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(54) **SANITARY WASHING DEVICE**

(57) A sanitary washing device includes a casing, a nozzle unit configured to advance and retreat between the casing and a toilet, a flexible rack connected to the nozzle unit, a gear configured to engage the rack, a drive motor configured to advance and retract the nozzle unit by moving the rack via the gear, and a rack guide con-

figured to guide the rack. The rack guide includes a first curved portion curved to be upwardly convex, and a second curved portion positioned further back than the first curved portion. The second curved portion includes a portion bent upward as the second curved portion extends backward.

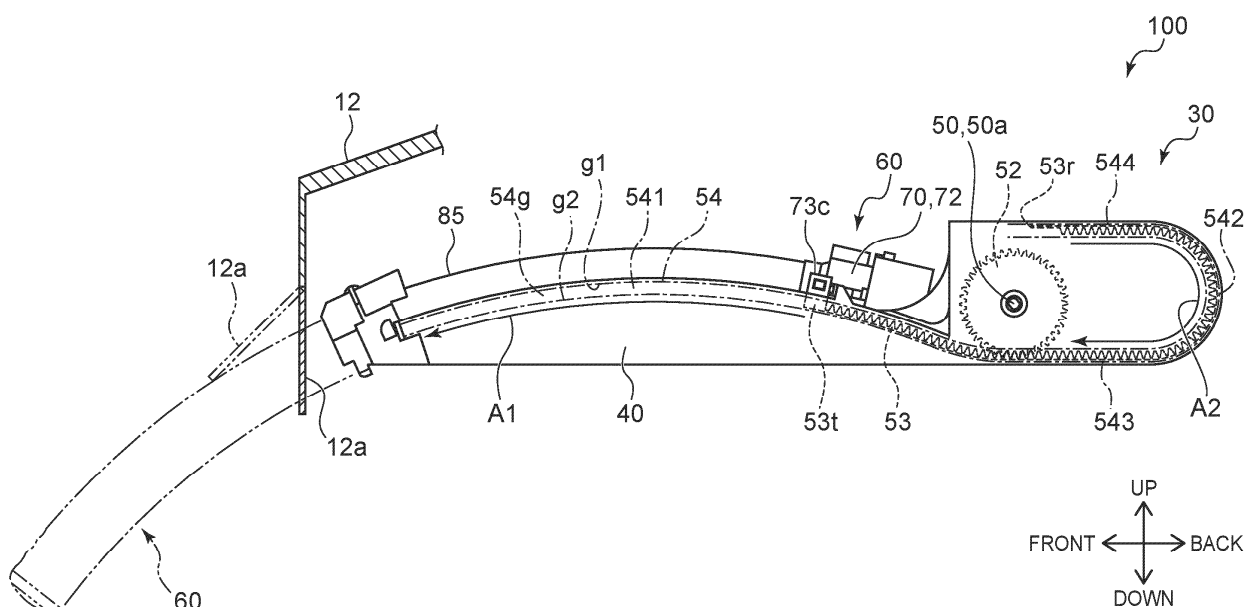


FIG. 4

Description

FIELD

[0001] Embodiments described herein relate generally to a sanitary washing device.

BACKGROUND

[0002] A sanitary washing device that includes a nozzle that advances and retreats with respect to a toilet is known in the art. The sanitary washing device performs a private part wash in which a human body private part is washed by discharging wash water from the nozzle advanced into the toilet. It is desirable to suppress the height of the sanitary washing device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0003]

FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing a toilet device including a sanitary washing device according to an embodiment;

FIG. 2 is a block diagram showing relevant components of the sanitary washing device;

FIG. 3 is a schematic perspective view illustrating a private part washing device according to an embodiment;

FIG. 4 is a schematic view illustrating a private part washing device according to an embodiment;

FIG. 5 is a schematic perspective view illustrating a nozzle unit according to an embodiment;

FIG. 6 is a schematic perspective view illustrating a supporter according to an embodiment;

FIG. 7 is a schematic perspective view illustrating a main part of the supporter according to an embodiment;

FIG. 8 is a schematic top view illustrating the main part of the supporter according to an embodiment;

FIG. 9 is a schematic perspective view illustrating a cover part of a supporter according to an embodiment;

FIGS. 10A and 10B are schematic side views illustrating a part of a private part washing device according to an embodiment;

FIG. 11 is a schematic side view illustrating a part of a private part washing device according to a reference example; and

FIG. 12 is a schematic side view illustrating a part of a private part washing device according to a modification of the embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0004] A first invention is a sanitary washing device including a casing, a nozzle unit configured to advance and retreat between the casing and a toilet, a flexible rack

connected to the nozzle unit, a gear configured to engage the rack, a drive motor configured to advance and retract the nozzle unit by moving the rack via the gear, and a rack guide configured to guide the rack; the rack guide includes a first curved portion curved to be upwardly convex, and a second curved portion positioned further back than the first curved portion; and the second curved portion includes a portion bent upward as the second curved portion extends backward.

[0005] According to the sanitary washing device, the rack guide includes the first curved portion and the second curved portion which are curved in mutually-different directions. As a result, the height of the rack guide can be suppressed, and the height of the sanitary washing device can be suppressed. The rack is flexible so as to move through the curved rack guide.

[0006] A second invention is the sanitary washing device of the first invention, wherein a curvature of the second curved portion is greater than a curvature of the first curved portion.

[0007] According to the sanitary washing device, the curvature of the second curved portion is set to be large, and so the height of the rack guide can be further suppressed, and the height of the sanitary washing device can be further suppressed.

[0008] A third invention is the sanitary washing device of the first or second invention, wherein the nozzle unit includes a washing nozzle shaped so that the washing nozzle is curved along the first curved portion when the washing nozzle is in a stored state.

[0009] According to the sanitary washing device, the washing nozzle can be stored so that the washing nozzle extends along the first curved portion, and so the height of the sanitary washing device can be further suppressed.

[0010] A fourth invention is the sanitary washing device of the third invention that further includes a supporter configured to support the nozzle unit so that the nozzle unit is slidable; the supporter includes a nozzle placement part having an upper surface curved to be upwardly convex; and the washing nozzle is disposed above the upper surface of the nozzle placement part when the washing nozzle is in the stored state.

[0011] According to the sanitary washing device, the curved washing nozzle is disposed on the curved upper surface of the supporter. The washing nozzle can be advanced frontward and downward; and water can be discharged from a lower position during a private part wash. Therefore, a nozzle unit that has a high washing performance can be provided while suppressing the height.

[0012] A fifth invention is the sanitary washing device of the first or second invention, wherein the gear is positioned between the first curved portion and the second curved portion.

[0013] According to the sanitary washing device, a structure can be obtained in which the gear and the rack engage in a linear portion of the rack guide between the first curved portion and the second curved portion.

[0014] Exemplary embodiments will now be described with reference to the drawings. Similar components in the drawings are marked with like reference numerals; and a detailed description is omitted as appropriate.

[0015] FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing a toilet device including a sanitary washing device according to an embodiment.

[0016] As shown in FIG. 1, the toilet device 300 according to the embodiment includes the sanitary washing device 100 and a western-style sit-down toilet 200 (hereinafter, called simply the "toilet" 200 for convenience of description). The sanitary washing device 100 is disposed on the toilet 200. The sanitary washing device 100 includes a private part washing device 30 for washing a private part of a user seated on a toilet seat 20.

[0017] A casing 10 includes a case plate 11 and a case cover 12. The case plate 11 forms the bottom part of the casing 10. The case plate 11 is placed on the back part of the toilet 200. The case cover 12 is disposed on the case plate 11 and covers the top of the case plate 11. The toilet seat 20 and a toilet lid 25 are pivotally supported by the case cover 12 to be rotatable.

[0018] The casing 10 stores the private part washing device 30 inside a space surrounded with the case plate 11 and the case cover 12. Functional units such as, for example, an opening/closing unit that controls the open/close operations of the toilet seat 20 and the toilet lid 25, a toilet seat heating unit that controls the temperature of the toilet seat 20, a communication unit that can communicate with an operation unit, etc., are stored inside the casing 10.

[0019] In this specification, "up/upward/above", "down/downward/below", "front/frontward/forward", "back/backward/behind", "right/rightward", and "left/leftward" are directions when viewed by a user sitting on the toilet seat 20 with the user's back facing the toilet lid 25 as shown in FIG. 1. "Longitudinal" means "frontward and/or backward", and "lateral" means "leftward and/or rightward".

[0020] FIG. 2 is a block diagram showing relevant components of the sanitary washing device.

[0021] FIG. 2 shows relevant components of both a water channel system and an electrical system of the sanitary washing device 100.

[0022] As shown in FIG. 2, the sanitary washing device 100 includes a pipe line 110. The pipe line 110 extends to a nozzle unit 60 from a water supply source 500 such as a service water line, a water storage tank, etc. The pipe line 110 guides the water supplied from the water supply source 500 to the nozzle unit 60.

[0023] An electromagnetic valve 120 is disposed at the upstream side of the pipe line 110. The electromagnetic valve 120 is an openable and closable electromagnetic valve and controls the supply of the water based on a command from a controller 130 disposed inside the casing 10. In other words, the electromagnetic valve 120 opens and closes the pipe line 110. The water that is supplied from the water supply source 500 is caused to

flow in the pipe line 110 by setting the electromagnetic valve 120 to the open state.

[0024] A pressure regulator valve 121 is disposed downstream of the electromagnetic valve 120. The pressure regulator valve 121 regulates the pressure inside the pipe line 110 to be within a prescribed pressure range when the water supply pressure is high. A check valve 122 is disposed downstream of the pressure regulator valve 121. The check valve 122 suppresses the backflow of water toward the upstream side of the check valve 122 when the pressure inside the pipe line 110 drops, etc.

[0025] A heat exchanger unit 123 (a heater) is disposed downstream of the check valve 122. The heat exchanger unit 123 includes a heater and heats the water supplied from the water supply source 500 to a specified temperature. In other words, the heat exchanger unit 123 produces warm water.

[0026] The heat exchanger unit 123 is, for example, an instant heating-type (instantaneous-type) heat exchanger that uses a ceramic heater, etc. Compared to a warm water storage heating-type heat exchanger that uses a warm water storage tank, the instant heating-type heat exchanger can heat the water to the specified temperature in a short period of time. The heat exchanger unit 123 is not limited to an instant heating-type heat exchanger and may be a warm water storage heating-type heat exchanger. The heater is not limited to a heat exchanger; for example, another heating technique such as one that utilizes microwave heating, etc., may be used.

[0027] The heat exchanger unit 123 is connected with the controller 130. For example, the controller 130 heats the water to a temperature set by an operation unit 140 by controlling the heat exchanger unit 123 according to an operation of the operation unit 140 by the user.

[0028] A flow rate sensor 124 is disposed downstream of the heat exchanger unit 123. The flow rate sensor 124 detects the flow rate of the water discharged from the heat exchanger unit 123. In other words, the flow rate sensor 124 detects the flow rate of the water flowing through the pipe line 110. The flow rate sensor 124 is connected to the controller 130. The flow rate sensor 124 inputs the detection result of the flow rate to the controller 130.

[0029] A vacuum breaker (VB) 125 is disposed downstream of the flow rate sensor 124. The vacuum breaker 125 includes, for example, a flow channel for allowing the water to flow, an intake for drawing air into the flow channel, and a valve mechanism that opens and closes the intake. For example, the valve mechanism blocks the intake when water is flowing in the flow channel, and draws air into the flow channel by opening the intake when the flow of the water stops. In other words, the vacuum breaker 125 draws air into the pipe line 110 when the water does not flow in the pipe line 110. The valve mechanism includes, for example, a float valve.

[0030] The vacuum breaker 125 draws air into the pipe line 110, thereby promoting, for example, water drainage of the part of the pipe line 110 downstream of the vacuum

breaker 125. For example, the vacuum breaker 125 promotes the water drainage of the nozzle unit 60. Thus, the vacuum breaker 125 drains the water inside the nozzle unit 60 and draws air into the nozzle unit 60, thereby suppressing, for example, the undesirable back-flow to the water supply source 500 (the fresh water) side of the wash water inside the nozzle unit 60, etc.

[0031] An electrolytic cell unit 126 is disposed downstream of the vacuum breaker 125. The electrolytic cell unit 126 generates a liquid (functional water) including hypochlorous acid from the tap water by electrolyzing the tap water flowing through the interior of the electrolytic cell unit 126. The electrolytic cell unit 126 is connected to the controller 130. The electrolytic cell unit 126 generates functional water based on a control by the controller 130.

[0032] The functional water that is generated by the electrolytic cell unit 126 may be, for example, a solution including metal ions such as silver ions, copper ions, etc. Or, the functional water that is generated by the electrolytic cell unit 126 may be a solution including electrolytic chlorine, ozone, etc. Or, the functional water that is generated by the electrolytic cell unit 126 may be acidic water or alkaline water.

[0033] A pressure modulator 127 is disposed downstream of the electrolytic cell unit 126. The pressure modulator 127 applies a pulsatory motion to the water discharged from the water discharge port of a washing nozzle 85 and the water discharge port of a nozzle wash part 44 by applying a pulsatory motion or an acceleration to the flow of the water inside the pipe line 110. In other words, the pressure modulator 127 causes the fluidic state of the water flowing through the pipe line 110 to fluctuate. The pressure modulator 127 is connected to the controller 130. The pressure modulator 127 causes the fluidic state of the water to fluctuate based on a control by the controller 130. The pressure modulator 127 causes the pressure of the water inside the pipe line 110 to fluctuate.

[0034] A flow regulator 71 and a flow channel switch valve 70 (a flow channel switching device) are disposed downstream of the pressure modulator 127. The flow regulator 71 (the flow regulating valve) regulates the water force (the flow rate). The flow channel switch valve 70 is disposed downstream of the flow regulator 71. The flow channel switch valve 70 is connected with a water supply flow channel 79. Water is supplied from the upstream side to the flow channel switch valve 70 via the water supply flow channel 79.

[0035] The flow channel switch valve 70 includes a flow path switching part 72. The flow path switching part 72 performs opening, closing, and switching of the water supply to a nozzle main body 80 of the washing nozzle 85 and/or the nozzle wash part 44. The flow regulator 71 and the flow path switching part 72 are connected to the controller 130. The operations of the flow regulator 71 and the flow path switching part 72 are controlled by the controller 130.

[0036] Multiple flow channels (a bottom wash channel

80a, a gentle wash channel 80b, a bidet wash channel 80c, a body wash flow channel 75, and a spout flow channel 76) are connected downstream of the flow channel switch valve 70 (the flow path switching part 72). The bottom wash channel 80a, the gentle wash channel 80b, and the bidet wash channel 80c are disposed inside the nozzle main body 80. The bottom wash channel 80a, the gentle wash channel 80b, and the bidet wash channel 80c are flow channels supplying water to water discharge ports that discharge the water toward human body private parts. In other words, the washing nozzle 85 discharges the water supplied from the flow path switching part 72 via the bottom wash channel 80a, the gentle wash channel 80b, and the bidet wash channel 80c.

[0037] The body wash flow channel 75 is a pipe line that connects between the flow channel switch valve 70 and the nozzle wash part 44. The nozzle wash part 44 discharges the water supplied from the flow path switching part 72 toward the outer perimeter surface (the body) of the washing nozzle 85 via the body wash flow channel 75. As a result, the nozzle wash part 44 washes the washing nozzle 85.

[0038] The spout flow channel 76 is a pipe line connecting the flow channel switch valve 70 and a spout part 77. The spout part 77 is, for example, a nozzle that turns the water supplied from the flow path switching part 72 via the spout flow channel 76 into a mist and sprays the mist into the bowl of the toilet 200. Dirt can be prevented from adhering inside the toilet 200 by spraying the water into the bowl.

[0039] The flow path switching part 72 switches the opening and closing of the flow channels of the bottom wash channel 80a, the gentle wash channel 80b, the bidet wash channel 80c, the body wash flow channel 75, and the spout flow channel 76. By opening each flow channel, the flow channel is set to a flow-enabled state in which water is supplied and flows. By closing each flow channel, the flow channel is set to a water shutoff state in which the supply of the water is stopped (e.g., a state in which water does not flow).

[0040] The flow path switching part 72 switches each of multiple water discharge ports such as the water discharge ports in the washing nozzle 85, the water discharge port in the nozzle wash part 44, etc., between a state of communicating with the pipe line 110 and a state of not communicating with the pipe line 110. The flow channel that is enabled to carry water among the multiple flow channels connected downstream of the flow channel switch valve 70 is switched by the flow channel switch valve 70 (the flow path switching part 72). In other words, the flow channel switch valve 70 selects the flow channel that supplies water to the downstream side among the multiple flow channels connected downstream of the flow channel switch valve 70.

[0041] The controller 130 is, for example, a control circuit that includes an electrical circuit such as a CPU (Central Processing Unit), etc. The controller 130 is supplied with power from a power supply circuit 135

and controls operations of the electromagnetic valve 120, the heat exchanger unit 123, the electrolytic cell unit 126, the pressure modulator 127, the flow regulator 71, the flow path switching part 72, a drive motor 50, etc., based on signals from a seating detection sensor 150, the flow rate sensor 124, the operation unit 140, etc. As a result, the controller 130 controls the operation of the nozzle unit 60.

[0042] FIG. 3 is a schematic perspective view illustrating a private part washing device according to an embodiment.

[0043] FIG. 4 schematically illustrates the private part washing device 30 of the sanitary washing device 100 when viewed from the left. As illustrated in FIG. 4, the private part washing device 30 includes the nozzle unit 60, a rack 53, a gear 52, the drive motor 50, and a rack guide 54.

[0044] The nozzle unit 60 is curved to be upwardly convex. The nozzle unit 60 includes the washing nozzle 85 and the flow channel switch valve 70 (the flow path switching part 72) positioned at the back of the washing nozzle 85. The flow channel switch valve 70 is connected to the back end of the washing nozzle 85, which is curved to be upwardly convex.

[0045] The nozzle unit 60 advances and retreats between the toilet 200 and the casing 10 described with reference to FIG. 1. With the exception of the double dot-dash lines, FIGS. 3 and 4 illustrate a stored state in which the nozzle unit 60 is at a retracted position. In the stored state, the tip of the nozzle unit 60 is positioned behind the front end of the case cover 12, and is positioned below the case cover 12. For example, in the stored state, the nozzle unit 60 is positioned behind an openable/closable lid 12a included in the case cover 12, and is stored between the case cover 12 and the case plate 11 (see FIG. 1). The retracted position is, for example, the most backward position within the range of movement of the nozzle unit 60. When viewed in side-view as illustrated in FIG. 4, the back part of the washing nozzle 85 is inclined upward toward the front; and the front part of the washing nozzle 85 is inclined downward toward the front. That is, for example, in the stored state, the upper end (the top) of the washing nozzle 85 or the nozzle unit 60 is positioned at the middle of the nozzle unit 60 in the longitudinal direction.

[0046] The double dot-dash lines in FIG. 4 illustrate the washing nozzle 85 and the openable/closable lid 12a when the nozzle unit 60 is in an advanced state in which the nozzle unit 60 is moved to an advanced position. In the advanced state, the tip of the nozzle unit 60 is positioned further forward than the front end of the case cover 12. For example, the tip of the nozzle unit 60 in the advanced state is positioned further forward than the openable/closable lid 12a and is advanced to a position inside the toilet 200 and further forward than the casing 10. When the nozzle unit 60 advances into the toilet 200, the openable/closable lid 12a is pressed open by the tip of the nozzle unit 60. The advanced position is, for example,

the most frontward position within the range of movement of the nozzle unit 60. The tip of the nozzle unit 60 in the advanced state is further forward and lower than the tip of the nozzle unit 60 in the stored state.

[0047] The rack 53 is a flexible rack (a cable rack). The rack 53 is flexible enough to move through the curved rack guide 54 (a passageway 54g). The rack 53 may include, for example, a resin. The rack 53 includes a tip part 53t, which is a front end part, and a back end 53r, which is the end at the side opposite to the tip part 53t in the extension direction along the rack guide 54. The tip part 53t of the rack 53 is connected to an engaging part 73c of the nozzle unit 60.

[0048] The gear 52 is a substantially circular gear when viewed in side-view. The teeth of the gear 52 engage the teeth of the rack 53. Multiple teeth configured to engage the gear 52 are arranged at the surface of the rack 53 at the gear 52 side, and are arranged in the extension direction of the rack 53. The rack 53 is a rack gear that converts rotational motion of the gear 52 into linear motion.

[0049] The drive motor 50 engages the gear 52. The gear 52 is mounted to the rotary shaft of the drive motor 50. The drive force of the drive motor 50 is transmitted to the rack 53 via the gear 52 and moves the rack 53. The drive motor 50 advances and retracts the nozzle unit 60 by moving the rack 53.

[0050] The rack 53 is guided by the rack guide 54 when moved by the drive force of the drive motor 50. The rack guide 54 is a part configured to contain the rack 53 and holds the rack 53 so that the rack 53 is slidable. The rack guide 54 defines the passageway 54g (the trajectory of the rack 53) through which the rack 53 moves.

[0051] More specifically, the rack guide 54 includes a first guide surface g1 and a second guide surface g2 that guide the rack 53. The space between the first guide surface g1 and the second guide surface g2 is used as the passageway 54g. The rack 53 slides along the first guide surface g1 and the second guide surface g2 by abutting the first guide surface g1 and the second guide surface g2.

[0052] For example, when the gear 52 is rotated clockwise by the drive motor 50 from the stored state shown in FIG. 4, the rack 53 is moved frontward through the curved rack guide 54 from the position illustrated in FIG. 4. In other words, the tip part 53t of the rack 53 is moved frontward along arrow A1 through the arc-like trajectory inside a first curved portion 541 of the rack guide 54. The back end 53r of the rack 53 is moved along arrow A2 from a linear portion 544 of the rack guide 54 to a linear portion 543 via a second curved portion 542. The nozzle unit 60 is advanced toward the interior of the toilet 200 by the rack 53 pressing the engaging part 73c frontward.

[0053] On the other hand, for example, the rack 53 is moved backward when the gear 52 is rotated counterclockwise from the state in which the rack 53 has been moved frontward and the nozzle unit 60 is in the advanced state. The rack 53 is moved backward through

the curved rack guide 54 to return to the position illustrated in FIG. 4. In other words, the tip part 53t of the rack 53 is moved backward along the opposite direction of arrow A1 through the arc-like trajectory inside the first curved portion 541 of the rack guide 54. The back end 53r of the rack 53 is moved along the opposite direction of arrow A2 from the linear portion 543 of the rack guide 54 toward the linear portion 544 via the second curved portion 542. The nozzle unit 60 is retracted inside the casing 10 by the rack 53 pulling the engaging part 73c backward.

[0054] Thus, the nozzle unit 60 can be moved along an arc-like trajectory between the advanced position and the retracted position by the drive force of the drive motor 50 transmitted via the gear 52 and the rack 53.

[0055] The private part washing device 30 further includes a supporter 40. For example, the supporter 40 is fixed with respect to the casing 10 (see FIG. 1). The supporter 40 supports the nozzle unit 60 so that the nozzle unit 60 is slidable. The supporter 40 is positioned below the nozzle unit 60 and supports the nozzle unit 60 from below.

[0056] The supporter 40 is positioned so that the supporter 40 is higher than, for example, an upper surface 200t (a rim surface; see FIG. 1) of the toilet 200. For example, the nozzle unit 60 is higher than the upper surface 200t when the nozzle unit 60 is in the stored state. As a result, penetration of liquid waste into the private part washing device 30 can be suppressed, and the supporter 40 and/or the nozzle unit 60 can be prevented from becoming dirty.

[0057] FIG. 5 is a schematic perspective view illustrating a nozzle unit according to an embodiment.

[0058] The washing nozzle 85 includes the nozzle main body 80 that has a curved (or bent) tubular shape, and a nozzle cover 90 that has a curved cylindrical shape covering the outer perimeter of the nozzle main body 80.

[0059] Water discharge ports (a bottom wash water discharge port 83a, a gentle wash water discharge port 83b, and a bidet wash water discharge port 83c) that discharge water toward human body private parts above the water discharge port in the advanced state of the nozzle unit 60 are formed in the tip of the washing nozzle 85. The bottom wash channel 80a, the gentle wash channel 80b, and the bidet wash channel 80c that are schematically illustrated in FIG. 2 are disposed in the nozzle main body 80.

[0060] The bottom wash channel 80a allows water to flow from the flow path switching part 72 to the bottom wash water discharge port 83a. The bottom wash water discharge port 83a discharges the water supplied from the flow path switching part 72 via the bottom wash channel 80a.

[0061] The gentle wash channel 80b allows water to flow from the flow path switching part 72 to the gentle wash water discharge port 83b. The gentle wash water discharge port 83b discharges the water supplied from the flow path switching part 72 via the gentle wash

channel 80b.

[0062] The bidet wash channel 80c allows water to flow from the flow path switching part 72 to the bidet wash water discharge port 83c. The bidet wash water discharge port 83c discharges the water supplied from the flow path switching part 72 via the bidet wash channel 80c.

[0063] For example, the flow channel switch valve 70 is continuous with the back end of the nozzle main body 80. The flow channel switch valve 70 includes a case 73 that stores the flow path switching part 72. The flow path switching part 72 includes a valve main body 72a. For example, a rotor and a stator can be used as the valve main body 72a. For example, the stator is disk-shaped and has ports (openings) connected respectively to the flow channels. The rotor is disk-shaped and is arranged to face the stator at the upstream side of the stator. A drive mechanism that includes an electromotor such as a motor, a solenoid, etc., rotates the rotor. The rotor switches the ports between a closed state and an open state by rotating in contact with the stator. By closing each port, the flow channel that is connected with the port is switched to a water shutoff state. By opening each port, the flow channel that is connected with the port is switched to a flow-enabled state. The configuration is not limited thereto, and the flow path switching part 72 may have any configuration that can switch the flow channel that allows the water to flow.

[0064] For example, the case 73 is mounted to the nozzle main body 80. A part of the case 73 may be formed as one piece with a part of the nozzle main body 80. The nozzle cover 90 is mounted to the case 73 and the nozzle main body 80. As a result, the nozzle unit 60 slides, with the flow channel switch valve 70, the nozzle main body 80, and the nozzle cover 90 as one piece, in the longitudinal direction with respect to the supporter 40.

[0065] Thus, by curving the washing nozzle 85 to be upwardly convex, the washing nozzle can be advanced to a lower position in the advanced state while suppressing the height (the width in the vertical direction) in the stored state. In other words, a nozzle unit that has high washing performance can be provided while suppressing the height.

[0066] The case 73 includes a protrusion 73a and a recess 73b. The protrusion 73a and the recess 73b are engaging parts that engage parts (a groove part 45 and a rail part 46 described below) of the supporter 40. The protrusion 73a protrudes outward from the outer perimeter of the case 73. The recess 73b is disposed at the outer perimeter of the case 73.

[0067] In the example, the engaging part 73c that connects the nozzle unit 60 to the rack 53 (see FIG. 4) is included in the case 73. The engaging part 73c is a protrusion protruding sideward from the outer perimeter of the case 73.

[0068] FIG. 6 is a schematic perspective view illustrating a supporter according to an embodiment.

[0069] The supporter 40 includes a main part 41 and a

cover part 48 that covers the side of the main part 41.

[0070] FIG. 7 is a schematic perspective view illustrating a main part of the supporter according to the embodiment.

[0071] FIG. 8 is a schematic top view illustrating the main part of the supporter according to the embodiment.

[0072] For example, as illustrated in FIG. 6, the main part 41 includes a nozzle placement part 42, a vertical part 43, and the nozzle wash part 44. The nozzle placement part 42 is, for example, a bottom part of the main part 41 and extends in the longitudinal direction. The nozzle placement part 42 is a part on which the nozzle unit 60 is disposed in the stored state. The shape of an upper surface 42t of the nozzle placement part 42 is curved to be upwardly convex to correspond to the shape of the nozzle cover 90. The nozzle unit 60 is curved along the upper surface 42t in the stored state. In other words, the nozzle unit 60 is stored above the upper surface 42t of the nozzle placement part 42 along the upper surface 42t. For example, the upper surface 42t has a smoothly curved shape, and may be curved with a constant curvature.

[0073] The vertical part 43 has a plate shape extending upward from the nozzle placement part 42. The vertical part 43 is curved to be upwardly convex to correspond to the shape of the nozzle cover 90.

[0074] For example, as illustrated in FIG. 7, the supporter 40 includes the groove part 45 extending in the advance/retreat direction of the nozzle unit 60. In the example, the groove part 45 is a slit-shaped opening extending through the vertical part 43 in the thickness direction (the lateral direction) and extending in the longitudinal direction. The groove part 45 is curved to be upwardly convex to correspond to the shape of the nozzle cover 90.

[0075] For example, as illustrated in FIG. 6 or FIG. 8, the supporter 40 includes the rail part 46 that extends in the advance/retreat direction of the nozzle unit 60. The rail part 46 has a plate shape that protrudes in the lateral direction from the nozzle placement part 42 and extends in the longitudinal direction. The rail part 46 is curved to be upwardly convex to correspond to the shape of the nozzle cover 90.

[0076] The groove part 45 and the rail part 46 are engaged parts that are engaged by parts of the nozzle unit 60. The groove part 45 and the rail part 46 are parts that guide the nozzle unit 60 when the nozzle unit 60 is advanced and retracted between the interior of the casing 10 and the interior of the toilet 200.

[0077] In other words, the protrusion 73a of the nozzle unit 60 (see FIG. 5) is configured to be inserted into the groove part 45 and to engage the groove part 45. The protrusion 73a is held to be slidable along the groove part 45. The recess 73b of the nozzle unit 60 (see FIG. 5) engages the rail part 46 by being configured so that the rail part 46 is interposed in the recess 73b. The recess 73b is held to be slidable along the rail part 46. Thus, the nozzle unit 60 is held by the groove part 45 and the rail

part 46 to be slidable with respect to the supporter 40. The nozzle unit 60 advances and retreats along an arc-like trajectory because the groove part 45 and the rail part 46 are curved along the longitudinal direction.

[0078] As illustrated in FIGS. 6 to 8, the nozzle wash part 44 is disposed at the front end side of the nozzle placement part 42 and the vertical part 43. In the example, the nozzle wash part 44 is included as a part of the main part 41. The nozzle wash part 44 covers the outer perimeter of the nozzle cover 90. A water discharge port 44a (see FIG. 7) is formed in the inner perimeter side of the nozzle wash part 44. Water is supplied to the nozzle wash part 44 through the flow path switching part 72 by the body wash flow channel 75. The nozzle wash part 44 discharges the water supplied by the body wash flow channel 75 toward the nozzle cover 90 of the washing nozzle 85 from the water discharge port 44a. As a result, the nozzle wash part 44 washes the outer perimeter surface (the body) of the nozzle cover 90.

[0079] For example, in the example as illustrated in FIG. 8, the supporter 40 includes a motor placement part 47a. The motor placement part 47a is disposed further back than the nozzle placement part 42 of the main part 41 and covers the drive motor 50. In other words, the drive motor 50 is contained inside the motor placement part 47a of the supporter 40.

[0080] As illustrated in FIG. 7, the supporter 40 includes a gear placement part 47b. The gear placement part 47b is adjacent to the motor placement part 47a at a side of the motor placement part 47a. The gear 52 is disposed in the gear placement part 47b. In other words, the gear 52 is contained inside the supporter 40 and positioned at the side surface of the main part 41.

[0081] FIG. 9 is a schematic perspective view illustrating a cover part of a supporter according to an embodiment.

[0082] In the example, the rack guide 54 and the supporter 40 are one piece. In other words, the rack guide 54 is included in the supporter 40. The supporter 40 of the nozzle unit 60 also is used as the supporter of the rack guide 54.

[0083] For example, a space defined by the cover part 48 (see FIG. 9) and the main part 41 (see FIG. 7) is used as the passageway 54g of the rack guide 54. The cover part 48 and at least a part of the rack guide 54 are one piece; and the cover part 48 is formed as one piece that includes at least a part of the rack guide 54.

[0084] More specifically, as illustrated in FIG. 9, the supporter 40 includes a first protrusion 48a and a second protrusion 48b. The space between the first protrusion 48a and the second protrusion 48b is used as the passageway 54g of the rack guide 54. The first protrusion 48a and the second protrusion 48b protrude in the lateral direction from the side surface of the supporter 40 (in the example, a side surface 48s of the cover part 48) and extend in the longitudinal direction.

[0085] The first protrusion 48a includes a front portion Pa1 and a back portion Pa2. The front portion Pa1 is

curved to be upwardly convex when viewed in side-view and extends in the longitudinal direction. The back portion Pa2 is positioned further back than the front portion Pa1, and includes a portion that is curved to extend upward and backward. The first guide surface g1 described with reference to FIG. 4 is a surface of the first protrusion 48a.

[0086] The second protrusion 48b is curved similarly to the first protrusion 48a and extends along the first protrusion 48a to surround the outer side of the first protrusion 48a. The second protrusion 48b includes a front part Pb1 adjacent to the front portion Pa1 of the first protrusion 48a, and a back part Pb2 adjacent to the back portion Pa2 of the first protrusion 48a. The second protrusion 48b has a curved shape that is parallel to the first protrusion 48a at a prescribed distance from the first protrusion 48a. The second guide surface g2 described with reference to FIG. 4 is a surface of the second protrusion 48b.

[0087] Accordingly, the rack guide 54 (the passageway 54g) includes the first curved portion 541 and the second curved portion 542. The first curved portion 541 is curved to be upwardly convex to correspond to the shape of the washing nozzle 85. The first curved portion 541 corresponds to the passageway between the front portion Pa1 and the front part Pb1. For example, the first curved portion 541 is curved with a constant curvature. For example, the first curved portion 541 is curved along the upper surface 42t of the nozzle placement part 42 (see FIG. 6) and has a curved shape that is parallel to the upper surface 42t at a prescribed distance from the upper surface 42t. The curvature of the first curved portion 541 may be substantially equal to the curvature of the upper surface 42t when viewed in side-view. The first curved portion 541 includes an upward inclined portion inclined upward and backward, and a downward inclined portion that is continuous from the back end of the upward inclined portion and is inclined downward and backward.

[0088] The second curved portion 542 is positioned further back than the first curved portion 541. The second curved portion 542 includes a portion that is bent in a direction crossing the longitudinal direction as the second curved portion 542 extends backward. The second curved portion 542 corresponds to a passageway between the back portion Pa2 and the back part Pb2. In the example, the second curved portion 542 is a folded portion that extends in the longitudinal direction, is folded back, and is convex backward when viewed in side-view. In other words, the second curved portion 542 includes a portion P1 bent upward as the second curved portion 542 extends backward. The second curved portion 542 includes a portion P2 that is continuous from the upper end of the portion P1 and is curved upward as the second curved portion 542 extends frontward. For example, the second curved portion 542 is curved with a constant curvature.

[0089] For example, at least a portion of the first curved portion 541 and at least a portion of the second curved portion 542 are arranged along a straight line extending in

the longitudinal direction when viewed in side-view. In the example, the position of the first curved portion 541 in the vertical direction is such that the first curved portion 541 is between the upper end and the lower end of the second curved portion 542 (the folded portion).

[0090] The rack guide 54 may further include the linear portion 543 and the linear portion 544. The linear portion 543 connects the first curved portion 541 and the second curved portion 542 and extends linearly in the longitudinal direction. The gear 52 positioned between the first curved portion 541 and the second curved portion 542 meshes with the rack 53 in the linear portion 543. The linear portion 544 extends linearly frontward from the upper end of the second curved portion 542.

[0091] Although the first protrusion 48a and the second protrusion 48b are included in the cover part 48 in the example of FIG. 9, at least portions of the first and second protrusions 48a and 48b may be included in the main part 41 side. The main part 41 and at least a part of the rack guide 54 may be one piece; and the main part 41 may be formed as one piece that includes at least a part of the rack guide 54. At least portion of the passageway 54g of the rack guide 54 may be formed as a groove (a recess) formed in the side surface of the supporter 40.

[0092] For example, as illustrated in FIG. 4 above, when the nozzle unit 60 is in the stored state, the washing nozzle 85 is adjacent to the first curved portion 541 in the lateral direction and positioned further forward than the second curved portion 542. The washing nozzle 85 is curved along the first curved portion 541 when the nozzle unit 60 is in the stored state. Because the washing nozzle 85 can be stored along the first curved portion 541, the height of the sanitary washing device 100 can be further suppressed.

[0093] The curvature of the washing nozzle 85 (the nozzle cover 90) may be equal to the curvature of the first curved portion 541 when viewed in side-view. For example, the first curved portion 541 has a curved shape that is parallel to the washing nozzle 85 (the nozzle cover 90) in the stored state.

[0094] When the nozzle unit 60 is in the stored state, the washing nozzle 85 is disposed above the upper surface 42t of the nozzle placement part 42 described in FIG. 6, etc. Thus, the curved washing nozzle 85 is disposed on the curved upper surface 42t of the supporter 40. As a result, the washing nozzle 85 can be advanced frontward and downward; and water can be discharged from a lower position during the private part wash. Therefore, a nozzle unit that has a high washing performance can be provided while suppressing the height.

[0095] FIGS. 10A and 10B are schematic side views illustrating a part of a private part washing device according to an embodiment.

[0096] In these drawings, components of the private part washing device 30 other than the gear 52 and the rack guide 54 are not illustrated for convenience; and the position of the rack 53 is schematically illustrated (the shapes of the teeth of the rack 53, etc., are not illustrated,

and the outline is illustrated by cross hatching). This is similar for FIGS. 11 and 12 below as well.

[0097] FIG. 10A illustrates the position of the rack 53 when the nozzle unit 60 is in the advanced state. FIG. 10B illustrates the position of the rack 53 when the nozzle unit 60 is in the stored state.

[0098] When the nozzle unit 60 is retracted from the state of FIG. 10A, the rack 53 is moved clockwise through the first curved portion 541 as in arrow CW1 when viewed in side-view. When the nozzle unit 60 is retracted, the rack 53 is moved counterclockwise through the second curved portion 542 as in arrow CCW1 when viewed in side-view.

[0099] On the other hand, when the nozzle unit 60 is advanced from the state of FIG. 10B, the rack 53 is moved counterclockwise through the first curved portion 541 as in arrow CCW2 when viewed in side-view. Also, when the nozzle unit 60 is advanced, the rack 53 is moved clockwise through the second curved portion 542 as in arrow CW2 when viewed in side-view.

[0100] In other words, when the direction of the rack 53 moving through the first curved portion 541 is one of clockwise or counterclockwise, the direction of the rack 53 moving through the second curved portion 542 is the other of clockwise or counterclockwise. Thus, the first curved portion 541 and the second curved portion 542 are curved in mutually-different directions.

[0101] FIG. 11 is a schematic side view illustrating a part of a private part washing device according to a reference example.

[0102] In a private part washing device 39 illustrated in FIG. 11, the rack guide 54 has a shape that is curved in one direction and does not include the first and second curved portions curved in mutually-different directions. Specifically, the rack guide 54 of the private part washing device 39 has an upwardly convex shape that is bent downward as the rack guide 54 extends backward, but is not bent upward.

[0103] When the nozzle unit 60 according to the reference example is retracted, the rack 53 is moved clockwise through the rack guide 54 as in arrow CW3 but is not moved counterclockwise through the rack guide 54 when viewed in side-view. In contrast, when the nozzle unit 60 according to the reference example is advanced, the rack 53 is moved counterclockwise through the rack guide 54 as in arrow CCW3 but is not moved clockwise through the rack guide 54 when viewed in side-view.

[0104] A conventional nozzle unit is known in which the nozzle unit is made smaller by curving the rack guide to suppress the longitudinal length while ensuring the length of the rack guide. However, the vertical-direction length of the rack guide must be increased as the rack guide is curved more upward or downward. For example, when the rack guide 54 is bent in only one direction as in the private part washing device 39 of the reference example, and when the rack guide 54 and the curved portion are lengthened, a length H2 in the vertical direction of the rack guide 54 is increased.

[0105] In contrast, according to the embodiment, the first curved portion 541 is upwardly convex; and the second curved portion 542 includes a portion that is bent upward as the second curved portion 542 extends backward. The rack guide 54 includes the first curved portion 541 and the second curved portion 542 which are curved in mutually-different directions. As a result, for example, compared to when the rack guide 54 is bent in only one direction, the height of the sanitary washing device 100 can be suppressed, that is, the height of the rack guide 54 (a length H1 in the vertical direction as in FIG. 10A) can be suppressed while ensuring the length of the rack guide 54. For example, the length from the rim surface of the toilet to the upper end of the sanitary washing device 100 can be reduced without disposing the nozzle unit 60 lower than the rim surface when stored, and the height can be reduced.

[0106] When viewed from the position of the gear 52 (the position of the rotary shaft of the drive motor), the curve direction of the first curved portion 541 is the opposite of the curve direction of the second curved portion 542. It is easy to form a linear trajectory in the rack guide 54 between the first curved portion 541 and the second curved portion 542. The gear 52 is positioned between the first curved portion 541 and the second curved portion 542. As a result, a structure can be obtained in which the gear 52 and the rack 53 engage in a linear portion between the first curved portion 541 and the second curved portion 542 of the rack guide 54.

[0107] In the example as illustrated in FIGS. 10A and 10B, the curvature of the second curved portion 542 is greater than the curvature of the first curved portion 541 when viewed in side-view. For example, by setting the curvature of the second curved portion 542 to be large, the height of the rack guide 54 can be suppressed, and the height of the sanitary washing device 100 can be suppressed.

[0108] FIG. 12 is a schematic side view illustrating a part of a private part washing device according to a modification of the embodiment.

[0109] In the example as illustrated in FIG. 12, the rack guide 54 includes the first curved portion 541 and the second curved portion 542. The first curved portion 541 is curved to be upwardly convex. In the example, the second curved portion 542 is curved to be downwardly convex. Specifically, the second curved portion 542 includes a downward inclined portion P3 that is inclined downward toward the back, and the portion P1 that is continuous from the back end of the downward inclined portion P3 and is bent upward toward the back.

[0110] When the nozzle unit 60 is retracted, the rack 53 is moved clockwise through the first curved portion 541 as in arrow CW4 when viewed in side-view. When the nozzle unit 60 is retracted, the rack 53 is moved counterclockwise through the second curved portion 542 as in arrow CCW4 when viewed in side-view. Thus, in the example as well, the first curved portion 541 and the second curved portion 542 are curved in mutually-differ-

ent directions. As a result, the height of the rack guide can be suppressed, and the height of the sanitary washing device 100 can be suppressed.

[0111] Embodiments may include the following configurations.

Configuration 1

[0112] A sanitary washing device, comprising:

a casing;
a nozzle unit configured to advance and retreat between the casing and a toilet;
a rack connected to the nozzle unit, the rack being flexible;
a gear configured to engage the rack;
a drive motor configured to advance and retract the nozzle unit by moving the rack via the gear; and
a rack guide configured to guide the rack,
the rack guide including

a first curved portion curved to be upwardly convex, and
a second curved portion positioned further back than the first curved portion, the second curved portion including a portion bent upward as the second curved portion extends backward.

Configuration 2

[0113] The sanitary washing device according to Configuration 1, wherein
a curvature of the second curved portion is greater than a curvature of the first curved portion.

Configuration 3

[0114] The sanitary washing device according to Configuration 1 or 2, wherein
the nozzle unit includes a washing nozzle shaped so that the washing nozzle is curved along the first curved portion when the washing nozzle is in a stored state.

Configuration 4

[0115] The sanitary washing device according to Configuration 3, further comprising:

a supporter configured to support the nozzle unit so that the nozzle unit is slidable,
the supporter including a nozzle placement part having an upper surface curved to be upwardly convex,
the washing nozzle being disposed above the upper surface of the nozzle placement part when the washing nozzle is in the stored state.

Configuration 5

[0116] The sanitary washing device according to any one of Configurations 1 to 4, wherein
the gear is positioned between the first curved portion and the second curved portion.

[0117] The invention has been described with reference to the embodiments. However, the invention is not limited to these embodiments. Any design changes in the above embodiments suitably made by those skilled in the art are also encompassed within the scope of the invention as long as they fall within the spirit of the invention. For example, the shape, the size the material, the disposition and the arrangement or the like of the components are not limited to illustrations and can be changed appropriately.

[0118] The components included in the embodiments described above can be combined to the extent possible, and these combinations are also encompassed within the scope of the invention as long as they include the features of the invention.

Claims

1. A sanitary washing device, comprising:

a casing (10) ;
a nozzle unit (60) configured to advance and retreat between the casing and a toilet;
a rack (53) connected to the nozzle unit, the rack being flexible;
a gear (52) configured to engage the rack;
a drive motor (50) configured to advance and retract the nozzle unit by moving the rack via the gear; and
a rack guide (54) configured to guide the rack,
the rack guide including

a first curved portion (541) curved to be upwardly convex, and
a second curved portion (542) positioned further back than the first curved portion, the second curved portion including a portion bent upward as the second curved portion extends backward.

2. The sanitary washing device according to claim 1, wherein
a curvature of the second curved portion is greater than a curvature of the first curved portion.

3. The sanitary washing device according to claim 1 or 2, wherein
the nozzle unit includes a washing nozzle shaped so that the washing nozzle is curved along the first curved portion when the washing nozzle is in a stored state.

4. The sanitary washing device according to claim 3,
further comprising:
 - a supporter (40) configured to support the nozzle unit so that the nozzle unit is slidable, 5
 - the supporter including a nozzle placement part having an upper surface curved to be upwardly convex,
 - the washing nozzle being disposed above the upper surface of the nozzle placement part 10
 - when the washing nozzle is in the stored state.
5. The sanitary washing device according to claim 4, wherein
 - the gear is positioned between the first curved portion and the second curved portion. 15
6. The sanitary washing device according to claim 4 or 5, wherein the rack guide (54) and the supporter (40) are formed one piece. 20
7. The sanitary washing device according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the rack (53) includes a tip part (53t), and a back end (53r) which are ends of the rack (53) and are opposite to each other, the tip part (53t) 25
being connected to the nozzle unit (60).
8. The sanitary washing device according to claim 7, wherein the nozzle unit (60) comprises an engaging part (73c), the nozzle unit (60) being connected to the tip part (53t) through the engaging part (73c). 30
9. A toilet device (300) comprising a sanitary washing device (100) according to any one of claims 1 to 8 and a toilet (200), the sanitary washing device (100) 35
being disposed on the toilet (200).
10. The toilet device (300) according to claim 9, wherein the nozzle unit (60) is positioned higher than an upper surface (200t) of the toilet (200) when the nozzle unit (60) is in a stored state. 40

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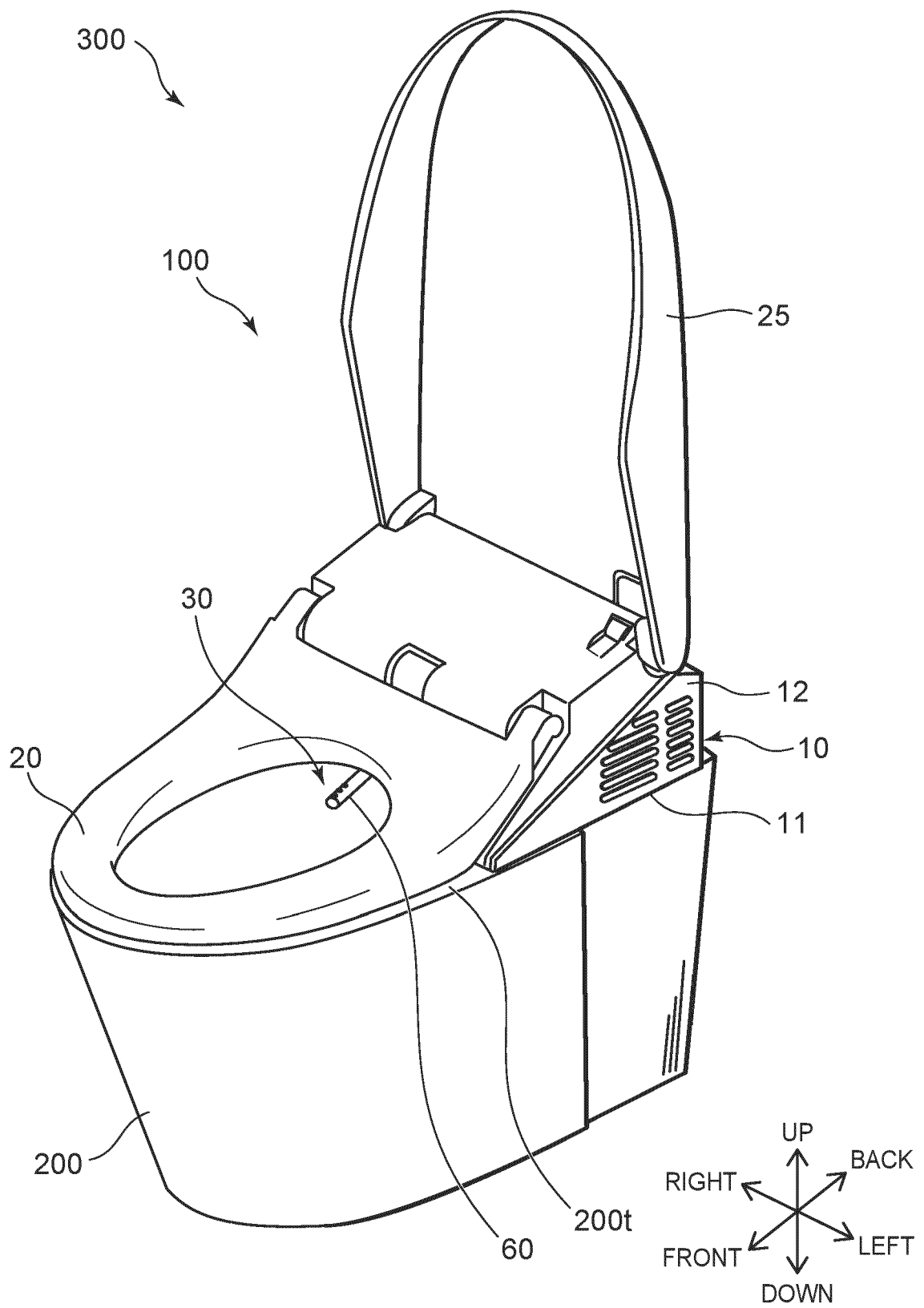


FIG. 1

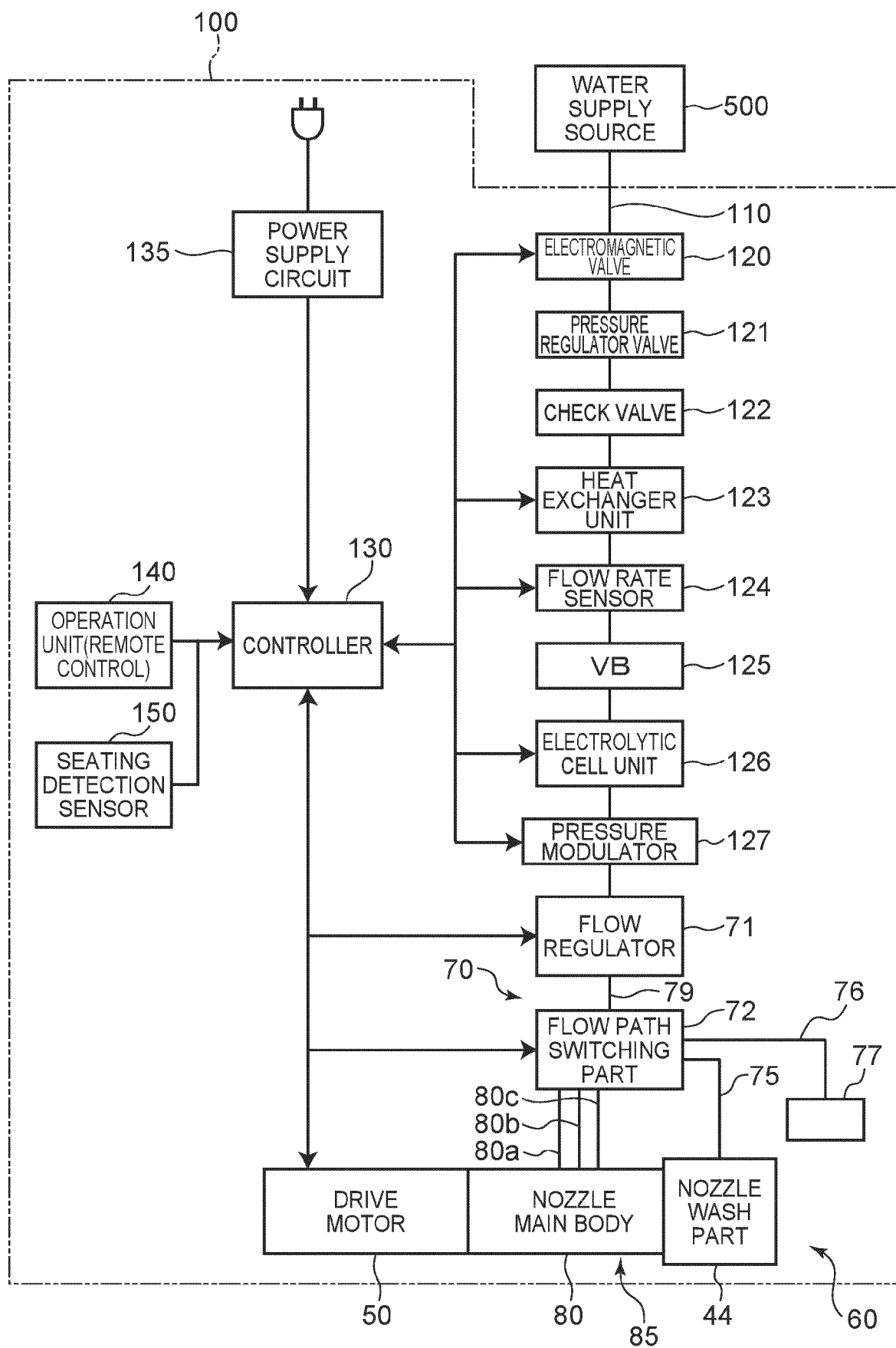


FIG. 2

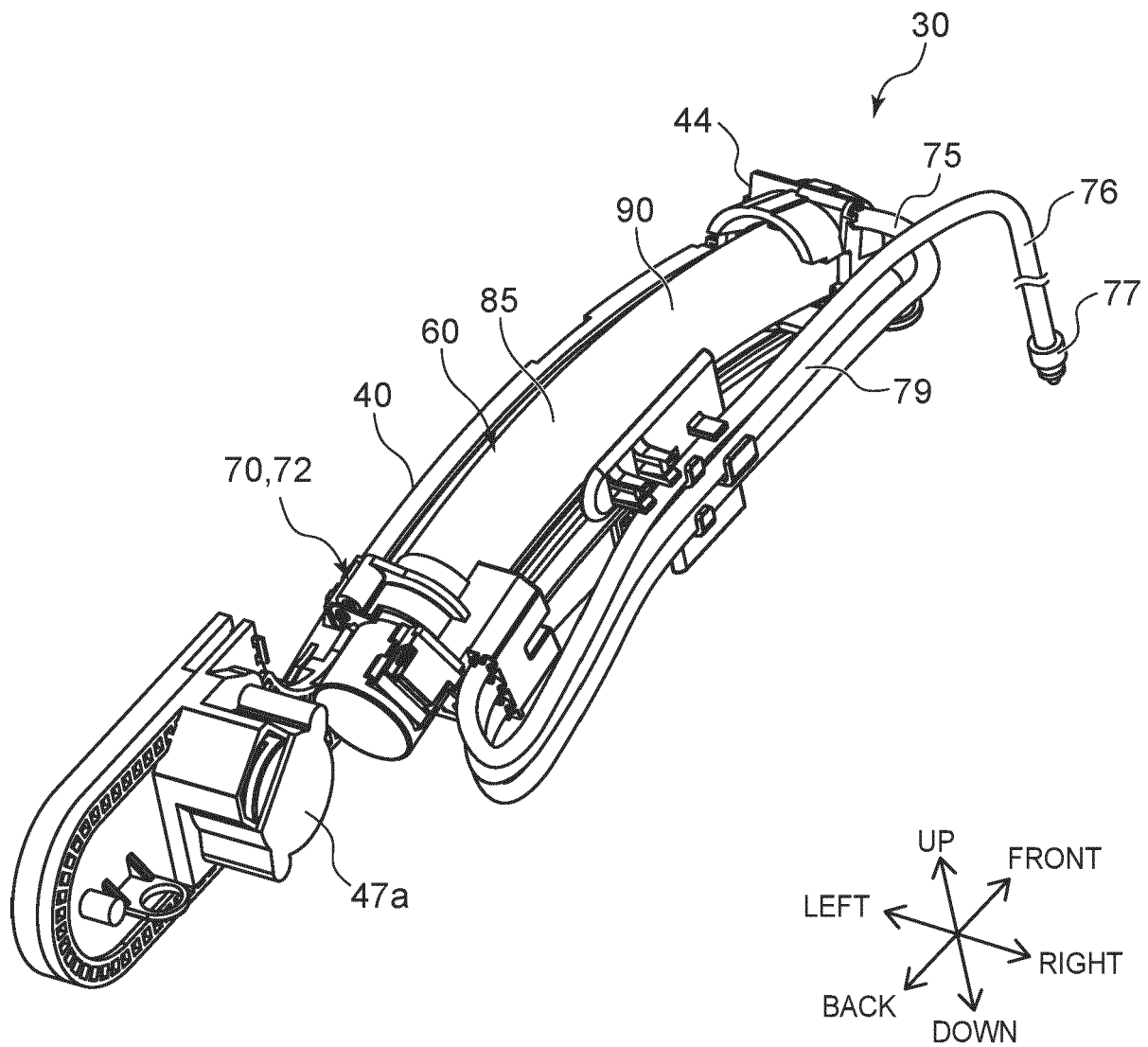


FIG. 3

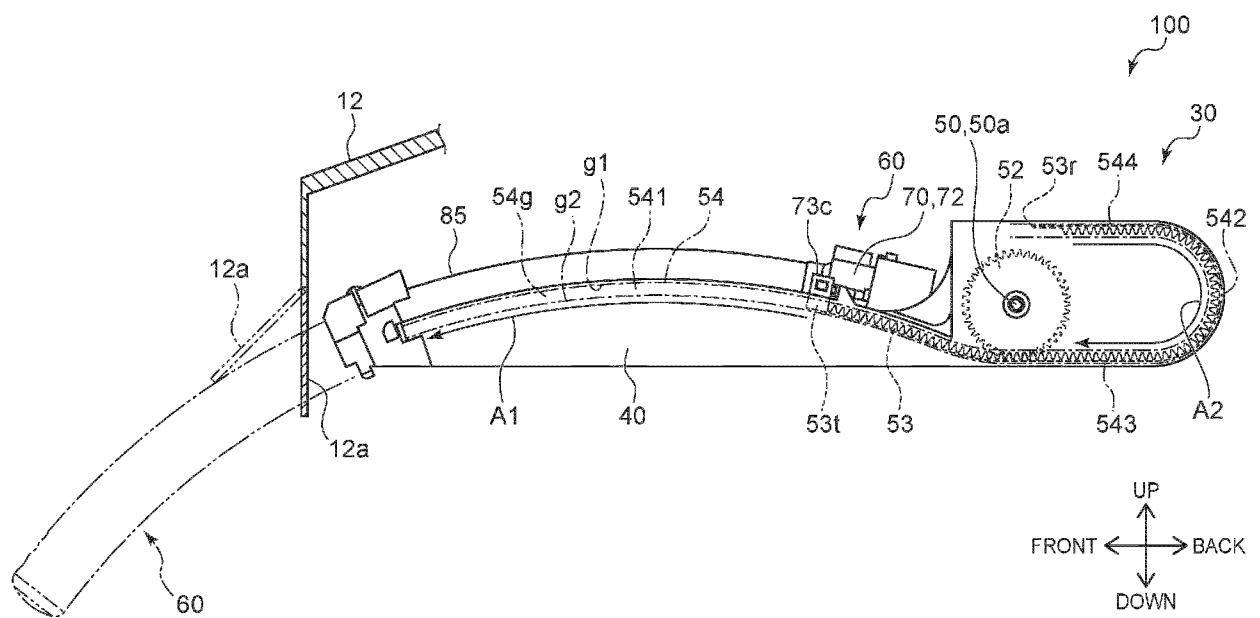


FIG. 4

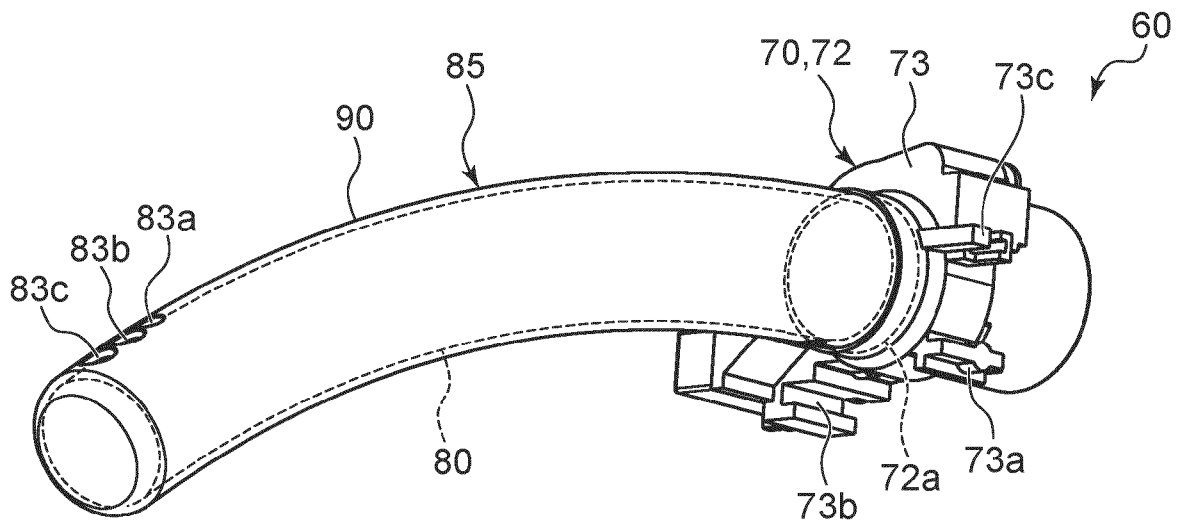


FIG. 5

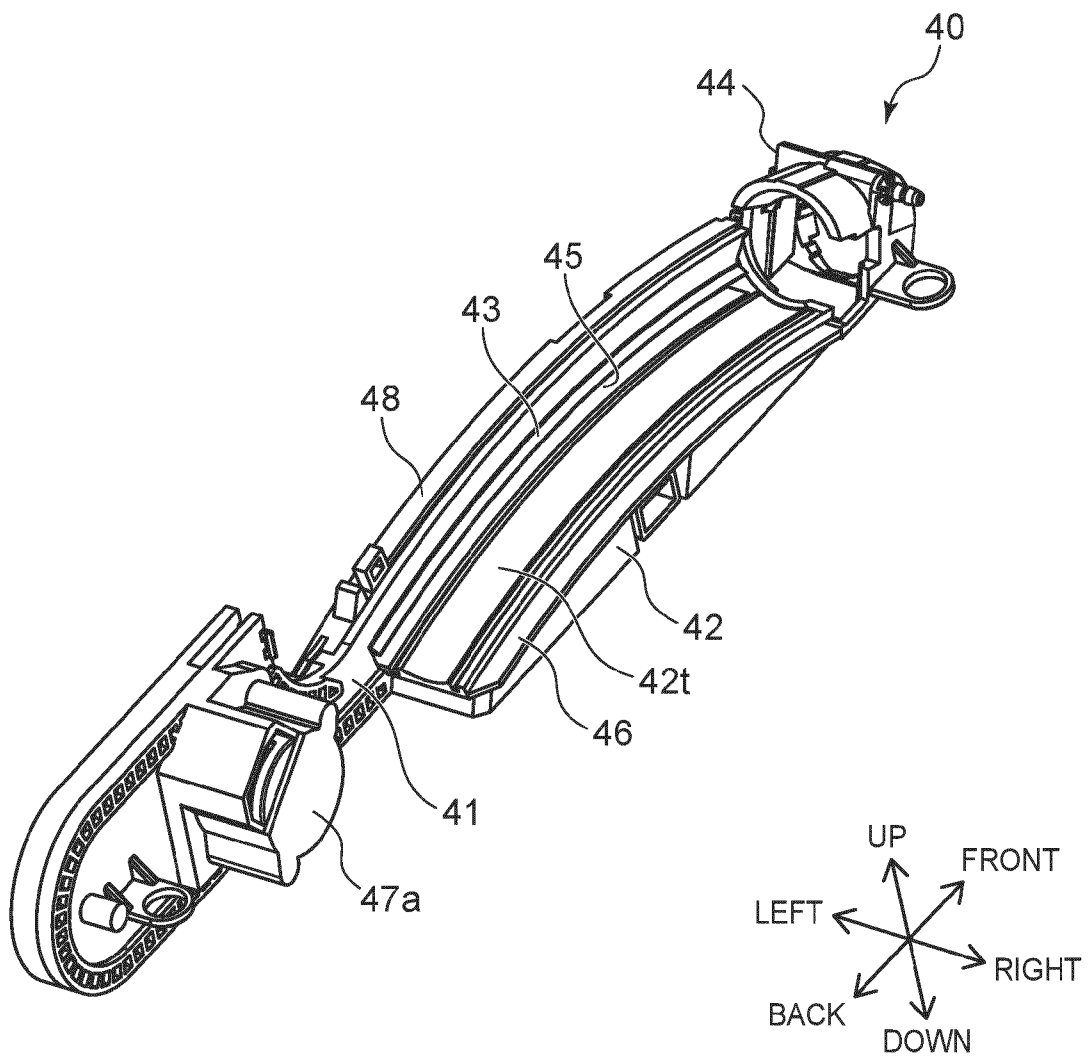


FIG. 6

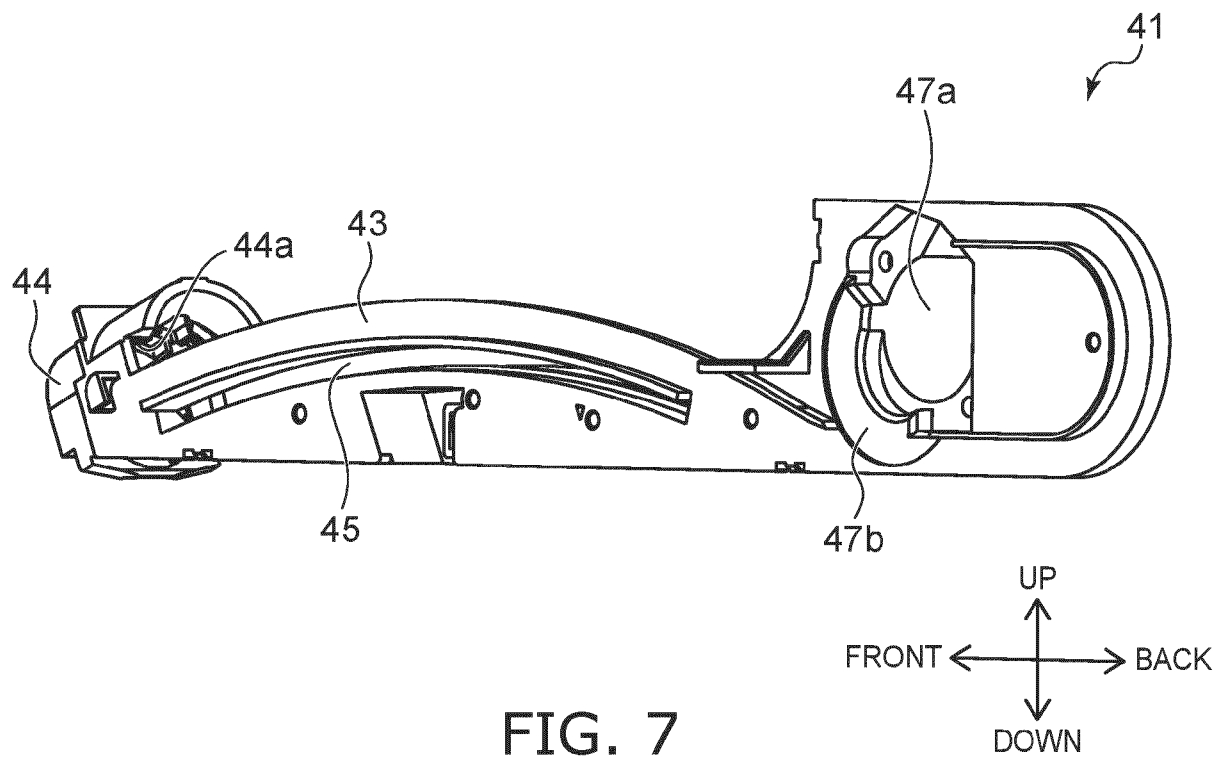


FIG. 7

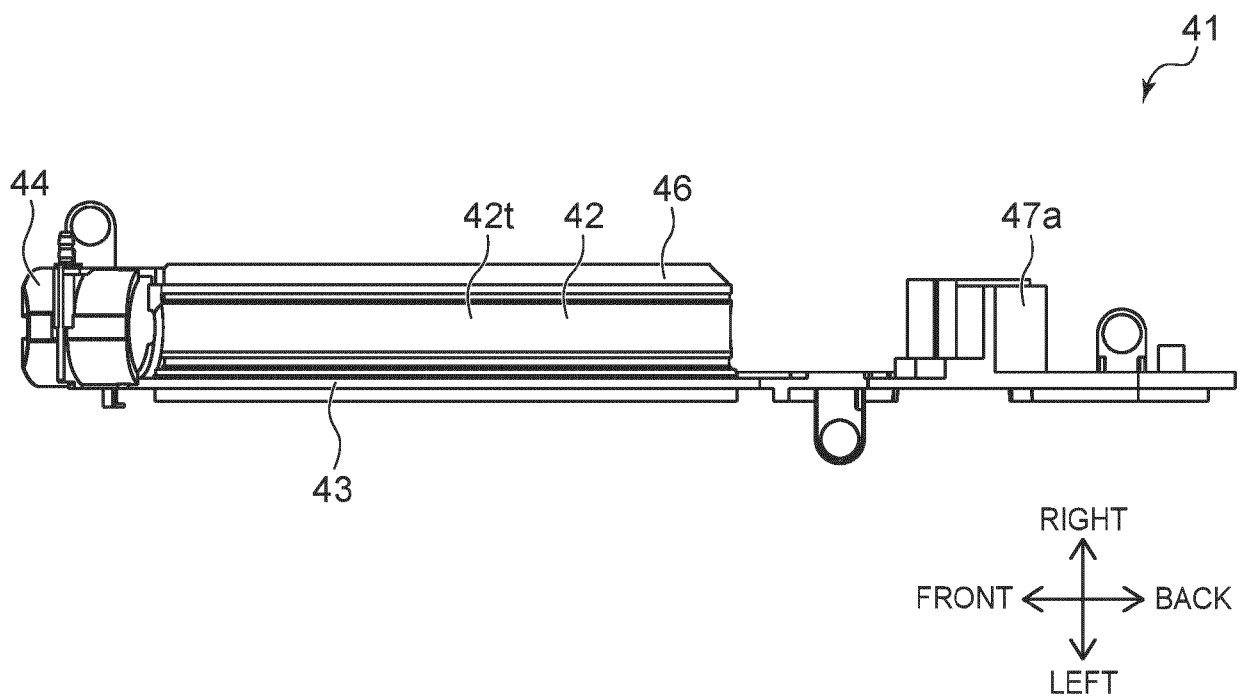


FIG. 8

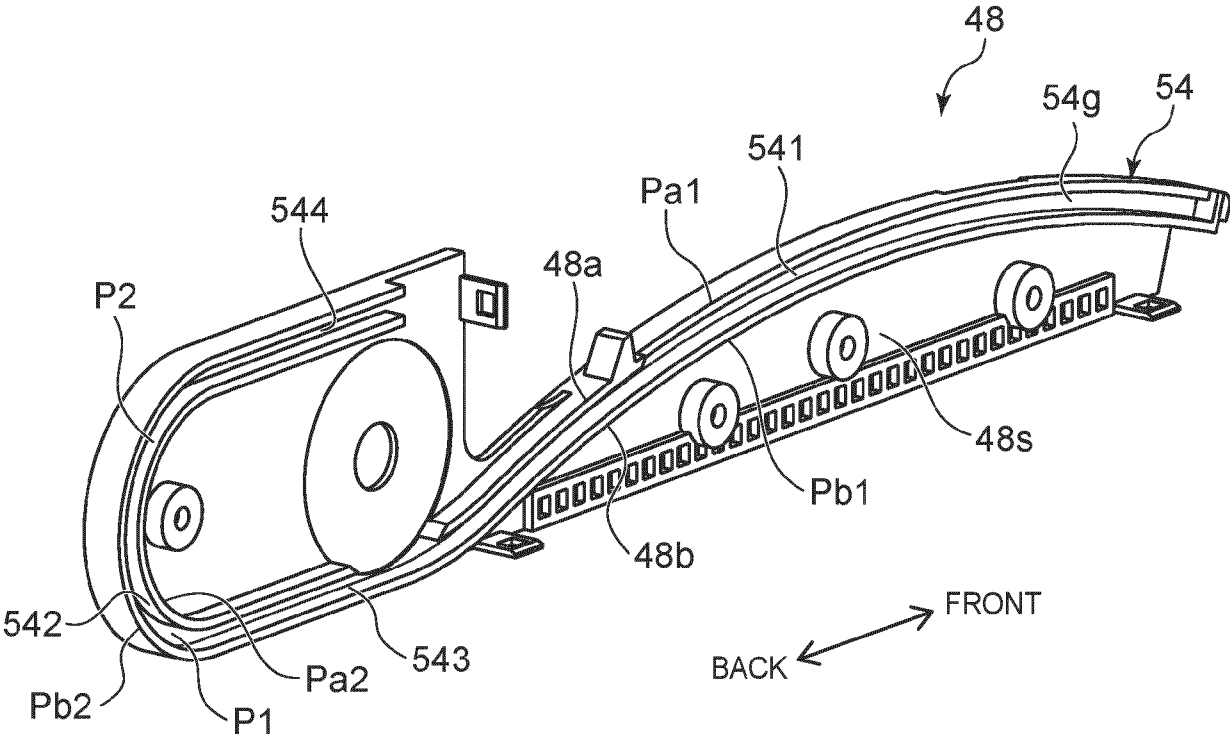


FIG. 9

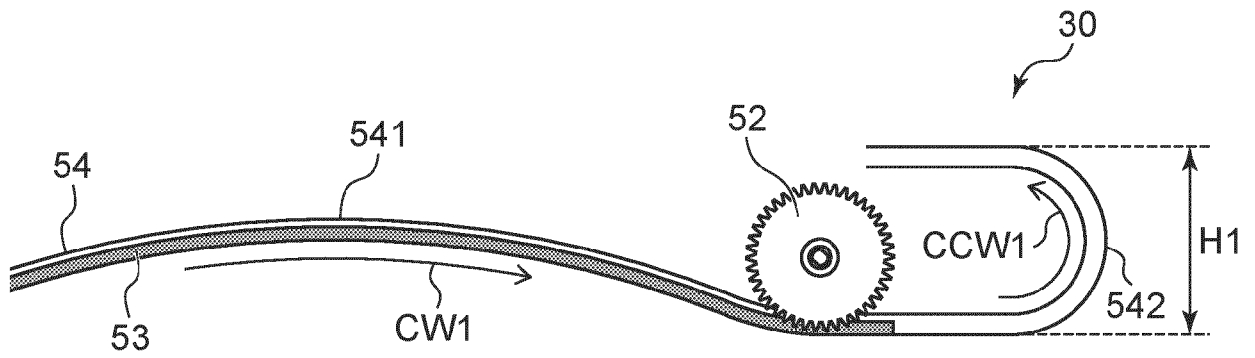


FIG. 10A

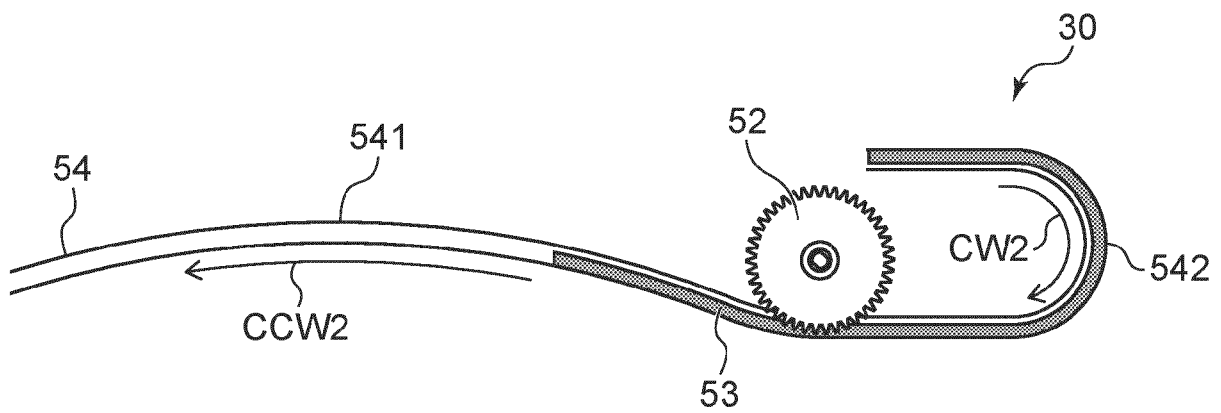


FIG. 10B

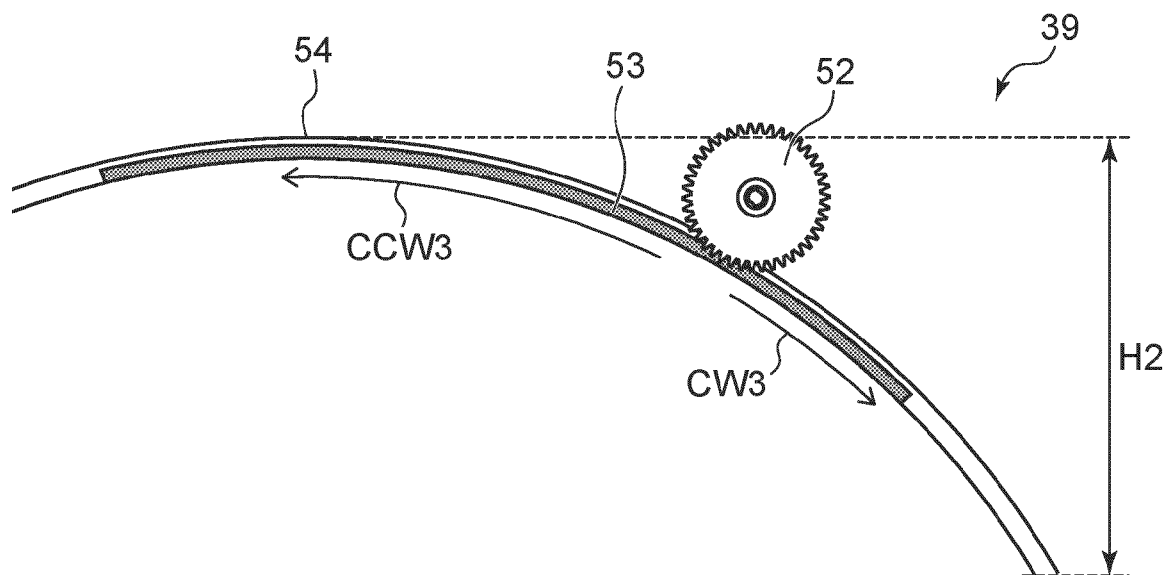


FIG. 11

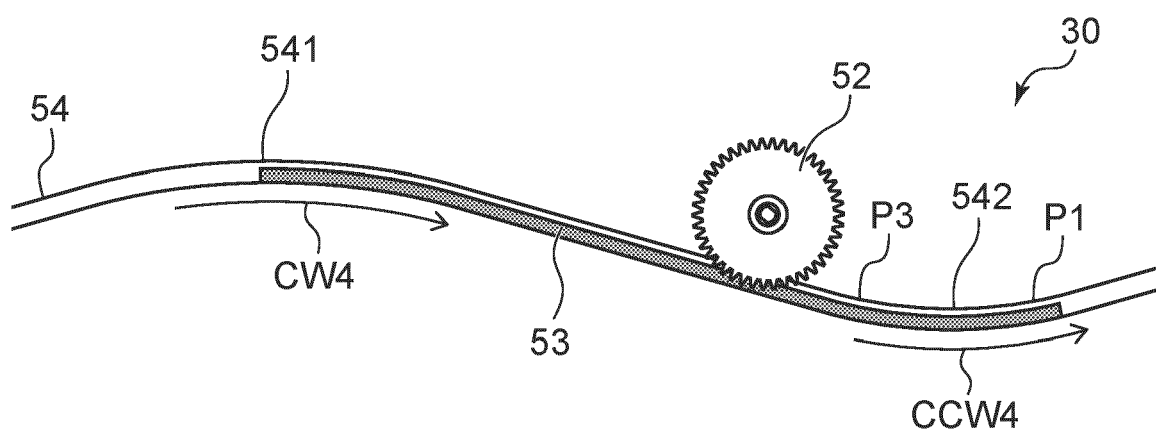


FIG. 12



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 25 18 8897

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X	EP 3 040 487 B2 (COWAY CO LTD [KR]) 3 May 2023 (2023-05-03) * page 2, paragraph 1 * * page 2, paragraph 14 - page 3, paragraph 23 * * page 3, paragraph 28 - page 5, paragraph 67; figures 3-7 * -----	1-10	INV. E03D9/08
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			E03D
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
Munich		28 November 2025	Fajarnés Jessen, A
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X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

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28-11-2025

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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82