



(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**  
published in accordance with Art. 158(3) EPC

(43) Date of publication:  
**17.08.2005 Bulletin 2005/33**

(51) Int Cl.7: **B66B 1/34**, B66B 7/00,  
B66B 11/02

(21) Application number: **02722861.8**

(86) International application number:  
**PCT/JP2002/004271**

(22) Date of filing: **26.04.2002**

(87) International publication number:  
**WO 2003/091141 (06.11.2003 Gazette 2003/45)**

(84) Designated Contracting States:  
**DE FR NL**

(72) Inventor: **HONDA, Takenobu**,  
**Mitsubishi Denki Kabushiki Kaisha**  
**Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8310 (JP)**

(71) Applicant: **mitsubishi denki kabushiki**  
**KAISHA**  
**Tokyo 100-8310 (JP)**

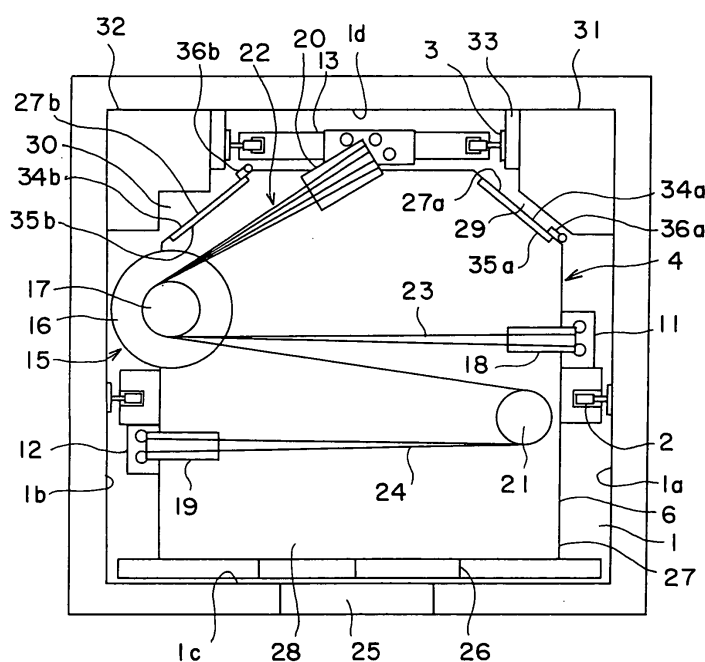
(74) Representative: **HOFFMANN - EITLE**  
**Patent- und Rechtsanwälte**  
**Arabellastrasse 4**  
**81925 München (DE)**

(54) **ELEVATOR**

(57) An elevator apparatus has a car wall formed in a polygonal plan configuration with five or more corners, whereby an installation space is provided between a

hoistway wall and the car wall. In the installation space, at least one hoistway device, such as a main control panel for controlling a drive machine, is installed.

**FIG. 2**



## Description

### TECHNICAL FIELD

**[0001]** The present invention relates to an elevator apparatus having a drive machine arranged in the upper portion in a hoistway.

### BACKGROUND ART

**[0002]** In conventional machine-room-less type elevators, a drive machine and a control panel are arranged, for example, between a hoistway wall and a car. JP 10-139321 A, for example, discloses a machine-room-less type elevator in which a thin drive machine is arranged in the upper portion in the hoistway.

**[0003]** In the conventional machine-room-less type elevator as described above, since there is a need to dispose various devices in the hoistway, a planar area of the hoistway and an overhead dimension are increased. Thus, there is a demand for a further reduction in the size of the hoistway.

### DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

**[0004]** The present invention has been made in view of the above problems. Therefore, it is an object of the present invention to provide an elevator apparatus simplified in construction and allowing a reduction in the hoistway size.

**[0005]** To this end, according to one aspect of the present invention, there is provided an elevator apparatus comprising: a hoistway having a hoistway wall; a car having a car floor, a tubular car wall arranged on the car floor and equipped with a car entrance, and a ceiling arranged on top of the car wall, and raised and lowered in the hoistway; and a plurality of hoistway devices arranged inside the hoistway, wherein the car wall is formed in a polygonal plan configuration with five or more corners to thereby provide an installation space between the hoistway wall and the car wall, and at least one hoistway device is installed in the installation space.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

#### [0006]

Fig. 1 is a front view showing an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 1 of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a plan view showing a main portion of the elevator apparatus in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a plan view showing a main portion of an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 2 of the present invention;

Fig. 4 is a plan view showing a main portion of an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 3 of

the present invention;

Fig. 5 is an explanatory view showing a plane layout of an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 4 of the present invention;

Fig. 6 is an explanatory view showing a plane layout of an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 5 of the present invention; and

Fig. 7 is an explanatory view showing a plane layout of an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 6 of the present invention.

### BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

**[0007]** Preferred embodiments of the present invention will now be described with reference to the drawings.

#### Embodiment 1

**[0008]** Fig. 1 is a front view showing an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 1 of the present invention, and Fig. 2 is a plan view showing a main portion of the elevator apparatus in Fig. 1.

**[0009]** In the drawings, installed in a hoistway 1 are a pair of car guide rails 2 and a pair of counterweight guide rails 3. A car 4 is guided by the car guide rails 2 to be raised and lowered in the hoistway 1. The car 4 has a car frame 5 and a cage 6 supported by the car frame 5. The car frame 5 has a pair of vertical frames 7, a lower frame 8 secured between the lower ends of the vertical frames 7 and supporting the cage 6, and an upper frame 9 secured between the upper ends of the vertical frames 7.

**[0010]** The lower frame 8 is equipped with first and second main rope connecting portions 11 and 12. The first and second main rope connecting portions 11 and 12 are arranged symmetrically with respect to the center of gravity of the car 4.

**[0011]** A counterweight 13 is guided by the counterweight guide rails 3 to be raised and lowered in the hoistway 1. Further, the counterweight 13 is arranged behind the car 4 as seen from the landing side.

**[0012]** A mounting frame 14 (omitted in Fig. 2) is arranged in the upper portion of the hoistway 1. The mounting frame 14 is fixed to the upper end portions of the car guide rails 2 and the counterweight guide rails 3. Mounted on the mounting frame 14 is a drive machine (hoisting machine) for causing the car 4 and the counterweight 13 to be raised and lowered.

**[0013]** The drive machine 15 has a drive machine main body 16 and a driving sheave 17 rotated by the drive machine main body 16. Further, the drive machine 15 is arranged horizontally so that the rotation shaft of the driving sheave 17 may extend vertically. The drive machine main body 16 has a thin motor whose axial dimension is smaller than the diameter thereof.

**[0014]** Mounted on the mounting frame 14 are first and second car side return pulleys 18 and 19, a coun-

terweight side return pulley 20, and a direction change pulley 21. The first car side return pulley 18 is arranged above the first main rope connecting portion 11 such that its rotation shaft extends horizontally in the depth direction of the car 4 (the vertical direction in Fig. 2). The second car side return pulley 19 is arranged above the second main rope connecting portion 12 such that its rotation shaft extends horizontally in the depth direction of the car 4 (the vertical direction in Fig. 2).

**[0015]** The counterweight side return pulley 20 is arranged above the counterweight 13 such that its rotation shaft extends horizontally. Further, the drive machine 15, the first and second car side return pulleys 18 and 19, the counterweight side return pulley 20, and the direction change pulley 21 are arranged above the car 4 so as to overlap the car 4 in a vertical plane of projection.

**[0016]** Wrapped around the driving sheave 17 is a main rope group 22 for suspending the car 4 and the counterweight 13 in the hoistway 1. The main rope group 22 has a plurality of first main ropes 23 and a plurality of second main ropes 24. Here, the number of first main ropes 23 is the same as the number of second main ropes 24.

**[0017]** Further, the first and second main ropes 23 and 24 consist, for example, of highly flexible composite material ropes with resin coating, whereby it is possible to achieve a reduction in diameter for the driving sheave 17, the first and second car side return pulleys 18 and 19, the counterweight side return pulley 20, and the direction change pulley 21.

**[0018]** The first main ropes 23 have first end portions connected to the first main rope connecting portion 11 and second end portions connected to the upper portion of the counterweight 13. The second main ropes 24 have first end portions connected to the main rope connecting portion 12 and second end portions connected to the upper portion of the counterweight 13.

**[0019]** Starting with their first ends, the first main ropes 23 are successively wrapped around the first car side return pulley 18, the driving sheave 17, and the counterweight side return pulley 20 in that order to end in their second end portions. Starting with their first ends, the second main ropes 24 are successively wrapped around the second car side return pulley 19, the direction change pulley 21, the driving sheave 17, and the counterweight side return pulley 20 in that order to end in their second end portions.

**[0020]** That is, the first main ropes 23 and the second main ropes 24 connected to the counterweight 13 bifurcated in two directions by the driving sheave 17 before being connected to the car 4.

**[0021]** The direction change pulley 21, which is arranged substantially horizontally, has its rotation shaft somewhat inclined with respect to the vertical direction so as to make the approach angle of the second main ropes 24 as small as possible.

**[0022]** Further, the hoistway 1 has first and second hoistway walls 1a and 1b opposed to each other, a third

hoistway wall 1c in which a landing entrance 25 is provided, the third hoistway wall 1c, and a fourth hoistway wall 1d opposed to the back surface of the car 4.

**[0023]** A car 6 has a car floor (not shown), a car wall 27 which is arranged on the car floor and equipped with a car entrance 26, and a ceiling 28 arranged on top of the car wall 27.

**[0024]** The car wall 27 has a hexagonal plan configuration, whereby first and second installation spaces 29 and 30 are provided between the hoistway walls 1a, 1b, 1d, and the car wall 27. More specifically, the car wall 27 is formed as a tube with a square sectional configuration, and adjacent corner portions thereof are beveled to form inclined surfaces 27a and 27b. The inclined surfaces 27a and 27b are inclined with respect to the hoistway walls 1a and 1b. The installation spaces 29 and 30 are provided between the inclined surfaces 27a and 27b and the hoistway walls 1a, 1b, and 1d.

**[0025]** In a first installation space 29, a main control panel 31 as a hoistway device is installed. In a second installation place 30, a sub control panel 32 as a hoistway device is installed. A main control panel 31 and a sub control panel 32 control the drive machine and other apparatuses.

**[0026]** Further, the main control panel 31 and the sub control panel 32 are arranged at positions where they are opposed to the inclined surfaces 27a and 27b of the car wall 27 when the car 6 is situated on the uppermost floor. Further, the main control panel 31 and the sub control panel 32 are supported by a plurality of rail brackets 33 supporting the counterweight guide rails 3 with respect to the hoistway wall 1d.

**[0027]** The inclined surfaces 27a and 27b are provided with inspection windows 34a and 34b facing the installation spaces 29 and 30 and covers 35a and 35b for opening and closing the inspection windows 34a and 34b from within the car 6.

**[0028]** Further, the car wall 27 is equipped with cover switches 36a and 36b for detecting the opening and closing of the covers 35a and 35b. When the covers 35a and 35b are opened, the ascent and descent of the car 4 is prevented.

**[0029]** In this elevator apparatus, due to the hexagonal plan configuration of the car wall 27, the first and second installation spaces 29 and 30 are secured between the hoistway walls 1a, 1b, 1d and the car wall 27, and the main control panel 31 and the sub control panel 32 are arranged in the first and second installation spaces 29 and 30, whereby the hoistway 1 can be made compact.

**[0030]** Further, the first and second installation spaces 29 and 30 are secured over the entire raising and lowering traveling distance for the car 4, so that the main control panel 31 and the sub control panel 32 can be increased in size, and these installation spaces allow installation of all manner of hoistway devices, whereby it is possible to achieve space saving for elevator apparatuses of both small and large volume.

**[0031]** Further, due to the configuration of the car wall 27, which is realized by beveling corner portions of a tube that is square in section, it is possible to prevent a deterioration in terms of design, and to utilize the space in the hoistway 1 more effectively.

**[0032]** Furthermore, since the car wall 27 is equipped with the inspection windows 34a and 34b facing the installation spaces 29 and 30 and the covers 35a and 35b for opening and closing the inspection windows 34a and 34b, it is possible for the operator to conduct maintenance operation on the apparatuses installed in the installation spaces 29 and 30 from within the car 6, thereby achieving an improvement in terms of operability.

**[0033]** Further, since the cover switches 36a and 36b are used to detect the opening and closing of the covers 35a and 35b, and the ascent and descent of the car 4 is prohibited when the covers 35a and 35b are opened, it is possible to achieve an improvement in terms of operational safety for maintenance.

**[0034]** Further, since the drive machine 15 is arranged in the upper portion of the interior of the hoistway 1, and the main control panel 31 for controlling the driving machine 15 is arranged on the uppermost floor, it is possible to diminish the distance between the drive machine 15 and the main control panel 31, whereby the control signal is protected from noise, thus achieving an improvement in terms of reliability.

#### Embodiment 2

**[0035]** Next, Fig. 3 is a plan view showing a main portion of an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 2 of the present invention. In this embodiment, the car wall 27 is formed by beveling the four corner portions of a tube that is square in section, forming inclined surfaces 27a through 27d, that is, the car wall 27 is formed as a tube with an octagonal sectional configuration. A first installation space 29 is provided between the inclined surface 27a and the hoistway walls 1a and 1d. Further, a third installation space 41 is provided between the inclined surface 27c and the hoistway walls 1b and 1c.

**[0036]** The inclined surfaces 27a and 27c are respectively equipped with inspection windows 34a and 34c and covers 35a and 35c. In the first installation space 29, a main control panel 31 is installed. In the third installation space 41, a sub control panel 32 is installed. The sub control panel 32 is fixed to the hoistway wall 1b.

**[0037]** The side surface of the car wall 27 has an inspection window 34e for performing maintenance on the sub control panel 32 from within the car 6, and a cover 35e for opening and closing the inspection window 34e from within the car 6.

**[0038]** The lower frame 8 of the car 4 is equipped with first and second main rope connecting portions 11 and 12. More specifically, the first and second main rope connecting portions 11 and 12 are arranged outside the inclined surfaces 27b and 27d. The first and second main rope connecting portions 11 and 12 are arranged

symmetrically with respect to the center of gravity of the car 4.

**[0039]** The inclined surfaces 27b and 27d are respectively equipped with inspection windows 34b and 34d facing the main rope connecting portions 11 and 12, and covers 35b and 35d for opening and closing the inspection windows 34b and 34d.

**[0040]** Starting with their first ends, first main ropes 23 are successively wrapped around a first car side return pulley 18, a direction change pulley 21, a driving sheave 17, and a counterweight side return pulley 20 in that order to end in their second end portions. Starting with their first ends, second main ropes 24 are successively wrapped around a second car side return pulley 19, the driving sheave 17, and the counterweight side return pulley 20 in that order to end in their second end portions.

**[0041]** In this elevator apparatus, the car wall 27 is octagonal in plan configuration, whereby the first and third installation spaces 29 and 41 are secured between the hoistway walls 1a through 1d and the car wall 27. Further, since the main control panel 31 and the sub control panel 32 are respectively arranged in the first and third installation spaces 29 and 41, it is possible to make the hoistway 1 compact.

**[0042]** Further, due to the configuration of the car wall 27, which is realized by beveling the four corner portions of a tube that is square in section, it is possible to achieve an improvement in terms of design, and to utilize the space in the hoistway 1 more effectively.

**[0043]** Further, since the main rope connecting portions 11 and 12 are arranged on the outer side of the diagonally situated inclined surfaces 27b and 27d of the car 6, it is possible to utilize the space in the hoistway 1 still more effectively.

**[0044]** Furthermore, since the inspection windows 34b and 34d facing the main rope connecting portions 11 and 12 are provided in the inclined surfaces 27b and 27d, it is possible to perform maintenance on the main rope connecting portions 11 and 12 from within the car 6, thereby achieving an improvement in terms of operability and safety.

#### Embodiment 3

**[0045]** Next, Fig. 4 is a plan view showing a main portion of an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 3 of the present invention. While in Embodiments 1 and 2 a counterweight 13 is arranged behind the car 4 as seen from a landing side, in Embodiment 3, the counterweight 13 is arranged on the side of the car 4 so as to be opposed to one side surface of the car 6. The car wall 27 is formed by beveling three corner portions of a tube that is square in section, forming the inclined surfaces 27a, 27b, and 27d, that is, as a tubular member with a heptagonal sectional configuration. Between the inclined surface 27a and the hoistway walls 1a and 1d, a first installation space 29 is provided. Otherwise, this

embodiment is of the same construction as the Embodiments 1 and 2.

**[0046]** In this way, even with the elevator apparatus in which the counterweight 13 is arranged by the side of the car 4, it is possible to form the car wall 27 in the polygonal plan configuration with five or more corners to secure the installation space 29, installing the main control panel 31 in the installation space 29, so that it is possible to make the hoistway 1 compact.

#### Embodiment 4

**[0047]** Next, Fig. 5 is an explanatory view showing a plan layout of an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 4 of the present invention. While Embodiments 1 through 3 have been described as applied to a single elevator apparatus, the present invention is also applicable to a case in which a plurality of elevator apparatuses are installed side by side as shown in Fig. 5. In this case, an installation space 42 is arranged between the two cars 27, whereby it is possible to effectively utilize the interior of the hoistway 1 and to secure a still larger installation space 42.

#### Embodiment 5

**[0048]** Next, Fig. 6 is an explanatory view showing a plan layout of an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 5 of the present invention. While in Embodiments 1 through 4 the car wall 27 is formed by beveling at least one corner portion of a tube that is square in section to form the inclined surfaces 27a through 27d, it is also possible, as shown in Fig. 6, to realize a sectional configuration in which a recess 27e is provided in a part of a side of a square. In this arrangement also, it is possible to secure an installation space 43 between the hoistway walls 1a and 1d and the recess 27e.

#### Embodiment 6

**[0049]** Next, Fig. 7 is an explanatory view showing a plan layout of an elevator apparatus according to Embodiment 6 of the present invention. While in Embodiments 1 through 4 the car wall 27 is provided with planar inclined surfaces 27a through 27d, it is also possible, as shown, for example, in Fig. 7, to provide the car wall 27 with a curved surface 27f opposed to an installation space 44.

**[0050]** The plan configuration of the car may also be a polygon with nine or more corners. In other words, it is only necessary for the car wall to be a tubular polyhedron with five or more faces.

**[0051]** Further, while in the above embodiments the main control panel 31 and the sub control panel 32 constitute the hoistway devices to be installed, it is also possible to install other hoistway devices in the installation space. Examples of other hoistway devices include such as a transformer, a battery (battery charger), and

a remote control apparatus (monitoring panel).

**[0052]** Here, the remote control apparatus consists of a monitoring panel for outputting a remote control signal to a remotely situated control room. Since in many cases the remote control apparatus is optionally installed, it has been rather difficult to secure the installation space for it. According to the present invention, however, the installation space extends substantially over the entire ascending/descending distance for the car, the remote control apparatus can be easily installed.

**[0053]** Further, it is also possible to install a drive machine for raising and lowering the car in the installation space as a hoistway device.

**[0054]** Furthermore, while the above embodiments have been described as applied to an elevator apparatus of a 1:1 roping system, there are no particular limitations regarding the roping system. For example, the present invention is also applicable to an elevator apparatus of a 2:1 roping system.

#### Claims

##### 1. An elevator apparatus comprising:

a hoistway having a hoistway wall;  
a car having a car floor, a tubular car wall arranged on the car floor and equipped with a car entrance, and a ceiling arranged on top of the car wall, and raised and lowered in the hoistway; and  
a plurality of hoistway devices arranged inside the hoistway,

wherein the car wall is formed in a polygonal plan configuration with five or more corners to thereby provide an installation space between the hoistway wall and the car wall, and at least one hoistway devices is installed in the installation space.

2. An elevator apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the car wall consists of a tubular member square in section with at least one corner portion thereof beveled to form an inclined surface, and wherein the installation space is provided between the inclined surface and the hoistway wall.

3. An elevator apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the car wall is equipped with an inspection window facing the installation space and a cover for opening and closing the inspection window.

4. An elevator apparatus according to Claim 3, further comprising a cover switch for detecting the opening and closing of the cover, wherein a raising and lowering operation of the car is prohibited when the cover is opened.

5. An elevator apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a drive machine arranged in an upper portion of the interior of the hoistway for raising and lowering the car, wherein the hoistway devices include a control panel for controlling the drive machine, with the control panel being situated so as to be opposed to the car wall when the car is on the uppermost floor.

10

15

20

25

30

35

40

45

50

55

FIG. 1

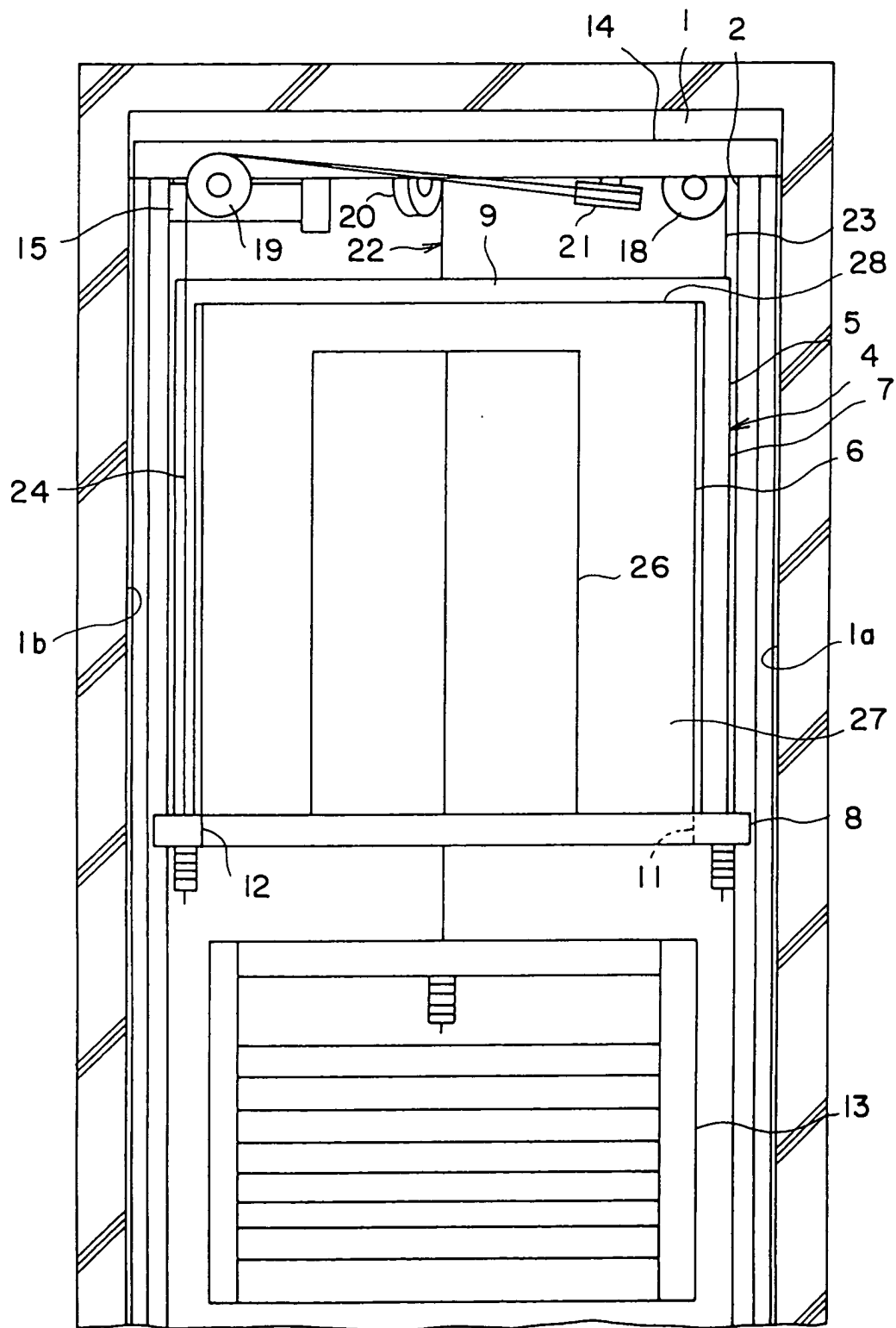


FIG. 2

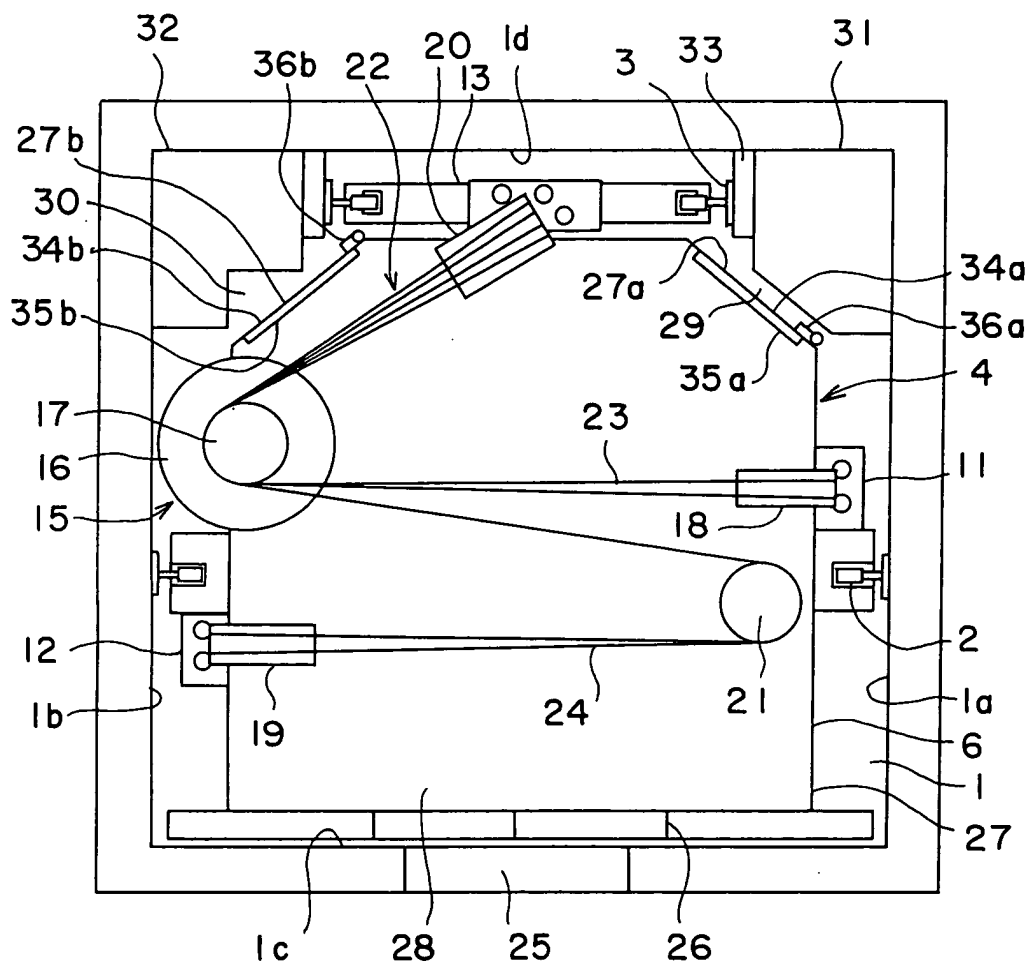




FIG. 3

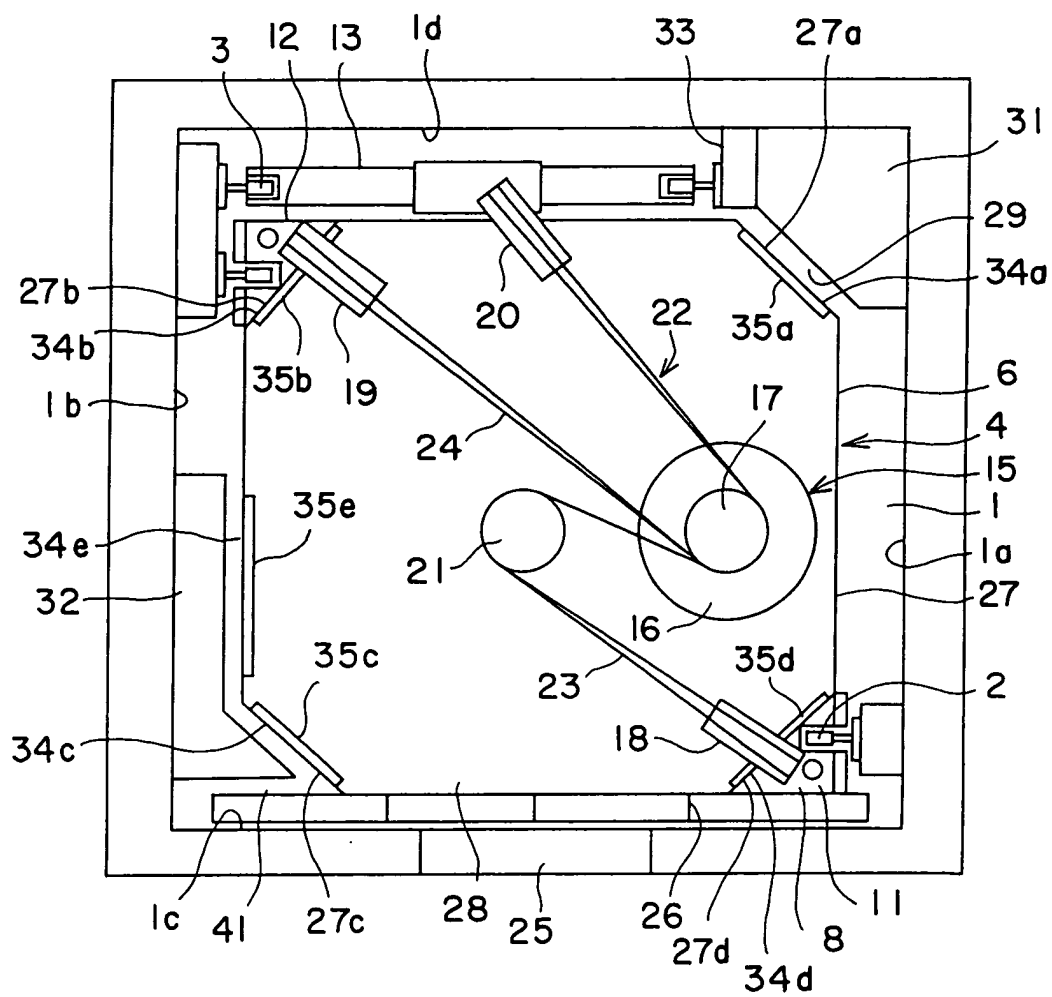


FIG. 4

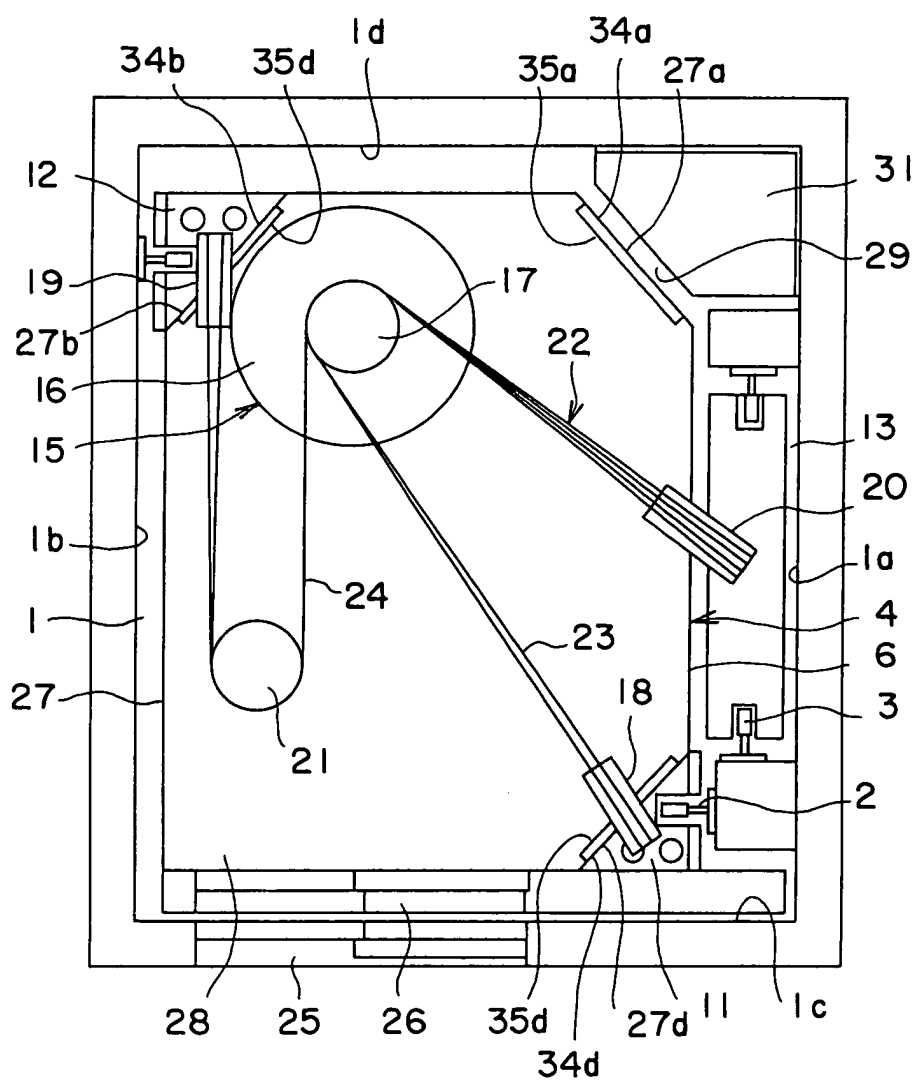


FIG. 5

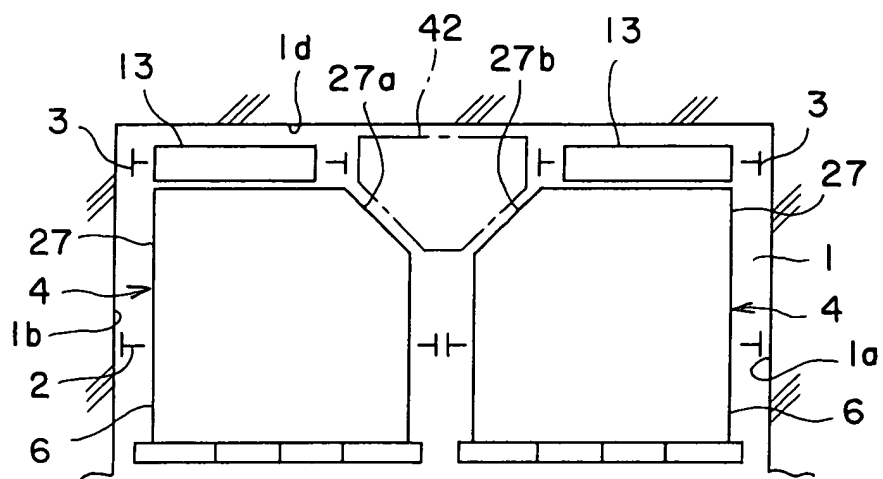


FIG. 6

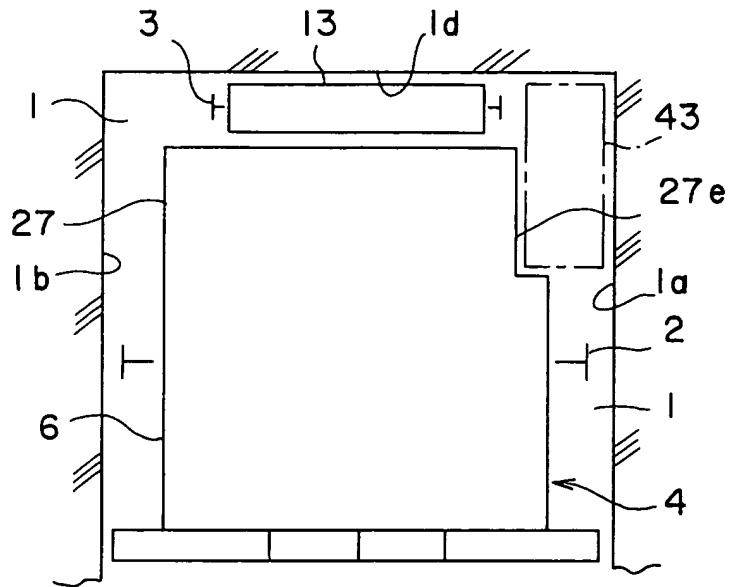
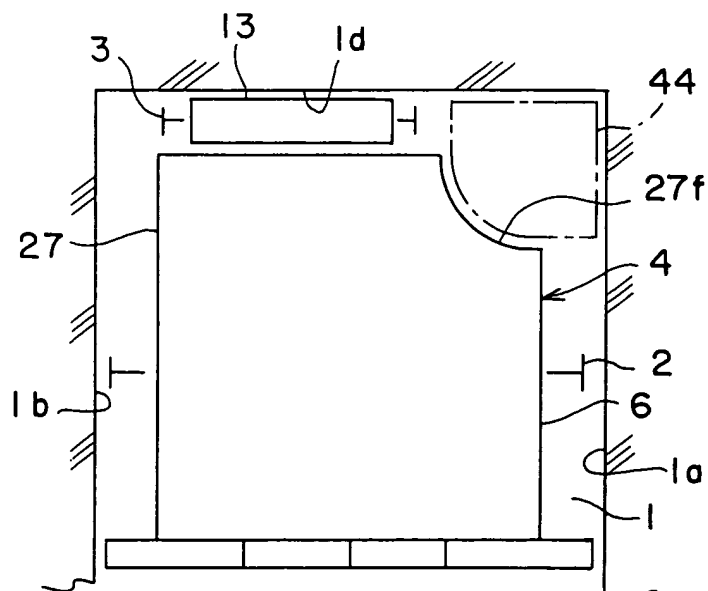


FIG. 7



## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP02/04271

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int.Cl.<sup>7</sup> B66B1/34, 7/00, 11/02

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Int.Cl.<sup>7</sup> B66B1/00-11/08

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Jitsuyo Shinan Koho	1922-1996	Jitsuyo Shinan Toroku Koho	1996-2003
Kokai Jitsuyo Shinan Koho	1971-2003	Toroku Jitsuyo Shinan Koho	1994-2003

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	JP 4-89787 A (Mitsubishi Electric Corp.),	1-2
Y	23 March, 1992 (23.03.92), (Family: none)	3-5
Y	JP 2000-247560 A (Mitsubishi Electric Corp.), 12 September, 2000 (12.09.00), & EP 1031528 A1 & CN 1264678 A	3-4
Y	JP 2000-238971 A (Hitachi Building Systems Co., Ltd.), 05 September, 2000 (05.09.00), (Family: none)	5
A	JP 2001-253659 A (Mitsubishi Electric Corp.), 18 September, 2001 (18.09.01), (Family: none)	1-2

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.
 ☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date	"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"&" document member of the same patent family
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search  
21 January, 2003 (21.01.03)Date of mailing of the international search report  
04 February, 2003 (04.02.03)Name and mailing address of the ISA/  
Japanese Patent Office

Authorized officer

Facsimile No.

Telephone No.

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP02/04271

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	JP 2001-106461 A (Matsushita Electric Works, Ltd.), 17 April, 2001 (17.04.01), (Family: none)	1, 5
A	JP 2001-233555 A (Hitachi Building Systems Co., Ltd.), 28 August, 2001 (28.08.01), (Family: none)	1-5

Form PCT/ISA/210 (continuation of second sheet) (July 1998)