Night city actually is. Here are the five techs from cyberpunk that we think stand out from the rest.



Cyberware

Let's start with the obvious one. The defining feature of the Cyberpunk 2077 universe is the huge proliferation of cybernetic prosthetics. It seems ever people in night city have traded bits of their flesh for a shiny piece of chrome, while a select few have replaced their entire skin with them. From a simple chip slot to complete Immune system enhancements, these man-made body parts have allowed people to become

faster, stronger or at the very least regain lost physical capability. That said, all these amazing technologies do come at a cost. In addition to the large numbers of Eddies need to buy these Cyberware, an overload of cybernetic augmentations might result in Cyberpsychosis. Those afflicted with Cyberpsychosis have a tendency to be extremely damaging to everyone around them and the affected person never truly recovers.

Alternative Reality Process (Braindance)

As depressing as it sounds, being able to live another person's life is something we wished for at least once in our life. Well, that's precisely what braindance does. According to the official literature, Braindance (BD) are immersive virtual reality and sonic complexities that allow users to fully and realistically experience an alternate reality. A person's recorded

thoughts, memories, and physical sensations all can be experienced by the users. Want to know how your favourite actress felt while revving an award or how did that race car driver cross the finish line first? Get yourself to a BD arcade and start reliving that exact same moment! That said, however, a braindance is not an interactive experience, you are just along for a ride. For those who do want control, there's the following tech.



The Net

The internet in Cyberpunk 2077 is wildly different from the one we use today. For starters, it's a lot more interactive. The net in Night City can be experienced in 3 dimensions, using a complex cybernetic interface called a cybermodem. Users of cybermodem are called Netrunners, skilled hackers who can use and navigate through the information highway faster than any no modem user could. To reference another of Keanu Reeve's works, the net is like Matrix. Everything on the net is fully interactive, and there is a lot of variety in what you can do. From playing simple video games to advance hacking, everything in the new happens as if you're really there and not seeing it through a monitor. It also a lot more dangerous. The new in cyberpunk is anything but safe, and is filled with malicious software and maybe rouge AI's. Getting into trouble in the net extremely unhealthy for Netrunners, if not outright lethal.

Aerodyne (AV)

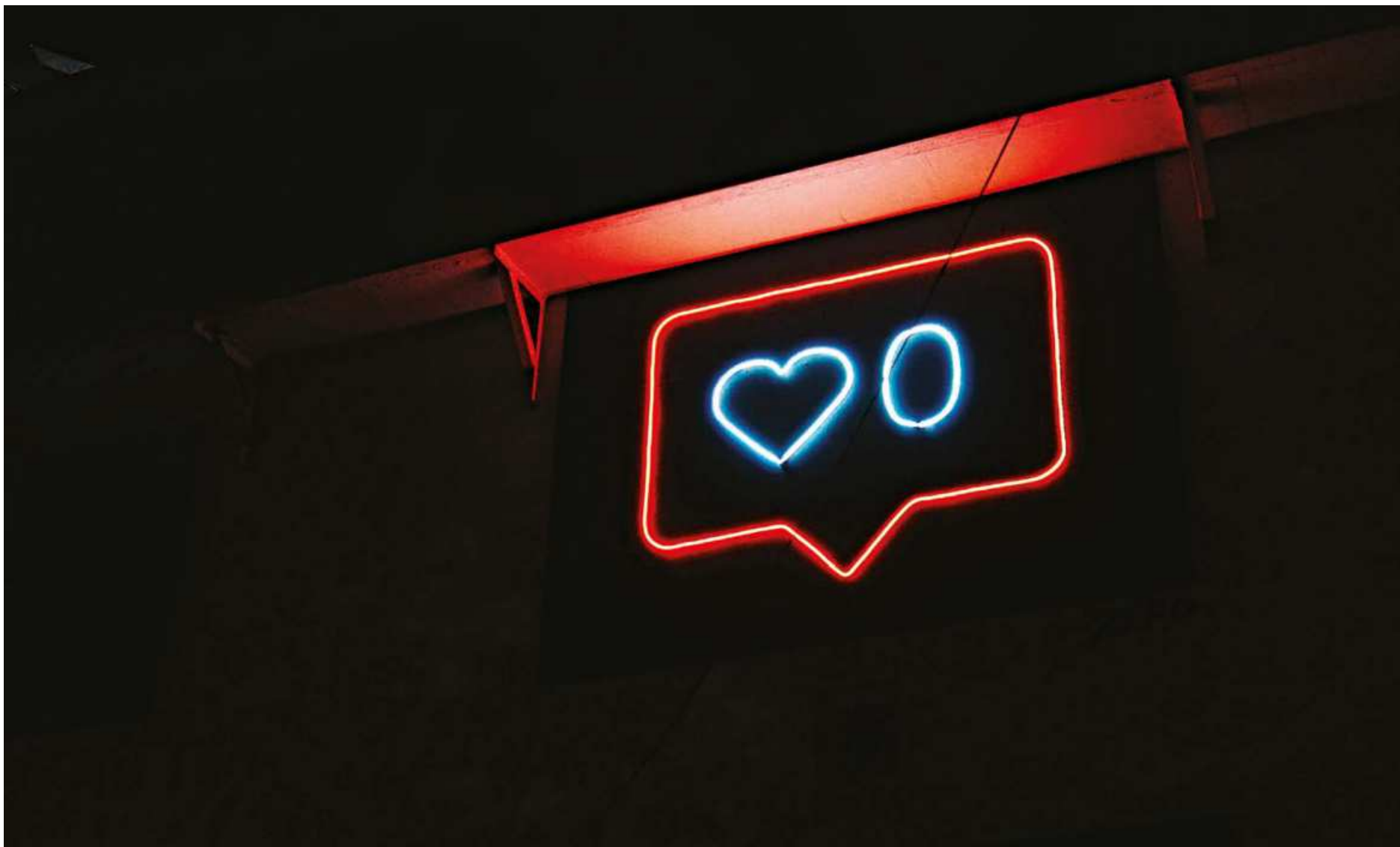
While flying cars are becoming a thing in the real world, they are nowhere as cool and sophisticated as the ones found dotting the Night city skyline. From the opulent Rayfield Excalibur to the utilitarian Zetatech Atlas all these flying vehicles are capable are mostly silent, automated, and capable of taking off and landing anywhere. In-universe, they are of course reserved only for the most obscenely wealthy, making them some of the coolest in-game vehicles we can not drive.



Crystal dome windshield

As much as we appreciate the big glass windows on our cars, they are quite bothersome. They are quite susceptible to rock chip and other fast-flying objects, are quite expensive to replace in the event of a crack. Moreover, the glassworks two ways, meaning privacy isn't an option and heavy tints can only do so far before becoming completely impractical. Enter the crystal dome technology, a wraparound internal screen that takes over the place of the windshield, giving the users complete privacy and not having to worry about rock chips while on a road trip. In addition, the screen can double as a massive instrument cluster and allow a car to reach high speed without having to worry about the glasses blowing out. Why isn't this a real-world thing yet?





Notifications are killing you

ISRAR HASAN

It is hard to make a distance from technology in our day and age where we are completely swamped into its daily usage. From hustling and grinding at work to organizing events to even going on dates, our worlds of complete and utter spontaneity seem to be enmeshed with the world of technology, especially, in this case, social media.

The constant ping-pongs and pop-ups have become deeply embedded into our everyday mode of living causing a flow of untrammelled daily minute by minute reminders of various sorts from messages from friends, family, work, and the bank to update notifications to reminders by the apps to use them. Overall, all this seems to be overwhelming at times leading to the loss of energy and direction amid pandemonium and chaos looming large.

Becoming a screen slave

There needs to be the gateway to channel the proper energies in the direction needed. The gradual effect of consecutive notifications does not only act as an instrument of distraction but also affects focus and performance and puts an extra layer of pressure to act upon all the notifications (At times, looking at it simply does not suffice).

Atoshie, a student of Business

Administration at BRAC University, calls notifications, "a nuisance and constant distraction that veer a person away from the balancing of work". Social media is an integral part of the workplace and in some instances, she allows selective notification detox with muting off friends and family off to clear some space to concentrate or ponder the new train of work she wants to channel her full energy into. Furthermore, notifications are a constant hurdle to honing one's skills in a particular hobby. It swaps the attention away and nudges in between deep moments of concentration.

While it is generally difficult to keep away from social media as important work and familial transactions of conversations and duty calls take place, notification detox is easier. Some do it selectively. Some go all the way muting all notifications, just keeping a watchful eye on their space. Khalid, a recent graduate working in an MNC, says, "During all the chaos running in life, social media makes it worse and more stressful. There is no need for needless chatter. Notification detox ultimately helps me to bring a bit of order to my chaotic world".

Digitising the detox

The solutions of the problems posed

by social media at times are found within the annals of social media itself. Apps like Space and Freedom can be downloaded on the phone as an aid to personalize and customize your relationship with your phone's apps allowing a more balanced composure. A balanced lifestyle is in all of our favours with limited and necessary interaction with the phone and its numerous beguiling apps, rather than crippling addiction now and then. Freedom helps to block websites and apps that constantly badger you with notifications and updates allowing space to focus. Space allows a replacement icon for the apps you need a break from paving the way for a change in habit with fewer notification distractions and managed screen time.

There is often a lot of email clutter from places which we do not want to have any further affiliation with, those can easily be unsubscribed. Apps like Spark come in handy to keep zero emails unread and remove the unnecessary email clutter by combining all the email accounts in one place. It notifies you with emails from people you know.

Finding new hobbies

Fast forward to the era of the pandemic

where work from home has largely become the norm, notification detox has become largely impossible with constant reliance on social media platforms for work updates and communication. In such times, it is important to have a mental demarcation of important and unimportant screen time and one way to do this to shut notifications off from apps that are not needed using the apps mentioned above. Customize them according to schedule and place. One other route to get away from a barrage of notifications is to have calls rather than have a slew of notifications piled up. An important part of notification detox is to read books and thus reduce screen time as well as the anxiety induced by notifications.

There are reminders which can be set on the phone as well to remind us of taking a break to immerse ourselves in other leisure activities be it cooking to spending some quality time with the family to just in general giving time to yourself. One can manually turn off notifications from the apps themselves to set them on a break. Such micro scheduling during the day acts as boosts and relaxation periods for all of us.

Video essays are the new art form: Our top 5 picks

ISRAR HASAN

Due to malleability and expansion of the internet, a new form of art form – the video essay – has picked up a lot of traction using audio-visuals to provide deep-seated commentary on a wide range of issues. While the initial focus of video essays has been on films, video essays have been used to analyze a plethora of ideas in the realm of diverse intersections between pop culture and the real world. Here are a few of the top video essays of the year you should look at: Nothing at Stake

Directed by one of the prime video essayists of our time, Kogonada, this is a beguiling and insightful look into the works of one of the great directors of our time, Alfonso Cuarón. A wonderfully furnished and crafted video essay just under 10 minute with spell binding narration, Kogonada dissects the intensely personal films in Alfonso's career ranging from Children of Men to Gravity to Roma. Exploring the deeply contested ideas of day-to-day existence of his films' characters amidst political turmoil, the video essay highlights the themes of life, death, and rebirth – the prominent themes embedded in each of Alfonso's time. A truly deeply personal watch.

The Bizarre Modern Reality of Sonic the Hedgehog

Super Eyepatch Wolf is known for creating deeply reflective videos, which encompass the fictional and lived experiences of pop-culture characters. Imbued with love, passion and depth, the video as the name suggests, looks at Sonic, the gaming mascot of SEGA and a major trademark of our lives growing up. This

video is well edited and well researched and using a set of critical lens of openness and sincerity, he delves into the trappings of the journey of what made Sonic a beloved figure catering to rebellious teens to its subsequent downfall and failures by SEGA, and how Sonic the Hedgehog has kept its voice alive through its fan base - through their amazingly fan-made games to grotesque erotic art. In a battle between the gaming consoles and the fans, the



video essay also highlights the importance of the voice of fans when it comes to the resurrection of beloved franchises, particularly, in the example of 2020's hit film, Sonic the Hedgehog.

Why VR is NOT an empathy machine
Video essays have long been used to push forward arguments using a constellation

of clips and fragments to demonstrate the urgency of the argument itself. Tackling the claim made by a famous documentary filmmaker on VR being an "empathy machine", this video essay supports the ideal of framing scenes of raw emotions to inoculate an authentic compassion for the characters on screen. As virtual reality makes headways into the art world, the video essay is a well-endowed crated piece of video graphic

criticism to analyze the arguments behind VR and counter arguments using audiovisuals, such as an engorging emotional scene of loneliness and helplessness from the film, "Babel". A nuanced form of storytelling, this is a rather educative look at the permeability of the different art forms spurred from advancements in technology.

Why hasn't Animated Horror Succeeded?

Horror has long been a longstanding genre in cinema and animation a medium catering to it. Although, despite animation's ongoing success with other (subcultural) genres, the relationship between the two has never symbiotic. This video essay highlights a labor of artistic storytelling behind one of cinema's long standing questions. Using definitions of horror from film theorists, the video essay is a calm piece with a clear narration and a mosaic of snippets and illustrations throughout history displaying the numerous synthesized attempts in integrating horror with animation. Asking why the horror genre has failed despite promising starts with animation, the video essays provides a introspective look into the history, economics, structures, and censorship that have posed challenges to the horror genre in an animated medium.

Bong Joon Ho's rampaging metaphors

Very few films have a chilling effect on our feelings and senses such as Bong Joon Ho's "Parasite". The master at teasing metaphors, often putting them at the climax of the film's plots, this video essay looks at the metaphors employed by one of world cinema's most enigmatic storytellers. Using mundane concepts of architecture to lively concepts of food and cuisine, each of the metaphors in Bong's films showcases a subtlety of ingrained issues in society ranging from late-stage capitalism to apathy to deeply entrenched social hierarchies.

Illustration: Zarif Faiaz

us on f /Sandalina

ঐতিহ্যের আর এক নাম আধুনিকতা
ঠিক যেমন রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য মানেই

স্যান্ডালিনা
সোপ

রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য...

KOHINOOR
CHEMICAL