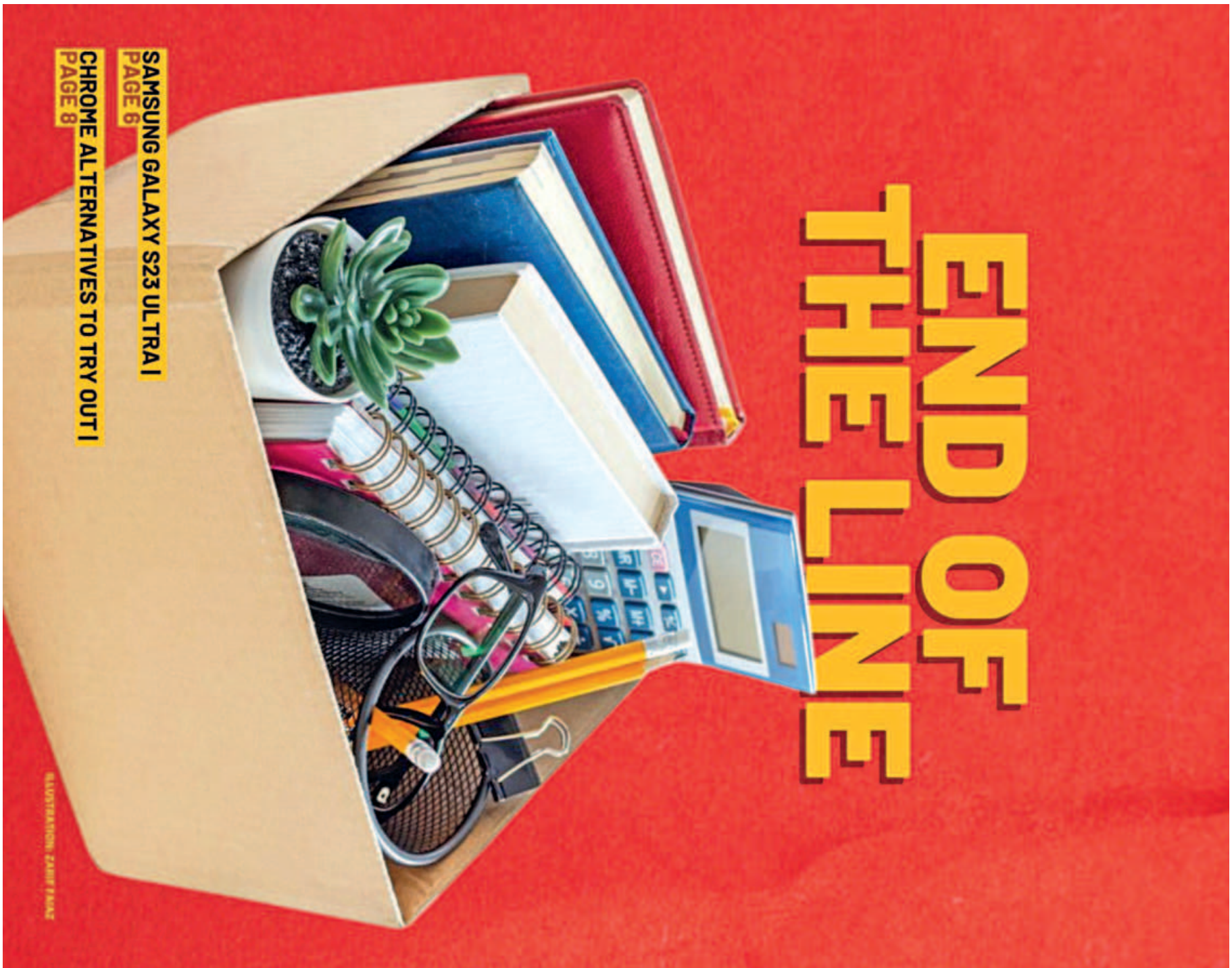


# TOGGLE

WEEKEND LIVING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

A publication of *The Daily Star*

# END OF THE LINE



**SAMSUNG GALAXY S23 ULTRA | PAGE 6**  
**CHROME ALTERNATIVES TO TRY OUT | PAGE 8**

ILLUSTRATION: ZAHIR HANAZ



**Terminates Bacteria & Keeps Food Fresh for Longer**



waltonbd.com | For Details: 16267 0800010297 (toll free)

**WALTON**  
Smart Fridge

**GI ionizer**  
INTELLIGENT GERM TERMINATOR

**30M50**  
INVERTER  
**12**  
Years  
SUNRAMTEE  
Compressor  
Condition Apply  
**SMART**  
REFRIGERATOR  
**IOT**

## Bangladeshis paying 7 times more for internet: report

Bangladeshis are paying 6.9x more for internet than the rest of the world. Global VPN provider Surf Shark recently released a report titled the Global Internet Value Index (IVI), which is a list that ranks countries based on how much its people are overpaying for internet access. Globally Bangladesh ranks 83rd, and regionally, ranks 3rd in the list.

The index examines whether people are getting what they're paying for. Bangladesh has an index of 0.0105, which is almost 86% lower than the global average. This translates that Bangladeshis are overpaying for the internet they are getting, and only 24% of the world overpaying more than Bangladesh.

India, the biggest neighbour of Bangladesh, ranks 44th in the list and regionally ranks 1st. Other neighbours of Bangladesh did not fare well in the ranking, i.e. Nepal ranks 77th, Sri Lanka ranks 96th, and Pakistan ranks 102nd in the world.

Surfshark released its Global Internet Value index (IVI), calculated by dividing each country's internet speed by internet affordability to figure out which countries are overpaying for their internet. Israel ranked 1st in the list, while Singapore and Denmark ranked 2nd and 3rd, respectively.

## Google fires about 450 employees in India, 190 in Singapore: reports

Google has recently fired around 450 employees in its Indian offices and around 190 employees in its Singaporean office. These rounds of layoffs are followed by Google CEO Sundar Pichai's announcement last month, which stated that the tech giant has planned to fire around 12,000 employees globally. In the initial announcement, Pichai clarified that US employees had been already notified and the termination process would take longer in other countries due to local laws and practices.

As per the Indian news magazine India Today, Google has sent termination letters to about 453 employees from several departments working in the Indian offices of Google, which are mostly situated in Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Gurugram. The report adds that as of yet, there's no clarification of severance packages being offered to the fired Indian employees. According to the Indian daily Hindustan Times, the fired Indian employees received a termination mail from Sanjay Gupta, Google India's Country Head and Vice President.

Furthermore, an estimated number of 190 employees have been fired



from Google's Singaporean office, states Singaporean news portals TODAY and Channel NewsAsia. As per the reports, the layoffs in Singapore began happening on February 16 night. At the time of writing, it is currently unclear exactly how many employees were fired, though insider sources report that the number is around 190.

Google's Asia-Pacific headquarters is currently situated in Mapletree Business City II, Singapore. According to an August 2022 blog post by Ben King, Managing Director at Google Singapore, the office had more than 3,000 employees.

## Twitter closes down two of three offices in India

Popular social media platform Twitter has recently closed down two of its three offices in India, according to a report by Bloomberg News. The affected offices were situated in New Delhi and Mumbai. The third and remaining Twitter office in India, situated in southern Bengaluru, is reportedly still operating. According to Bloomberg, the Bengaluru branch mostly consists of engineers working for the Elon Musk-owned company.



Late last year, soon after Elon Musk's \$44 billion acquisition, Twitter let go of more than 90% of its 200+ employees in India. Affected employees were from various departments, including engineering, communications and marketing. Right after getting control of the company, Elon Musk stated he was planning to fire about 3,700 Twitter employees, which then constituted about half of the entire workforce of Twitter.

## Indian-origin Neil Mohan is YouTube's new CEO

After 9 years of serving as the CEO of YouTube, Susan Wojcicki is now stepping down to make room for the Indian-origin Neil Mohan, who will be the new CEO of the world's largest video streaming site. She was one of Google's first employees and has spent almost 25 years working for parent company Alphabet Inc. In a blog post, Susan mentioned that she is stepping down to focus on "family, health, and personal projects I'm passionate about."

Former Chief Product Officer of YouTube Neil Mohan earned his electrical



engineering degree from Stanford. Neil was also a part of the team that launched YouTube TV, Premium, and Shorts. With

### EDITOR'S NOTE

## Survival of the fittest?

The wave of the global tech layoffs have made its way to the Bangladeshi startup scene as well. However, what do these layoffs mean for the local startups? What about the employees? Find out our take on layoffs and its consequences in today's Cover Story.

We often hear about the importance of work-life balance for a satisfactory life. However, we often overlook how work-life integration could be the solution for young professionals in this fast-paced world. This week's Next Step introduces you to work-life integration from the eyes of an HR professional.

You can also check out our first impressions on the new Samsung Galaxy S23 Ultra in today's Bytes. Read on to find out more in this week's edition of Toggle.

Have a good weekend everyone.

- Tanzid Samad Choudhury  
Sub-Editor

## TOGGLE

**Editor and Publisher**  
Mahfuz Anam

**Editor (Toggle)**  
Shahriar Rahman

**Team**  
Zarif Faiaz  
Shams Rashid Tonmoy  
Tanzid Samad Choudhury

**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.



## Walton launches new model of TAKYON e-bike

Walton Digi-Tech Industries Limited has launched a new model of its TAKYON electric bike. The eco-friendly TAKYON Leo e-bike comes in three versions which can run for 40-80 kilometres on a single charge for only 6-8 hours, claims a press handout.

Currently, a total of four versions from two models of Walton e-bikes are available in the market. With its portable charger, the e-bike can be charged from the 220-volt power line used in regular residences.

The TAKYON Leo has three versions with 12Ah, 20Ah, and 23Ah batteries. The price of the 12Ah version is Tk. 49,850 and it will run for 40 kilometres on a single charge. The 20Ah version will provide 70-kilometre mileage and it is priced at Tk. 56,850. The 23Ah version is priced at Tk. 59,850 and it will run for 80 kilometres on a single charge, according to the press release.

this move, Neil will join a growing group of elite CEOs of US-based multinational corporations who are of Indian descent, including Satya Nadella, the CEO of Microsoft, Shantanu Narayen, the CEO of Adobe, and Sundar Pichai, the CEO of Alphabet.

YouTube's brown roots go way back to the very beginning of the platform. Jawed Karim, one of the co-founders of YouTube, was a German and Bangladeshi-American software developer working in the United States. He was also the first user to upload a video to YouTube.

# Working nine to thrive: an intro to work-life integration

SYEDA ADIBA ARIF

Stepping into the fourth year of my corporate career as an HR professional, I've been reflecting on my fair share of triumphs and struggles that have each contributed to moulding my perspective and building my resilience. Of all things, I am most pleased of making conscious efforts to focus on my career without compromising on the people and things that matter to me outside work. It was last year that I acquainted myself with 'work-life integration', initially being sceptical and gradually embracing the merits of the concept.

Work-life integration happens when career, family, community & well-being become non-mutually exclusive, meaning while some of the areas of these four elements can exist independently, many coexist & intersect. Unlike 'work-life balance', the concept transcends from the separation of work and life to maintaining a healthy blend between the demands and responsibilities of the two. Here are some of the key enablers of 'work-life integration'.

## Flexible work

Flexible work refers to fluidity in terms of when, where and how professional obligations are fulfilled. It leads to increased productivity, greater control of the work schedule and improved well-being. If your workplace offers a flex work policy, that includes work from home (WFH) on certain days of the week, it is an excellent opportunity to exercise greater flexibility in your way of work. Personally, I've opted for WFH once a week, aligned with the policy at my workplace. This helped me save time on my commute on those days, and allowed for an increased grip on my day.

A smart approach would be to utilise work-from-office days on tasks and projects that benefit from face-to-face collaboration, and WFH days on those that require a distraction-free environment conducive to thinking, ideating and strategising. As for the

practicability of WFH itself, I believe those who have the compatible infrastructure, yet are still in the 'I can't work with WFH' mindset, should make an active effort to embrace this new reality and find solutions that work for them. Do be wary of the fact that WFH can present its own set of challenges and present a high derailment risk if you don't have rigid boundaries and discipline in place. However, with the right attitude, it is possible to find success working remotely.

## Consistent time-offs

Surprisingly, employees often stockpile all their paid annual leaves & utilise them only at the end of the year. Unsurprisingly, this leads to high burnout throughout the year that a long break at the end of the year simply can't make up for. On the contrary, taking time offs consistently leads to enhanced well-being, heightened innovation and spiked energy levels, all contributing to better delivery. A nifty way of planning time-offs could be by mapping bridge holiday opportunities and national holidays against your paid holiday quota. You should ideally do this at the beginning of the year to fully use up your quota, but do reserve a few to be used on an ad hoc basis. By planning in advance, I managed to squeeze in 4 overseas vacations and multiple domestic trips last year, allowing me to stay refreshed throughout the year. If you don't have an appetite for travelling, do

use your time-offs for things that give you fulfilment.

Invest in self-development within and outside work, and spend quality time with your family, friends, loved ones, and most importantly with yourself. Consistent time-offs can create an enabling environment for anything that is an outside-work priority for you, such as working on your relationships, learning a new skill or two, reconnecting with a forgotten hobby or even spending a perfectly splendid day with nothing to do.

## Well-being

People often tend to deprioritise well-being in the chaos and grind surrounding a demanding job, but it's very crucial that well-being occupies a focal point in one's goals for the year. There are several facets to well-being and while occupational well-being has the most relevance to work-life integration, other facets such as social, emotional, physical and mental well-being are also of high significance. These can also include personal prompts to being 'well' in your own unique way. In any case, start with basics such as eating healthy, staying hydrated and getting optimum sleep. One of the most efficient ways to improve the quality of your life at work is to carefully choose work allies who you trust with matters of significance, who challenge and grow you, serve as a sounding board for ideas and provide confidential support when need be.

No matter how packed your calendar is, try and find time to take short breaks throughout the day, connect with coworkers you appreciate and practice mindfulness. Besides, something that really helped me last year was to leverage the existing initiatives at work to reconnect with old passions such as music and sports. If your workplace has well-being initiatives in place, do try and participate in whatever appeals to you and brings you joy at work.

To conclude, I will recommend Sir John Whitmore's GROW (Goal, Reality, Options and Way Forward) model as a very useful tool to get you started on achieving your desired work-life integration. Identify your 'Goal' from said integration, assess 'Reality' on where you are now and what is possible in your current situation, determine what 'Options' you have to achieve your goal and commit your 'Way forward' to crafting an integrated work-life for yourself.







The country's only customized steel solution

**FASTBUILD PROVIDES  
RODS OF ANY SHAPE AND  
SIZE AS PER DESIGN**



**BSRM**  
building a safer nation

# The Audi Activesphere concept - Unorthodox in automation

ARFIN KAZI

Audi has recently announced a new vehicle concept which can be perhaps one of the more unorthodox vehicles in terms of shape and utility. Audi's sphere concepts have always been a conversation piece, such as the Skysphere Roadster and UrbanSphere just to name a few. With the immense versatility of the body design and cutting-edge technology packed inside, Audi seems to spew new competition bending traditional car designs. Here's a quick look at Audi's new experimental yet innovative vehicle concept.

## Exterior

There are a lot of things the Activesphere does. On the outside, the Activesphere has an SUV-esque design with a steep roofline which makes it look like a fastback coupe. It also integrates a pickup truck-like bed where there is also a tailgate attached at the back. Furthermore, The lower section folds down exactly like a pickup truck, where the rear glass also slides up to reveal enough space where a pair of bikes can be stored.

In terms of size, the Audi Activesphere spans about 4.93 m in terms of longitude and about 2.07 m in width. Being 1.3 m long, it almost resembles an Audi Q8 in terms of length. When it comes to the front fascia, on either side of the steeple



we see a rather muted design. The headlights are like slits with curved DRLs inside, which Audi says comes with two-piece holographic HIDs, which at a glance, look like pupils. At the rear, the thin tail lights use ultra-



fine micro LED technology.

## Interior

When it comes to the interior where scissor doors opening on either side welcome the driver and passengers, the Activesphere redefines infotainment and the cabin as a whole in hindsight. For starters, the interior has no screens - not even a speedometer cluster, making it clean and minimal. Everything is controlled in terms of holograms and hand gestures backed with augmented reality. Audi provides four sunglasses-like headsets for access to augmented reality functions. When it comes to driving the car in autonomous mode, the steering and pedals disappear - giving a large, clean dash, with practically nothing.

## Specifications

The Audi Activesphere is a complete EV with the latest PPE (Premium Platform Electric) technology from Audi, packed

with a 100 kWh battery. The battery can be fast charged with 800 V chargers which can charge the car from 0 to 80 percent in nearly 25 minutes. With slow chargers, the battery can split into two and charge simultaneously for faster charging, which is enabled with the PPE technology. Other than that, the Activesphere pushes nearly about 370 kW of power along with 720 Nm of torque which is plenty from the two motors present in it.

## Verdict

The Audi Sphere concepts in general show us what to expect when it comes to cars in the near future. Since cars are starting to come out of the traditional designs, which mostly favoured cooling for the engine with aerodynamics in mind, electric motors have made possible more ways of shaping 4-wheelers due to fewer restrictions, and it goes to show whether we like it or not, the foreseeable future is electric.



# Mass layoffs in big tech What is even happening?

On Thursday, February 16, tech-giant Google laid off over 150 of its employees in Singapore, a part of a wider exercise of 12,000 layoffs worldwide. On February 17, Meta ranked thousands of its employees 'sub-par' in a performance review—a move many are considering as a 'background setting' for another wave of mass layoffs. Just a week before this, TikTok terminated the contracts of its 40 Indian employees, with many speculating the move as a 'retaliation' against the Indian government's decision to block the app in the country.

Combinedly the top tech companies—Meta, Microsoft and Google—have laid off around 50,000 staff all around the world in recent times, reports Forbes. All these layoffs may well be isolated incidents and each organisation may have their different reasonings, but there's one common thread that binds each of them: it's part of a distinct trend that has been recently sweeping through Silicon Valley.

The tech industry has long been seen as a beacon of innovation, constantly pushing the boundaries of what is possible through cutting-edge technology. However, in recent years, the industry has been plagued by a growing trend of mass layoffs. From small startups to large multinational corporations, tech companies of all sizes have been forced to let go of employees in droves, leaving many wondering why this is happening.

In May 2020, the ride-hailing company announced that it was cutting 3,700 jobs or around 14% of its global workforce. The move was part of a broader effort to reduce costs in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Another example is Airbnb, which announced in May 2020 that it was cutting around 1,900 jobs or about 25%

Companies are constantly adapting to new technologies and trends, which can lead to restructuring and downsizing. In some cases, companies merge with other firms, leading to redundancies in staff. In other cases, economic downturns may force companies to reduce their workforce to cut costs and remain competitive.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also had a significant impact on the tech industry, leading to a wave of layoffs across the sector. With many businesses struggling to stay afloat, companies have been forced to make difficult decisions about their staffing levels. Many have turned to mass layoffs to cut costs and preserve their bottom line.

But could there be more? A closer look at the race to develop their own AI may reveal an unsettling fact that these companies may simply just need more money. Microsoft recently invested heavily in ChatGPT to integrate it with its products and Google is on its way to launching its own AI with Bard.

"Over the past two years we've seen periods of dramatic growth. To match and fuel that growth, we hired for a different economic reality than the one we face today. I am confident about the

There is also the fact that just prior to the pandemic, the big tech companies were in a frenzied race to hire the top talents in the industry with lavish perks. In fact, the Silicon Valley lifestyle became somewhat of a myth. The companies also overspent on over-hiring and then the pandemic came with a reality check. However, once again, it was the junior employees who bore the brunt.

Automation and AI are also playing a role in replacing human employees. As AI and other forms of automation become more advanced, they are increasingly able to replace human workers in a variety of roles. For example, many companies are now using AI-powered chatbots to handle customer service inquiries, eliminating the need for human customer service representatives. Similarly, AI is being used to analyse vast amounts of data, making it possible to automate tasks that were previously performed by human analysts.

This trend is not limited to customer service and data analysis, however. Many tech companies are now looking to automate or outsource other roles, such as HR and marketing. This is because these roles are often seen as less critical to the success of the company, making them easier targets for automation or outsourcing. As a result, many employees in these roles are finding themselves out of a job, with no clear path forward.

The reasons behind these layoffs vary, but the consequences for those affected are significant and can be devastating. Many employees may find themselves without a job or a source of income, struggling to pay bills and support their families. For some, the experience can be traumatic, leading to feelings of depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem.

In addition to the personal toll, mass layoffs can also have wider economic consequences. When large numbers of people are laid off, it can lead to a decrease in consumer spending, as people become more cautious with their money. This, in turn, can have a ripple effect on other businesses, leading to further layoffs and economic contraction.

In response to the trend of mass layoffs, some tech companies have implemented programs to help affected employees. For example, some companies offer severance packages or outplacement services to help laid-off workers find new jobs. Others may provide job training or education programs to help workers develop new skills and transition to new careers.

As the tech industry continues to evolve, it is likely that we will see more mass layoffs in the coming years. While it is impossible to predict the exact reasons for these layoffs or the impact they will have, it is clear that they will continue to be a painful reality for many employees in the sector.



ILLUSTRATION:  
ZARIF FAIAZ

of its workforce. The company had been hit hard by the pandemic, with many customers cancelling their bookings and travel coming to a halt. The layoffs were seen as a necessary step to help the company weather the storm of the pandemic.

One of the primary reasons for mass layoffs in the tech industry is the ever-changing nature of the business.

huge opportunity in front of us thanks to the strength of our mission, the value of our products and services, and our early investments in AI. To fully capture it, we'll need to make tough choices," wrote Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai in a blog post.

Analysts fear that millions and billions are being invested in developing AI, but at the cost of the jobs of junior employees.

# SAMSUNG GALAXY S23 ULTRA

## Our first impressions

AHMAD TOUSIF JAMI

The Samsung S22 Ultra from 2022 was already a good phone, so the S23 Ultra, besides its many similarities, attempts to distinguish itself from a few different angles by introducing updated technology and designs.



At unboxing, the device box comes with a charger (25W fast charging Travel Adapter), exclusive to Bangladeshi and Brazilian customers. It also includes a user guide, a black USB-C to USB-C cable and a SIM ejection tool.

The S23 Ultra has a modern, sleek design. The device has a metal and glass construction, with a large 6.8-inch Dynamic AMOLED display that takes up most of the front screen. The display features an impressive 120Hz refresh rate. It also uses updated Gorilla Glass Victus 2 on the front and back of the device. According to Corning, the manufacturer of Gorilla Glasses, this glass provides better drop resistance on hard surfaces like concrete. The button placement and ports are in identical positions when compared to the S22 Ultra. On the right edge, there is the power button and volume

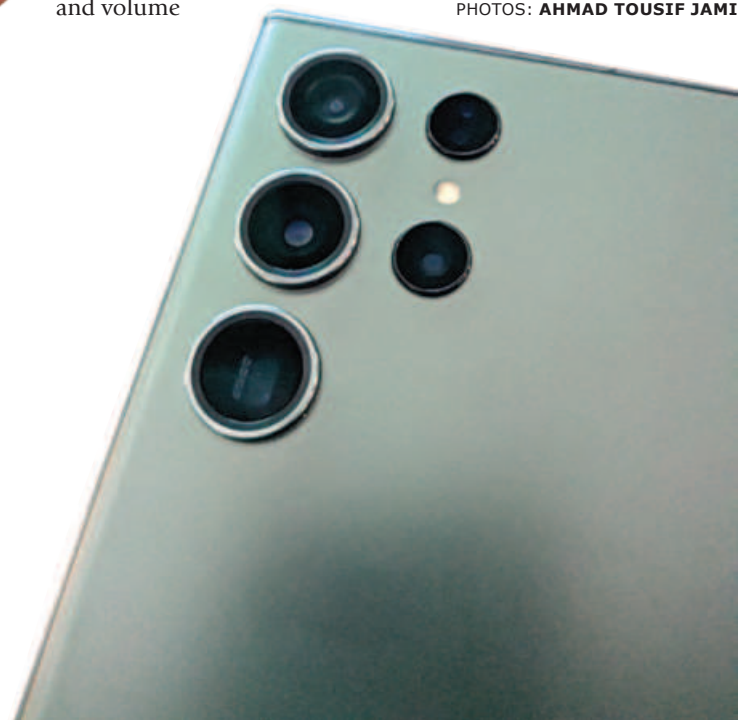
rocker. The left edge is bare, and the top has a microphone hole. The bottom edge has a USB Type-C port, a speaker grill, a microphone hole, and a SIM tray. The main external difference between Galaxy S23 Ultra and its predecessor in terms of device body is that the sides are flatter on the S23 Ultra. Samsung Bangladesh claims this new edge design makes it more ergonomic than its predecessor.

Along with the design, Galaxy S23 Ultra uses Qualcomm Snapdragon 8 Gen 2 (4nm), the latest chipset available in the market. It is worth noting that this year, Samsung is shipping the devices only with Snapdragon chipsets globally, meaning the Exynos chipset is not used in any variant of this device. Samsung has paired the chipset with a 2.7x larger vapour cooling chamber - which is expected to help the chipset work efficiently and prevent overheating.

The Galaxy S23 Ultra camera system boasts a quad-camera setup on the back, with a 200 MP Wide-Angle, 12 MP Ultra-Wide, 10 MP 10x Optical Zoom and 10 MP 3x Optical Zoom. It has a 12 MP Selfie Camera on the front. The camera system comes with Samsung's very own ISOCELL HP2 sensors. The camera system features 8 K video recording, optical image stabilisation, nightography and multiple shooting modes.

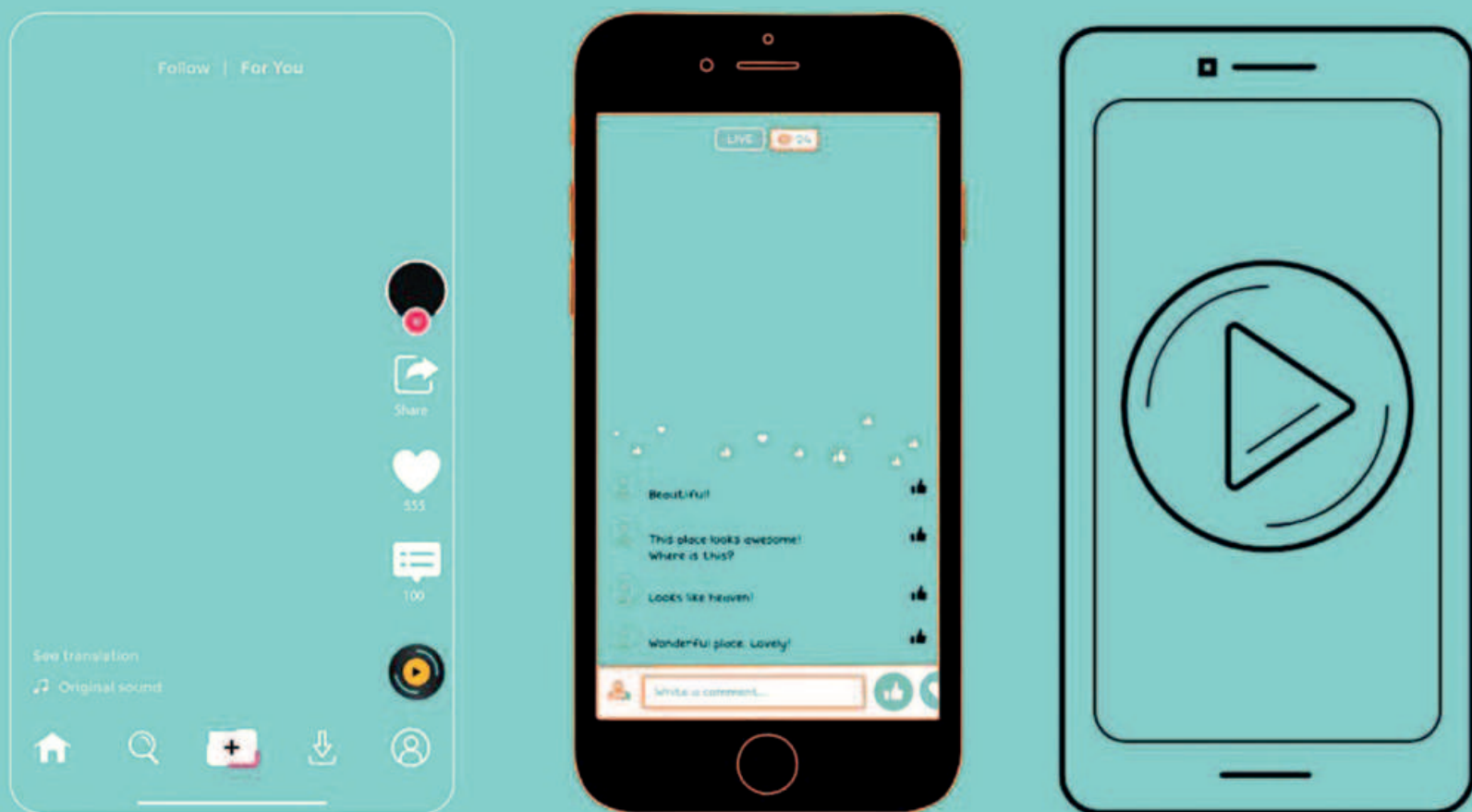
The price of the 256 GB version is Tk. 1,97,999 (excluding VAT), and the 512 GB version is Tk. 2,14,999 (excluding VAT).

PHOTOS: AHMAD TOUSIF JAMI



# Short-form videos are the future of content creation

IFTEKHAR AHMED



Social media has become a defining aspect of the 21st century, shaping how people live, interact, and access information. With around 4.7 billion people worldwide using social media, the influence of these platforms is impossible to ignore. They have transformed communication, making it easier and more convenient than ever before. In turn, social media and entertainment platforms have continuously developed new features to keep users engaged, and as a result, have had a significant impact on how people form relationships, access and disseminate information, and make decisions.

Using social media has, in fact, become a daily necessity, with not only individuals but also businesses relying on it to promote their products and services. Marketers use various social media platforms to promote their businesses in different ways, while internet influencers and content creators have become powerful marketing tools in the ever-evolving digital landscape.

In particular, young people are more active on social networking platforms than ever, creating content about their daily lives and sharing it on social networks. With ongoing trends and diverse challenges, young people are more inclined to share

their activities virtually than through physical interactions.

Short videos, however, are the next new frontier. Short video content is quickly becoming the future of social media, as the demand for fast and easy-to-consume content continues to rise. Short video platforms like TikTok offer a unique space for creators and businesses to showcase their creativity and engage with their audience in a way that's both entertaining and informative. Short videos allow for concise messaging, making it easy for viewers to absorb information quickly, without feeling overwhelmed or bored.

In fact, TikTok has rapidly become a dominant force in the world of entertainment and content creation. With over a billion active users worldwide, it has revolutionised the way content is created and consumed. Unlike traditional platforms, TikTok's algorithm favours short-form, visually stimulating videos, making it the perfect platform for creative expression. The app's emphasis on user-generated content has democratised the creative process, allowing anyone with a smartphone to share their talents with a global audience.

TikTok enables users to create and share short videos with visual and sound effects ranging from 15 seconds to 10 minutes. Users can find a wide

range of content on the platform, from dancing, music, news, and travel to vlogs and education. The platform makes it easy to create high-quality short videos by providing editing tools, music clips, sound effects, filters, and more for users to use in their video creation.

TikTok's innovative editing tools, effects, and filters provide creators with endless possibilities for customisation, encouraging experimentation and innovation. As a result, TikTok has already birthed a new generation of celebrities and influencers, and its future potential as a marketing tool is immense.

TikTok is immensely popular among young people and has numerous safety features that make it an attractive option for parents. For instance, TikTok offers the Family Pairing feature, which includes Screen Time Management, Restricted Mode, and Direct Messages, among other options. Screen Time Management allows parents to control how long their teens spend on TikTok daily. Meanwhile, Restricted Mode limits the appearance of content that may not be appropriate for the younger audience. Parents can monitor and control their children's TikTok accounts through Family Pairing, which shows TikTok's responsiveness to parental concerns.

TikTok is also highly relevant to Bangladeshi users as the platform is actively working with local communities to ensure that it remains a safe and positive space. In Bangladesh, TikTok recently introduced the Safety Ambassadors Programme, where popular changemakers joined the campaign and expressed their solidarity with TikTok's safety pledges. The Safety Ambassadors encouraged fellow creators on the platform to leverage their social power for the betterment of society through creative means.

Every social media and entertainment platform has its pros and cons, depending on how people use it. However, the tremendous popularity TikTok has gained within a short time shows how people of different ages have responded positively to the platform.

With its adaptive and accessible format, TikTok is undoubtedly the future of content creation, and it is poised to continue to change the way we consume and interact with media for years to come. As users, we can choose to leverage the platform's positive features based on our unique preferences. Ultimately, supporting TikTok's positive features will help the platform continue to grow and improve.

# Alternate web browsers you can try out

Google Chrome, Firefox, Opera, Safari, Edge - these web browsers are more or less seen in every device these days, with Chrome being a clear favourite among most longtime users. While these four mainstay browsers offer us the ease of access and features we want from our everyday browsing experience, there are other web browsers you can try out for some much-needed change of pace. Here are some alternate options you can consider for a brand-new experience while retaining the security and ease you want from your preferred browser.



## Brave

**Platforms:** Windows, Android, iOS, Linux

If you're looking to switch up from Google Chrome or Firefox, Brave might be the next best thing. It's hailed as

one of the most secure browsers out there, automatically blocking intrusive ads on websites you visit. The browser also counts blocked trackers and ads, including how much bandwidth and time you have saved - showing them to you on the default home page. The browser has a feature called Brave

Rewards, with which you can earn tokens by viewing certain ads and visiting selected sites and content creators. Another feature, Brave News, can be customised to automatically follow news from platforms such as CNN and The Guardian based on your preferred news topics.



## Vivaldi

**Platforms:** Windows, Android, Mac, Linux

If you're looking for a browser you can freely customise, look no further than Vivaldi. When you first load it,

you will be asked to choose between three layout options: essentials, classic and fully loaded, all of which can be customised based on what kind of features you want in your taskbar. There are also additional options to organise your tabs, including a split screen function to focus on multiple

tabs at once. Vivaldi also has other handy features such as end break, which pauses all active tabs so you can take a break; capture page, which can take a screenshot of selections or the entire webpage; and toggling animations and images of your current active tab.



## Avast Secure Browser

**Platforms:** Windows, Android, iOS, Mac

If you're a fan of Avast antivirus, we

recommend trying out their browser as well. The Avast Secure Browser has a UI similar to Google Chrome, and it can import history and bookmarks from your current Chrome profile as well. But what really sets it apart is the security features. Similar to Avast antivirus, the browser has a web shield to protect you from spyware and fake website, and boasts

noteworthy anti-tracking technology to block trackers and intrusive ads. The browser also has other security options such as hack check, which can monitor and inform you of a potential data breach; password manager, which allows you to access websites with one click; and bank mode, which lets the user shop online without worries of being tracked.



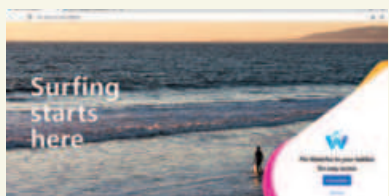
## Epic Privacy Browser

**Platforms:** Windows, Android, Mac, Linux

On a similar note to Avast Secure Browser, Epic Privacy Browser, as the

name implies, offers you anti-tracking security and the utmost privacy during your browsing. The browser automatically blocks third-party cookies and has an 'always-on' private browsing mode, which ensures your history won't remain after you have closed the browser. The main tab also shows a count of how many trackers the browser has blocked,

and will even give you a count of existing trackers in other web browsers you have installed on your computer. In case you're having trouble loading a website because of Epic's built-in privacy settings, there's an umbrella icon on the top-right corner with which you can toggle ad block, HTTP preference and encrypted proxy settings.



## Waterfox

**Platforms:** Windows, Mac, Linux

If you like using Firefox, Waterfox might be the next best thing. It has a layout similar to the Mozilla we all

know and love, and comes loaded with add-ons that allow the user to customise the browser however they want. This browser also doesn't collect telemetry, meaning you can browse without worrying about trackers or usage information. For web developers,

Waterfox offers the option to edit the internal CSS and JS scripting - giving users a whole new range of flexibility in everyday browsing. This browser also receives frequent updates, so there is also no worry about extensions getting outdated.