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MIDDLE EAST WAR

Israel OKs talks with Lebanon

PM Netanyahu's move aims to boost ceasefire efforts 'as soon as possible'

By Jon Gambrell, Elena Becatoros and Mike Corder
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — In a potential boost to Middle East ceasefire efforts, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Thursday that he authorized direct negotiations with Lebanon “as soon

as possible” aimed at disarming Iranian-backed Hezbollah militants and establishing relations between the neighbors.

The two countries have technically been at war since Israel was established in 1948, and Netanyahu later stressed that there was no ceasefire between them. In a video statement, he said Israel will keep striking Hezbollah until security is

restored in northern Israel. There was no immediate response from Lebanese authorities. But Israel-Lebanon negotiations were expected to begin next week at the State Department in Washington, according to a U.S. official and a person familiar with the plans who both spoke on condition of anonymity due to the delicacy of the matter.

The prospect of talks appeared to bolster the tentative ceasefire in the Iran war

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A government supporter weeps during a mourning ceremony marking the 40th day since the death of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed in the U.S. and Israel strikes in Tehran, Iran, on Thursday. VAHID SALEMI THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIO

Coachella festival back for 25th year



Fans of Junior H react to his performance on the main stage during Weekend 2 of the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in Indio's Empire Polo Field last year. PHOTOS BY DREW A. KELLEY — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Today launches 2 sold-out weekends of world-famous music showcase

Staff reports

When fans step onto the Empire Polo Field in Indio today, they'll be participating in a cultural milestone — the 25th version of the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival, which has grown from a fledgling event to a global gathering that shapes the tastes of music fans worldwide.

It wasn't a seamless transition. After the first festival in October 1999 was awash in red ink, it took promoter Goldenvoice a year and a half to try again — and then in a stripped-down, one-day format. From that uneven start, the festival began to grow steadily, expanding to three days and adding the



Weekend 2 of the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in Indio on April 20.

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AIR TRAVEL

2 people die in Catalina Island small plane crash

Aircraft seems to have taken off from Torrance's Zamperini Field

By Nathaniel Percy and Sierra van der Brug
STAFF WRITERS

A small airplane crashed on Catalina Island on Thursday, killing both people on board, authorities said.

The aircraft, an Airplane Factory Sling, crashed around 12:30 p.m., according to the Federal Aviation Administration. Both people in the plane were found dead when paramedics arrived, the Los Angeles County Fire Department said.

The plane wound up on the south side of the island and in a ravine, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Capt. Matthew King said.

The plane appeared to have taken off from Zamperini Field in Torrance and crash-landed on the island, according to FlightAware, a third-party website that tracks flights.

It was not immediately known if the pilot was trying to land at Catalina Airport.

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CONNECTIONS

LB leaders aim to link waterfront with other cities

Officials to explore partnership through ferry system program

By Christina Merino
CMERINO@SCNG.COM

As Long Beach continues preparing to host major regional and international events, such as the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, local leaders want the city to participate in regional efforts that will connect waterfronts through a ferry system.

During this week's City Council meeting, the elected officials unanimously approved taking formal steps to establish Long Beach as a major destination and participant in the Pier-to-Pier

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FORECAST

TODAY H:72 L:58 SAT. H:71 L:58 SUN. H:66 L:54
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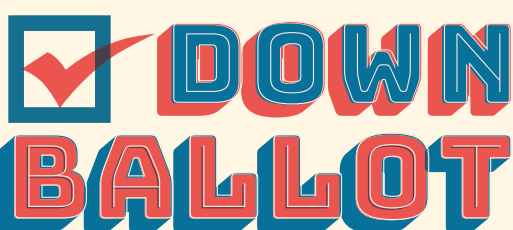
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