# Tech giants announce layoffs, remote work policy shifts and new product launches amid market challenges



Meta has initiated a fresh round of layoffs within its Reality Labs division, specifically targeting Oculus Studios, the team responsible for creating apps and games for Meta's Quest virtual reality headsets. Among the affected projects is Supernatural, a VR fitness app acquired by Meta in 2023. The company has characterised these job cuts as part of a wider effort to streamline operations and concentrate on developing future mixed reality experiences. Although the exact number of employees impacted has not been disclosed, Meta asserts that the changes are intended to enhance the efficiency of Oculus Studios while continuing to provide engaging content to users.

In a related development concerning workforce management, Microsoft has introduced a new strategy giving underperforming employees the choice to accept a payout and depart the company rather than entering a performance improvement plan. Internal documents reveal that employees opting for this voluntary exit are offered 16 weeks of pay. This approach bears resemblance to Amazon's "Pivot" programme, which has attracted criticism regarding its intent and effectiveness.

Google has announced a significant shift in its remote working policies by mandating that certain remote employees return to office premises at least three days per week or face the possibility of losing their jobs. Several units within Google have indicated that staff previously approved for remote work must either relocate within 50 miles of an office or accept voluntary exit packages.

Similarly, Intel has declared that from 1 September 2025, employees will be required to work from the office four days a week, modifying its existing hybrid model that allowed two remote workdays. Intel CEO Lip-Bu Tan emphasised the importance of in-person collaboration during the company's Q1 2025 earnings call. Intel reported a revenue of $12.7 billion for the quarter, surpassing expectations, with strong demand for its Xeon processors contributing to this success. Tan outlined plans to streamline operations and reduce operating expenses to $17 billion in 2025 and $16 billion in 2026, focusing on empowering engineers and improving execution efficiency.

Apple has adjusted its marketing of Apple Intelligence features by removing claims that these are "available now" from its website, following a recommendation from the National Advertising Division (NAD). The watchdog concluded that Apple's promotional materials had misleadingly suggested that features such as Priority Notifications, Genmoji, Image Playground, and ChatGPT integration were fully accessible at the launch of the iPhone 16. The claim was removed from Apple's website in late March 2025.

In a tragic incident, Bitan Adhikary, a 40-year-old engineer with India-based Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) but residing in the United States, was among 28 tourists killed in a terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, on 22 April 2025. Originally from West Bengal, Mr Adhikary had recently returned to India on a summer break with his wife and three-year-old son. His family has been left in deep shock by his untimely death. Debashish Chakraborty, Mr Adhikary’s cousin, shared with state minister Aroop Biswas, "I spoke to him just this morning."

Samsung has expanded its commitment to embedding artificial intelligence (AI) across its consumer electronics range, launching India-centric AI-powered features on products such as air conditioners, refrigerators, and washing machines. India ranks third globally for Samsung's SmartThings platform, which has recently been enhanced with AI for smarter home automation, enabling users to connect and control multiple devices more efficiently.

At Tesla, CEO Elon Musk's net worth increased by $7.5 billion on 23 April 2025 after announcing that he will reduce his time dedicated to the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to one or two days a week starting in May. Musk stated during Tesla's first-quarter earnings call, "I'll continue to spend a day or two per week on government matters for as long as the President would like me to do so." Following this announcement, Tesla shares rose by 5% to $251. Forbes reported Musk's total net worth at $369.2 billion after the quarter’s report.

Google and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai provided an optimistic update on the company's performance during their Q1 2025 earnings call. He highlighted strong results driven by growth in Search, Cloud, and YouTube, attributing much of the success to AI and strategic investments. Pichai shared nine key performance numbers, reflecting the company's continued focus on innovation and expansion.

In terms of product launches in India, several companies introduced new devices this week. Xiaomi expanded its smartwatch lineup with the Redmi Watch Move, featuring a 1.85-inch AMOLED screen, over 140 workout modes, and health monitoring features like SpO2 tracking and cycle monitoring. The watch is priced at Rs 1,999 and will be available from 1 May 2025.

Oppo unveiled the K13 5G smartphone, equipped with a 7,000mAh battery, 50MP main camera, and powered by a Qualcomm chipset running Android 15. The device supports 80W fast charging and is positioned as an affordable option in the K-series.

Vivo expanded its T-series with the Vivo T4 5G smartphone, offering up to 12GB of RAM, a 7,300mAh battery, and a 32MP selfie camera. Available in three variants ranging from Rs 21,999 to Rs 25,999, the phone launches online on 29 April 2025, with discounts and no-cost EMI offers available.

Lenovo launched the IdeaPad Slim 3 2025 in India, featuring the latest Intel Raptor Lake H and AMD HawkPoint processors in a new metal chassis. Starting at Rs 63,790, the laptop targets hybrid workers, students, and content creators.

Asus introduced the Vivobook S14 (S3407VA) and Vivobook S14 Flip (TP3402VAO) laptops, designed for young professionals and students. The models start at Rs 67,990 and Rs 69,990 respectively and are available through various retail channels.

Sennheiser launched the HD 505 Copper Edition headphones in India at Rs 27,990, aimed at audiophiles and gamers seeking high-fidelity sound.

Signify expanded its product portfolio with a new Ecolink ceiling fan range designed for energy efficiency and high performance. Models are priced between Rs 5,850 and Rs 8,700 and include smart variants powered by Signify's IoT platform, Wiz.

In legal developments, Google agreed to a Rs 20.2 crore penalty to settle an antitrust case in India concerning Android TV. The Competition Commission of India found a prima facie case of abuse of dominant position. The settlement includes a 'New India Agreement' allowing Google to offer separate licences for the Play Store and Play Services on Android smart TVs, removing bundling and default placement requirements for TV manufacturers.

Finally, YouTube marked its 20th anniversary on 23 April 2025, celebrating over 20 billion videos uploaded since its launch in 2005. YouTube CEO Neil Mohan stated, "What started as a simple video-sharing platform has grown into a force, driving culture and fundamentally reshaping how we watch and create entertainment." The platform unveiled new statistics to commemorate two decades of growth and influence in the digital content space.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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