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THE NEWS THAT MATTERS

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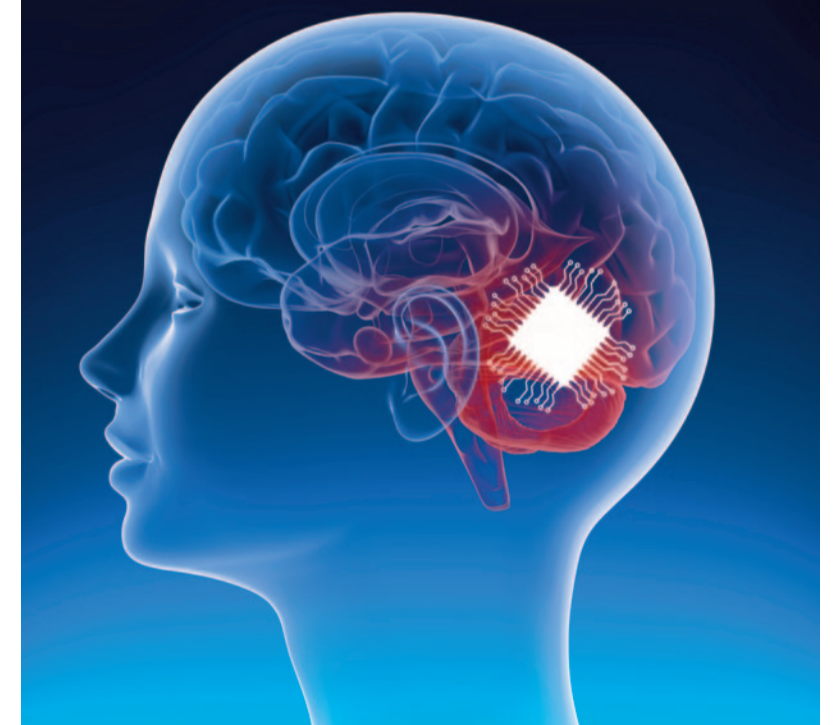
Brain Implant Gives ALS Patient His Voice Back

A groundbreaking brain implant has dramatically transformed the life of 48-year-old ALS patient Casey Harrell, allowing him to communicate using only his thoughts after years of losing his ability to speak. The remarkable achievement, detailed in a recent scientific study, highlights the growing potential of brain-computer interface (BCI) technology to restore communication for people affected by severe neurological disorders. Harrell was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a progressive disease that gradually destroys nerve cells controlling voluntary muscles. As the illness advanced, he lost the ability to speak, sing, and interact naturally with family and friends. In 2023, researchers at the University of California, Davis implanted tiny ex-

perimental devices into his brain as part of the BrainGate2 clinical trial. The implant records brain signals associated with intended speech and uses artificial intelligence to convert those signals into text and synthesized voice. Over nearly two years of home use, Harrell reportedly generated more than 1.96 million words across 183,000 sentences, communicating at an average speed of 56 words per minute. Unlike conventional assistive technologies that often require slow letter-by-letter typing, the new system enables more natural conversations. Harrell has been able to participate in family discussions, continue his work as a cli-

mate and disability rights advocate, attend virtual meetings, tell jokes, and even interact more freely with his young daughter. Researchers say the study demonstrates that brain-computer interfaces are moving beyond laboratory experiments into practical, everyday use. The technology currently relies on wired connections to external computers, but scientists are working toward fully wireless systems that would offer greater mobility and independence. Experts believe such innovations could significantly improve the quality of life for thousands of people living with ALS and other conditions that impair speech and

movement. Future developments may eventually allow direct brain-to-voice communication, making conversations even faster and more natural. For Harrell, the technology represents far more than scientific progress. After years of silence imposed by disease, it has restored a vital part of his identity—the ability to participate in conversations, express emotions, and re-connect with the world around him. As research continues to advance, brain implants like these may open a new chapter in assistive medicine, offering renewed hope to patients who have lost their voices but not their thoughts.



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Protests Erupt in Bangladesh Over Alleged Desecration of Lord Ram Image



Dhaka: Tensions have escalated in Bangladesh after thousands of Hindus staged demonstrations in the capital and other regions over the alleged desecration of an image of Lord Ram and the suspension of a proposed statue project in Gaibandha district. Carrying torches and chanting "Jai Shri Ram," protesters marched through Dhaka under the banner of several Hindu organisations, including Hindu Mahajot. Demonstrators gathered at Shahbagh and later proceeded toward the National Press Club, demanding the immediate arrest of those accused of insulting the deity's image. Similar protests and human chains were organised at multiple locations in the city. The controversy centres on an under-construction 81-foot statue of Lord Ram at Palashbari in Gaibandha district. The project, reportedly about 80 per cent

complete, is part of a larger temple complex that also includes statues of Lord Krishna and Lord Shiva. According to the temple committee, construction was halted after alleged threats from Islamist groups and concerns over public safety. Temple authorities stated that work was suspended voluntarily to maintain communal harmony and avoid further tensions. They emphasised that the project was intended as a religious tribute and not to provoke any community. Protesters also alleged that during earlier demonstrations against the statue project, an image of Lord Ram was deliberately desecrated by placing footwear on it. Although a police complaint has reportedly been filed, no arrests have been made so far, prompting Hindu organisations to issue a 72-hour ultimatum demanding action against those responsible. Leaders of the agitation warned that if permission to resume construction is not granted, they would intensify protests and consider establishing Ram temples across Bangladesh's districts. A memorandum outlining their demands is also expected to be submitted to the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The developments have renewed concerns over the protection of religious minorities in Bangladesh, where Hindus constitute the largest minority community. Community representatives have called on the government to ensure justice, protect places of worship, and uphold the constitutional right of citizens to practise their faith peacefully. The government has repeatedly stated that every citizen has the freedom to practise religion and that maintaining communal harmony remains a priority.



EDITORIAL

The Business of Sports

Sport in India is no longer just a form of entertainment or a symbol of national pride—it has become a major economic engine. Over the past two decades, professional leagues in cricket, football, kabaddi, badminton, and other sports have transformed into multi-billion-rupee industries, creating jobs, attracting investments, and boosting tourism. The economics of these leagues demonstrate how sports can contribute significantly to a nation's growth while also highlighting the challenges of building sustainable business models. The success of franchise-based leagues has been driven primarily by broadcasting rights, sponsorships, ticket sales, merchandising, and digital media. Television networks and streaming platforms compete fiercely for exclusive rights, generating enormous revenues that are shared among league organizers and teams. Corporate sponsorships further fuel the ecosystem, with brands eager to associate themselves with popular athletes and high-profile tournaments. The economic impact extends far beyond the playing field. Sporting leagues create employment for coaches, physiotherapists, event managers, broadcasters, security personnel, hospitality workers, marketers, and technology professionals. Hotels, restaurants, transport services, and local businesses also benefit when fans travel to attend matches. This ripple effect makes sports an important contributor to urban economies. Another major advantage is the development of sports infrastructure. Stadiums, training facilities, academies, and high-performance centers receive greater investment when leagues attract commercial success. Young athletes gain access to better coaching and opportunities to compete professionally, encouraging sports as a viable career option rather than merely a recreational activity. However, the economics of Indian sporting leagues also reveal certain imbalances. Cricket dominates the commercial landscape, attracting a disproportionate share of sponsorships and media attention. Other sports often struggle to maintain financial stability despite passionate fan bases. Several leagues have faced declining viewership, inconsistent franchise ownership, or operational challenges, raising questions about their long-term sustainability. Player salaries present another interesting economic issue. While star athletes command substantial contracts, many emerging players earn comparatively modest incomes and have limited career security. Ensuring equitable revenue distribution and investment in grassroots development remains essential for the health of the sporting ecosystem.

Technology is reshaping sports economics as well. Social media, fantasy sports platforms, mobile applications, and digital streaming have expanded audience engagement and opened new revenue streams.



SR Prime School Celebrates Fatherhood with Joy

Hyderabad, June 20 (Tricolour Estate): SR Prime School in Alwal-Hyderabad, celebrated Father's Day, International Yoga Day, and World Music Day with great enthusiasm on Saturday. The event witnessed active participation from students, parents, teachers, and school staff, making the celebrations a grand success. As part of the programme, students performed various yoga

asanas, highlighting the importance of yoga in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and overall well-being. To mark World Music Day, the school organized musical performances, songs, and cultural activities that created a vibrant and festive atmosphere. Special events were conducted to celebrate Father's Day, emphasizing the unique bond between fathers and their children. The

school management also organized several fun-filled games and competitions exclusively for the fathers of the students. The participants enthusiastically took part in the activities and enjoyed memorable moments with their children, adding joy and excitement to the occasion. The event was attended by School DGM Radhika Reddy, Principal Divya Madhuri, teachers, students,

and parents. Speaking on the occasion, the organisers emphasized that strong family values, regular yoga practice, and exposure to music play an important role in the holistic development of children. They also reiterated the school's commitment to nurturing students through value-based education and activities that promote their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Jaiswal, Prasidh Power India to 3-0 Sweep



India completed a dominant 3-0 One Day International series whitewash over Afghanistan with a convincing nine-wicket victory at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. The win was built on a sensational bowling display by Prasidh Krishna and a brilliant unbeaten century from Yashasvi Jaiswal. Opting to bowl first, India dismantled Afghanistan's batting lineup with Prasidh claiming his maiden five-wicket haul in ODIs. The pacer finished with outstanding figures of 5 for 23, using pace and movement to trouble the batters throughout the innings. Despite the collapse around him, Afghanistan captain Hashmatullah Shahidi produced a fighting century, scoring 102 runs, while Azmatullah Omarzai contributed a valuable fifty to help the visitors reach 218 before being bowled out in 44.2 overs. India's chase was clinical from the outset. Openers Rohit Sharma and Yashasvi Jaiswal stitched together a commanding 170-run partnership, taking the game away from Afghanistan with aggressive stroke play and smart running between the wickets. Rohit made an impressive 79 before falling to Mohammad Nabi. Jaiswal, however, continued his sparkling form and anchored the innings to perfection. The young left-hander reached his century in just 83 deliveries and remained unbeaten on 110 off 86 balls, striking 14 boundaries and three sixes. His composed yet attacking knock ensured India chased down the target in only 28.4 overs with 128 balls to spare. The emphatic victory also marked the first ODI series triumph under the captaincy of Shubman Gill, highlighting India's all-round dominance with both bat and ball. With Prasidh's match-winning spell and Jaiswal's masterclass at the crease, India finished the series unbeaten and carried significant momentum into their upcoming international assignments.

Harshit Rana: 'Finally Feels Like I'm Back'

New Delhi: India pacer Harshit Rana has expressed relief and joy at returning to the national squad after spending five months on the sidelines due to a knee injury, calling the extended absence the toughest period of his cricketing career. The 24-year-old fast bowler completed his rehabilitation at the BCCI Centre of Excellence (CoE) and re-joined the Indian team ahead of the third ODI against Afghanistan. Speaking about his comeback, Rana admitted that missing the T20 World Cup campaign was emotionally challenging. "For me, it was very difficult because playing in the World Cup has always been my dream. India won the title, but I had to watch from the sidelines due to injury," he said in a BCCI video. Rana spent over three months at the Centre of Excellence, where he underwent intensive rehabilitation. He credited the facility's coaches, trainers and physiotherapists for helping him recover fully. "The CoE has everything a player needs to improve. The support I received there was outstanding and it played a huge role in my comeback," he said. While his physical recovery progressed steadily, Rana admitted that staying away from competitive cricket for such a long period was mentally exhausting. "I had never been away from the game for five months before. It was a very difficult phase, but now it finally feels like I'm back," he remarked. The pacer also praised the atmosphere within the Indian team, saying the intensity of training sessions at the international level is unmatched. "The energy and competitiveness during India's practice sessions are completely different. It's great to be part of the setup again," Rana added. With his rehabilitation complete, Harshit Rana is now eager to make the most of his return and contribute to India's pace attack in the upcoming matches.

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PhonePe Wallet Alerts Explained

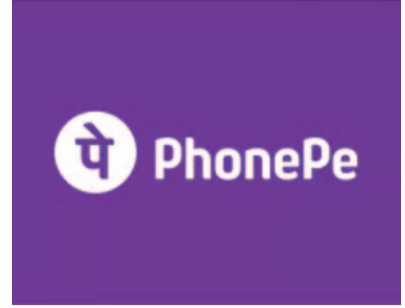
New Delhi: Recent inactivity notifications sent by PhonePe regarding its wallet service have sparked curiosity among users, with many seeking clarity on how digital wallets function and how they differ from UPI-based payments. A common mis-

conception is that a PhonePe account, a UPI account, and a PhonePe Wallet are the same. However, they are distinct payment systems that operate independently. When users make a payment through UPI on PhonePe, the amount is transferred di-

rectly from their linked bank account. In contrast, the PhonePe Wallet functions as a Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI), where users first load money into the wallet and then use those stored funds for transactions. Unlike UPI, which is connected

to a bank account and facilitates direct fund transfers, a wallet maintains a separate balance that can be used for merchant payments, recharges, and other eligible transactions. Wallet balances are not automatically linked to the user's bank account. The recent notifications relate specifically to wallet inactivity and do not affect users' UPI services or

linked bank accounts. Customers who use only UPI payments and do not maintain a wallet balance are generally unaffected by these reminders. As digital payment platforms continue to evolve, understanding the distinction between UPI and prepaid wallets can help consumers use these services more effectively and avoid confusion regarding



account notifications and payment options.



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Disha Patani

Namrata Welcomes a Feathered Guest Home

Hyderabad: Actress Namrata Shirodkar recently delighted her followers by sharing photographs of a special visitor that arrived at her Hyderabad residence—a graceful peahen that perched atop her home and enjoyed the serene surroundings. Taking to social media, Namrata posted a series of pictures of the bird and captioned them, “And the most beautiful guest walked into our home today... #blessed and grateful #homesweethome,” expressing her joy at the unexpected visit. The images show the peahen standing elegantly on a white structure within the property, adding a touch of natural beauty to the peaceful setting. Fans flooded the comments section with appreciation, calling the sight a symbol of good fortune and harmony. Namrata is known for sharing glimpses of her family life and cherished moments with her followers. Earlier, she posted an adorable throwback photograph of her children, Gautam and Sitara, capturing the siblings striking playful poses with their hands raised. Sharing the memory, she wrote, “My heart in one frame,” along with a heart emoji. Before stepping away from acting after marrying Telugu superstar Mahesh Babu, Namrata Shirodkar established herself as a popular actress in Hindi cinema with notable performances in films such as *Vaastav*, *Pukar*, and *Jab Pyaar Kisise Hota Hai*. Namrata and Mahesh Babu first met during the filming of *Vamsi* in 2000 and tied the knot on February 10, 2005. The couple are parents to two children, Gautam Krishna and Sitara, and frequently share heartwarming family moments with their fans.

Samantha Delighted by Women’s Support for ‘Maa Inti Bangaram’



Hyderabad: Actress Samantha has expressed gratitude over the strong opening-day response to her latest film *Maa Inti Bangaram*, saying the most encouraging aspect was the overwhelming support from women audiences. The film reportedly earned more than ₹13.15 crore worldwide on its opening day, marking a promising start for the actress, who also serves as the film’s producer. Sharing her excitement on social media, Samantha wrote that the film’s success was “hugely humbling” and reflected changing audience preferences. She noted that moviegoers are increasingly embracing stories regardless of whether they are led by male or female protagonists. “The most heartening thing is seeing women contribute so heavily to the opening day. For the longest time, we’ve heard that theatrical openings are driven by male audiences. It’s wonderful to see the audience for cinema continue to grow and

evolve,” she said. Samantha also thanked viewers across age groups for supporting the film and celebrated the achievement of her production house, calling it a proud milestone. Earlier, the actress had revealed that she was deeply connected to her character, Swarna, describing the role as the closest to her real-life personality among all the characters she has portrayed in Telugu cinema. She said it was the resilience and strength of the character that made her fall in love with the script. Speaking about the film’s action sequences, Samantha explained that they were designed to look realistic rather than stylised. She added that she performed the stunts herself, enduring actual bruises and injuries during filming to ensure authenticity on screen. With positive audience response and encouraging box-office collections, *Maa Inti Bangaram* has emerged as a significant milestone in Samantha’s career, both as an actress and as a producer.



Ram Charan, Upasana Reveal Klin Kaara’s Face on 3rd Birthday

Hyderabad: Actor Ram Charan and his wife Upasana Kamineni Konidela delighted fans by unveiling the face of their daughter, Klin Kaara, on the occasion of her third birthday. Until now, the couple had only shared partial glimpses of their daughter in public appearances and on social media. To mark the special occasion, the couple posted a heartwarming family photograph featuring themselves with Klin Kaara. Sharing the image, they wrote, “Happy Birthday Klin Kaara, our precious little one,” accompanied by heart emojis. Ram Charan and Upasana, who got engaged in December 2011 after years of friendship, tied the knot in June 2012. They welcomed their first child, Klin Kaara, in June 2023, making her one of the most celebrated star kids in Telugu cinema. The couple later expanded their family with the arrival of twins—a baby boy and a baby girl—in February this year. Announcing the happy news, Ram Charan expressed gratitude and joy, saying that having two daughters and a son had filled their lives with immense happiness. He also thanked fans, family members, and well-wishers for their continued support throughout the family’s journey. Earlier this year, on their 14th wedding anniversary, Ram Charan and Upasana shared the first glimpse of their newborn twins through a touching photograph showing the tiny hands of all three children. The image was captioned simply, “Heart is full,” reflecting the couple’s joy as parents. The latest birthday post revealing Klin Kaara’s face has quickly gained widespread attention on social media, with fans and celebrities sending warm wishes and blessings to the young girl.

Kayadu Lohar Takes a Social Media Break

Chennai: Actress Kayadu Lohar has announced that she is taking a temporary break from social media to focus on her mental well-being and spend more time away from the digital world. Sharing the news through an Instagram post, the actress said she felt the need to step back and recharge. “Sometimes, the mind needs the same kind of rest that we give our bodies. I’ve been feeling the need to slow down, disconnect for a bit, and spend more time being present with myself and life beyond a screen,” she wrote. Kayadu also thanked her followers for their constant encouragement and affection, saying their support had meant a great deal to her. She assured fans that any important updates regarding her professional commitments would continue to be shared by her team through her official account. The actress concluded her message by wishing everyone “peace, happiness, and kindness” and expressed hope to reconnect with her audience soon. Last month, Kayadu had won hearts with a heartfelt birthday message dedicated to her younger brother, describing him as her “baby brother” and affectionately joking about her role as an elder sister while reaffirming her unconditional love and support for him. On the professional front, Kayadu Lohar is gearing up for the release of the horror thriller *Immortal*, directed by Mariyappan Chinna and co-starring G. V. Prakash Kumar. The recently released teaser hinted at a blend of romance, humour and supernatural suspense, generating curiosity among moviegoers. Fans have extended their support for Kayadu’s decision to take time off, wishing her a peaceful break and looking forward to her return both online and on the big screen.

