

20th anniversary of deadly attack on UN headquarters in Iraq commemorated

BAGHDAD: Iraqi and UN officials on Saturday marked the 20th anniversary of a deadly attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad.

The Aug. 19, 2003, truck bomb attack on the Canal Hotel in Baghdad, which housed the UN headquarters in Iraq at the time, killed 22 UN staff including the head, Sergio Vieira de Mello, a rising UN star. It was the deadliest attack against UN staff in its history.

The attack came in the wake of the US-led invasion of Iraq that toppled ex-ruler, Saddam Hussein, but unleashed an insurgency and years of brutal civil war in the country.

Morocco 'has not applied to join BRICS'

RABAT: Morocco has not made a formal request to join the BRICS grouping and will not attend its summit in South Africa, state news agency MAP said.

Citing an unnamed diplomatic source, MAP denied a statement by South Africa's Foreign Minister Anil Sooklal who said earlier this month Morocco was among the nations seeking to join the bloc.

"South Africa allowed itself to speak about Morocco's ties with the BRICS without prior consultation," it said.

'Press, run, report': Beirut women given personal alarms to protect against harassment

BEIRUT: Small portable alarms named in memory of a young British Embassy worker raped and murdered in Lebanon in 2017 have been distributed on Beirut Corniche as part of a campaign to protect women and girls from violence.

Known as Becky's Button, the lightweight devices were handed out by the Becky's Button Association on Saturday, with volunteers explaining how the alarms can offer protection from sexual harassment or assault.

Promoting tourism with mangoes: Festival northeast of Cairo is major draw

CAIRO: The second Ismailia Mango Festival began on Friday in the north-eastern Egyptian governorate.

The opening of the free festival attracted a significant number of visitors, including international tourists. It is taking place alongside the Export Forum – a paid event attended by sponsors, diplomatic and political delegations, merchants, companies, export councils, and exporters.

The festival was organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

Jordan's foreign currency reserves stand at \$17.5bn, central bank chief says

AMMAN: Jordan's foreign exchange reserves total \$17.5 billion, enough to cover the country's imports for over seven months, Adel Sharkas, governor of the Central Bank of Jordan, said on Saturday.

Speaking during the 8th Jordanian Investors and Businessmen Abroad Conference, Sharkas said that the country's inflation rate of 2.7 percent recorded in the first seven months of 2023 is expected to remain the same for the rest of the year.