

International

Eric Clapton back to Rock Hall with fellows

NEW YORK, Mar 7: Eric Clapton, whose solo career has veered between pop hits and blues explorations, joined the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame for the third time with fellow honorees James Taylor and Bonnie Raitt, reports AP.

The Lovin' Spoonful's sunny series of 1960s hits, and Earth, Wind and Fire's inspirational soul also ushered them into the hall during a ceremony Monday night at New York's Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

Following a night of long speeches, both Clapton and Taylor were humbled by the honor and seemed eager to play,

instead of talk.

"For me, it's about the music," said Clapton, inducted before as a member of the Yardbirds and Cream. "I'm just the messenger, and I hope to do it as long as I live."

Clapton was honored for a solo career that began in 1970 and, on acoustic guitar, played the mournful tribute to his late son, "Tears in Heaven." He duetted on electric guitar with the Band's Robbie Robertson on "Further On Up the Road."

Paul McCartney inducted "Sweet Baby James" Taylor, the quintessential 1970s singer-songwriter. It was the Beatles who gave Taylor his first break,

Way of the World," bringing together its original members for the first time in 20 years.

Earth, Wind and Fire is enjoying renewed popularity because of radio formats devoted to 1970s soul. White continues to record with the band but hasn't toured since 1995 because of Parkinson's.

Raitt sang "Thing Called Love," in a scorching duet with Melissa Etheridge, who paid tribute to Raitt's "sex on a plate" voice in a lengthy induction speech. Raitt was so tough and secure, "she hasn't felt the need to change her hairstyle in 30 years," Etheridge said.

"I'd never been to New York City, but here I was in a town of 4,000 people and I related to every word that singer was singing," he said.

A ragged, reformed Spoonful played their first hit, "Do You Believe in Magic?"

Earth, Wind and Fire's Maurice White, who last week revealed his battle with Parkinson's disease, made a rare appearance performing with the band he founded.

"It's been a long road, but it's been a beautiful road," said White, who made no mention of his affliction.

The band performed its hits "Shining Star" and "That's the

signing him to their Apple label, and launching a career that included the hits "Fire and Rain" and "How Sweet It Is."

McCartney recalled first hearing Taylor. "It was this haunting guy who could really play the guitar... We were just lucky to run into him and he was lucky to run into us, I suppose."

John Mellencamp's rambling, profane and funny induction speech for the Lovin' Spoonful recalled his summer as a 14-year-old driving a motorcycle illegally in Indiana, being arrested or public obnoxiousness and listening to "Summer in the City."



Opposition Members of Parliament shout anti-government slogans in front of the main entrance to Parliament house in New Delhi yesterday. The MPs call the national budget presented by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) "anti-farmers" and "anti-poor" and say it would help only the rich industrialists. Opposition protests have caused parliament to be adjourned almost every day since the current budget session opened two weeks ago. —AFP photo

China's military puts pressure on Taiwan, hits at US

BEIJING, Mar 7: The Chinese military today fired yet another vitriolic blast at Taiwan and aimed a veiled barb at the United States by accusing "hostile Western forces" of trying to control China, reports AFP.

In what has become a daily ritual as Taiwan's presidential elections on March 18 draw nearer, Defence Minister Chi Haotian hammered out Beijing's uncompromising message to voters that independence would mean war.

And in an indirect reference to the United States, Chi accused "certain big countries" of fuelling independence sentiment on the island which has been ruled separately from the mainland since 1949.

The Taiwan splittist force is supported by certain big countries who want to sabotage the 'One China' principle and block

the peaceful reunification process," said Chi, quoted in the Liberation Army Daily.

"We sternly warn those Taiwan splittists who are playing with fire that they will get burned. The choice of Taiwan independence means a choice of war," Chi told a meeting of parliamentary delegates.

"Those troublemakers who are supported by foreigners are trying to make themselves stronger and sabotage reunification, but they are doomed to failure."

Meanwhile the People's Liberation Army's top general Zhang Wannian, without explicitly naming the United States, voiced China's long-running anger at US arms sales to Taiwan.

"Hostile Western forces trying to push our country down will not die. They are trying to

form a strategy to impose Westernisation and divide China," said Zhang.

China has kept up a steady stream of threats against Taiwan, which it considers a rebel province, since it published a new policy white paper on reunification on February 21.

China's political and military leadership have queued up to repeatedly warn the island that if it refuses to open talks on reunification or moves towards independence it could face an invasion.

Analysts have viewed the threats as a blatant attempt to intimidate voters and candidates in Taiwan, in particular pro-independence candidate Chen Shui-bien.

US State Department spokesman James Foley on Monday described the "cacophony" of threatening lan-

guage as "very counterproductive."

"It is probably not accidental that these comments are being made... in the context of the run-up to the elections on Taiwan in two weeks time," he said.

"And so, there may be a certain amount of posturing involved," said Foley, while insisting Washington could not "in any way dismiss the fact that threats continue to be made."

In the past three days President Jiang Zemin, Premier Zhu Rongji, General Chi and General Zhang have all dispatched carefully-crafted and uncompromising warnings to Taiwan's electorate.

Zhang singled out Taiwan's president in his latest attack during a speech to PLA delegates to parliament.

Pollution kills tons of fish in Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO, Mar 7: A leaking sewer line pumped contaminated waste from homes and businesses into a popular Rio lagoon, killing more than 30 tons of fish, officials said, reports AP.

The horrible smell arising from the rotting fish drove people away from the park around the Rodrigo de Freitas lagoon. People usually flock to the lagoon to escape the central city, strolling the waterside and stopping at cafes for snacks and refreshments.

Monday evening, it was deserted except for a few people, mostly park attendants.

The fish began dying on Sunday because of a leak in the sewer system that passes along the bottom of the lagoon on its way to the sea, said Mario Moscatelli, a biologist and the lagoon's natural resources manager.

Japan resumes food aid to N Korea

Full diplomatic talks next month

TOKYO, Mar 7: Japan announced today it will send 100,000 tonnes of rice to starving North Korea for the first time in three years as a prelude to full-fledged diplomatic talks next month, reports AFP.

"Japan will provide food aid of 100,000 tonnes (rice) to North Korea through the World Food Programme for humanitarian reasons," Chief Cabinet Secretary Mikio Aoki told a news conference.

The decision was also made in the hope of encouraging North Korea to respond to the raft of problems in their relationship "with a view to the future," he said.

Japan and North Korea had reached agreement in principle through unofficial contacts to launch full talks on establishing diplomatic ties for the first time, the chief cabinet secretary said.

"As for negotiations on diplomatic relations between Japan and North Korea, full

talks will resume in the first half of April," Aoki told the news conference.

The two countries held a round of preparatory talks last December, aiming for the resumption of rapprochement negotiations. Aoki said no further preliminary talks would be needed.

Instead, proper negotiations on setting up diplomatic ties would begin, he said, the first round to be held in Pyongyang, the next in Tokyo and then in Beijing or elsewhere.

"It is our belief that the resumption of full meetings on normalisation of diplomatic relations will not only help correct abnormal relations between Japan and North Korea and settle various problems through dialogue but also contribute to the easing of tension on the Korean peninsula and the security of our country," the chief cabinet secretary said.

The Japanese government last gave food aid to North Ko-

rea in 1997, when it provided 67,000 tonnes of rice worth 27 million dollars through the United Nations.

But Tokyo halted its aid program to the Stalinist state after Pyongyang test-fired a ballistic missile which flew over Japanese territory in August 1998.

All remaining sanctions were lifted last December as Tokyo sought to improve relations with Pyongyang after North Korea announced a moratorium on its missile tests.

Japan planned to inform the North Koreans of the resumed food aid during a Red Cross meeting in Beijing on March 13, Aoki said. The food would be shipped "as soon as possible," he added.

The chief cabinet secretary declined to comment on the cost of the aid or about further shipments.

Afghan parties open peace talks

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia, Mar 7: Representatives of Afghanistan's Taliban regime began peace talks today hosted by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, an OIC official told AFP.

The first session at the OIC headquarters in the Red Sea city of Jeddah was to be followed in the afternoon by a meeting between the OIC and the Afghan opposition alliance, the official said.

The Taliban side is led by Mulla Amir Khan Muttaqi, head of the militia's executive affairs department.

United Nations envoy to Afghanistan Francesco Vendrell will take part in the separate talks along with Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Zahir Zahir, whose country currently holds the chair of the OIC.

Representatives from Pakistan, Guinea and Tunisia, who sit on the OIC ad hoc committee on Afghanistan, are also taking part in the meetings.

Japan readying bill to ban human cloning

TOKYO, Mar 7: Japan is readying a rare bill that will ban human cloning, even at a research level, and could punish offenders with jail sentences, reports Reuters.

"We feel that human cloning could damage human dignity and promote social turmoil by muddling family ties," a spokesman for the Science and Technology Agency said today.

If passed, it will be the first Japanese law mandating punishment for certain scientific research.

Japanese media reported that punishments for those who break the law could include fines and prison sentences of three to seven years, but the spokesman said this was still under discussion.

The agency submitted an outline of the bill to a panel in the Liberal Democratic Party, the dominant member of the government coalition, for ap-

proval on Monday.

It hopes to see the bill approved by the cabinet by the end of this month and submitted during the current session of Parliament, which ends in June.

According to the outline, the bill will outlaw the act of putting a cloned human embryo — in which a body cell is transplanted into an unfertilised egg from which the nucleus has been removed — back into the womb of humans or animals.

It will also ban the transplant of hybrid embryos, or human egg cells fertilised with animal sperm, as well as chimera embryos made by combining human and animal embryo cells.

Some types of clone research may be permitted if it is deemed essential and cannot be carried out in any other way, the spokesman said.

Bush, Gore push for 'Super Tuesday'

WASHINGTON, Mar 7: Hoping for a Super Tuesday worthy of the name, Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Al Gore campaigned on opposite coasts Monday in parallel pursuit of the victories needed to settle their parties' struggles to nominate a presidential candidate, reports AP.

"Rest is for another day," said Gore's rival, Bill Bradley. And on the eve of a virtual nationwide presidential primary with contests in all regions of the country, all sides seemed to agree on that.

Republican John McCain said he sensed a backlash developing against campaign commercials aired by Bush and "his sleazy Texas buddies" in New York and elsewhere.

The front-runners, Bush and Gore, both courted Jewish voters as they tailored their message as much to the general election as Tuesday's primaries.

In the primary elections, the candidates are trying to amass delegates votes for nominating

conventions this summer when the two major parties will choose their presidential candidates.

In what could be a decisive day of voting on Tuesday, Republicans in 13 states cast ballots with 613 delegates at stake, while Democrats in 15 states pick 1,315 delegates — both representing more than half the number needed for nomination. The batch of primaries are known as Super Tuesday.

"Tolerance can never be assumed, and it always must be taught," Bush said in an appearance at the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles where he also stressed his support for "a safe and secure Israel."

Gore, in New York, told a Jewish organization he would be a "good and helpful and loyal friend" to Israel if elected to the White House.

Public opinion polls had Gore ahead of Bradley virtually everywhere.



Albright would be 'excellent' successor: Czech President

HODONIN, Czech Republic, Mar 7: President Vaclav Havel, said on Monday he thought it would be "excellent" if Czech-born US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright were to succeed him in 2003, reports Reuters.

Havel revived an idea he first floated in September 1998 and which was taken up by a US news magazine last month — during brief remarks to Czech television after the old friends toured a museum.

Albright, who earlier had narrowly avoided two eggs hurled by what her spokesman said were two anti-American anarchists, stood silently beside him, though she speaks fluent Czech.

Her spokesman Philip Reeker referred reporters to a recent, firm denial that she was even contemplating running for Havel's post.

Havel chose his words carefully. "First of all, it's not up to me to decide who the next Czech president will be. The president is elected by the parliament," he said.

In fact the two biggest parties are highly unlikely to back anything he proposes, though the political situation is fluid. "I also don't know what position Mrs Albright would take on this proposal," he added.

"I personally would consider it excellent because into a rather state provincial environment this would bring an international spirit, someone who knows the world well, understands it, and would be able to act."

The main theme of Albright's three-day visit to the land her diplomat father left once because of the Nazis and again because the communist had him on a death list, is promoting democracy in a corner of Europe which as she put it paid a "terrible price" for its freedom.

Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh Kurmitola, Dhaka-1229 Time Extension of Tender Notice

Name of : Extension of Passenger Terminal work Building at ZIA, Kurmitola, Dhaka (SH: Supply, installation, testing & commissioning of sub-station equipment).

In the "Notice Inviting Tender" of the above named work, the last date of issue of tender document has been extended up to 17:00 PM on 14-3-2000, last date & time of receiving tender has been extended up to 12:00 Noon on 15-3-2000 and date & time of opening of tender has been extended up to 15:00PM on 15-3-2000.

Other terms & conditions will remain unaltered.

Asaduzzaman Choudhury Chief Engineer DFP-4975-2/3 G-427 Civil Aviation Authority, Headquarters, Dhaka.

Bangladesh Steel & Engineering Corporation BSEC Bhaban 102, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue Dhaka-1215 Planning & Research Division

Ref. No. BSEC/PL/ISO/0094/Part/ Dated: 01.03.2000

International Tender Notice Invitation of Offer for Implementation of ISO-9002 in 6 (six) Industrial Enterprises

1. Sealed international tenders, in two envelope system, are hereby invited from the bonafide consulting firms having sufficient experience in implementing ISO-9002 in industrial enterprises.

2. Tender documents may be purchased from the Cashier of Accounts Division of Bangladesh Steel & Engineering Corporation (BSEC), BSEC Bhaban (4th floor), 102, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215 on cash payment of Tk. 500/- (Tk five hundred) only (non-refundable) or equivalent foreign currency (non-refundable) per set during office hours on all working days till 23.03.2000.

3. The tenderers shall have to submit Technical Offer along with 'Bid Bond' in the form of Bank Draft/Pay Order/Unconditional Bank Guarantee from a scheduled bank of Bangladesh (for foreign bidder) for an amount of Tk. 10,000.00 (Ten thousand) only or equivalent foreign currency for each industrial enterprise in favour of Bangladesh Steel & Engineering Corporation. The bid bond shall remain valid for 90 (ninety) days from the date of submission of offer with provision of extension if required.

4. Tenders will be received in the office of the Senior General Manager (Pl. & Res.), BSEC, Dhaka up to 2-30 PM on 27.03.2000 and the Technical Offer will be opened in presence of the tenderers (if any) immediately after the closing time.

5. Tenders without bid bond will be rejected outright.

6. BSEC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offer (s) without assigning any reason whatsoever.

No-BSEC/PRD/234 Date-02/03/2000 DFP-5164-5/3/2000 G-429 A T Lutful Kabir Sr. General Manager (Pl. & Res)



Biman Flight Catering Centre বিমান ফ্লাইট ক্যাটারিং সেন্টার

ZIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, KURMITOLA, DHAKA, BANGLADESH. PHONES: 894700-4. CABLE: AIRBANGLA, TLX: 642649 DABG BJ, FAX: 880-02-893006.

Ref: BFCC/HS/Tender/44/2000/18 Dated: 28/02/2000

Re-Tender Notice No: 08/2000

Biman Flight Catering Center (BFCC) invites sealed tender from the experienced supplier/contractor for the following jobs:

Sl No	Name of Items	Date for sale of tender	Earnest money Taka	Cost of schedule	Time & date of dropping tender	Time & date of opening tender
01.	Supply of Tyre and Tube of Car & Microbus (Re-Tender)	From 05/03/2000 to 19/03/2000	3,000/=	100/= (Non-refundable)	From 10:00 hrs to 14:30 hrs on 20/03/2000	At 14:30 hrs on 20/03/2000

Schedule of tender along with other terms and conditions may be obtained on request in the official letterhead pad during office hours on payment of cost of schedule from the Office of the Manager Finance, BFCC, Zia International Airport, Kurmitola, Dhaka. Any eligible bidder may participate in the tender.

BFCC Management reserves the right to accept/reject any or all tender/tenders and also to change the opening date of the tender without assigning any reason whatsoever. If tender opening day happens to be holiday, the tender will be opened on the next working day at the same schedule time.

DFP-5017-2/3 G-428 Dy General Manager, BFCC