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Red carpet rolled out for new Airbous

By B. Indra

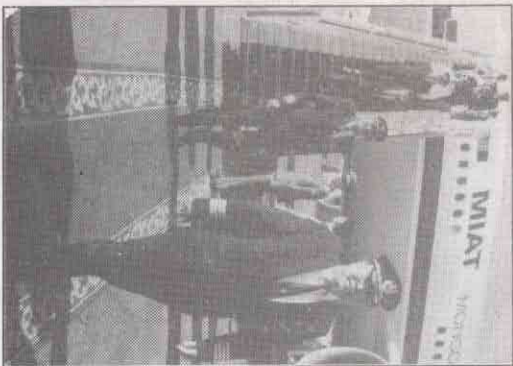
May 24 was significant not only MIAT company, but also for Mongolia. MIAT's newly acquired Airbus-310-300, F-OHPF landed at the Buyant-Ukhaa International Airport at 9:30 am after a non-stop flight from Berlin to Ulaanbaatar. A grand and excited welcoming committee was on hand for the historic event.

The Mongolian/German crew received a long ovation and cheers upon waking onto the tarmac. Traditional Mongolian singers and dancers performed while the pilots were welcomed with hadakh and milk at the end of a red carpet. Government officials, and the German Embassy staff were present to witness the events and inspect the aircraft.

The newest member of the MIAT fleet is being leased from Lufthansa for 10 years on a US\$32 million contract. Upon expiration



PHOTOS BY A. ALTMAN



Clockwise from above. The German pilot is welcomed with milk and



Elbegdorj makes

WEATHER



Ulaanbaatar and central regions can expect night temperatures of between 0° and -5°. During the day they should reach between 5° and 10°. Dust storms today, and Saturday. On the weekend the temperature is expected to increase by 5 degrees
Sunrise: 5.01
Sunset: 20.37

AIR QUALITY

Carbon Monoxide average - .4
3 is unhealthy.
Sulphur Dioxide average - .005
.51 is unhealthy

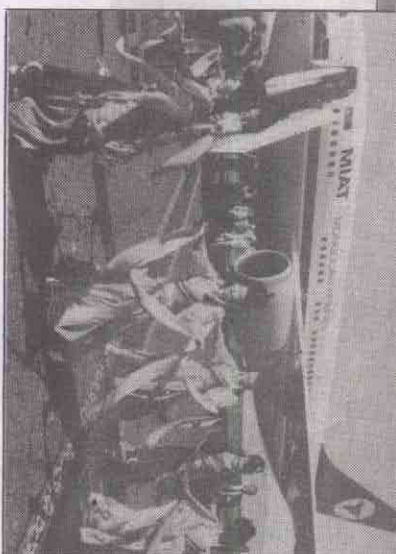
milk at the end of a red carpet. Government officials, and the German Embassy staff were present to witness the events and inspect the aircraft.

The newest member of the MIAT fleet is being leased from Lufthansa for 10 years on a US\$32 million contract. Upon expiration of the contract, MIAT will acquire the rights to buy the Airbus for one American dollar.

"New and reliable technologies will be introduced shortly to this Airbus which meet international flying standards," said MIAT President H. Alexander. "We consider it an important investment along with forthcoming new technologies and new management," he said.

In two months, the Mongolian pilots will be able to run the Airbus independently. Four Mongolian crew members and 20 steward-

Clockwise from above. The German pilot is welcomed with milk and hadakh. The crew takes to the tarmac. Dancers perform at the ceremony.



esses have been trained in Germany to operate the plane. Additionally, five crew members, 40 stewardesses and several technicians will be trained. The first commercial flight of the aircraft will be on June 6 or 7 to either Osaka or Berlin.

The seven-year old Airbus is capable of flying for 23 more years. It is 46.7 metres long and is the product of a French, Spanish, Belgium, German and British joint venture. It is equipped with 169 seats and is able to transport 15 tonnes of freight. The Airbus can travel up to eight hours without stopping.

Defence minister added to Elbegdorj's line-up

Ts. Elbegdorj has welcomed the newest member of his cabinet. On May 21, Member of Parliament R. Odonbatrar was appointed Defence Minister of Mongolia by a 63.6 percent vote.

On the same day, Enlightenment Minister hopeful Ts. Gankhuyag could not muster enough votes for approval - his 47.2 percent vote fell short of the necessary 50 barrier. 56 of 76 members of parliament participated in the vote.

The New Defence Minister was born in 1961, in Moron, Hovsgol Aimag. He graduated from the Mongolian State University as a commercial economist-organiser, and the Institute for Improvement of Managers' Qualification in

Novosibirsk, Russia.

In 1983-84 Mr Odonbatrar worked as an accountant for the commercial department on Moron. In 1987, he returned to the Moron office after two years in the military. Beginning in 1988, he worked for three years a Chief of the Commercial Department in Erdenebulgan Soun, Hovsgol Aimag. He then returned again to the Moron Commercial Department in 1990. In 1991 he was named Director of the Brokerage House in Hovsgol Aimag, where he remained until becoming a member of parliament in 1994. From 1992-1994 he was the leader of the Mongolian National Democratic Party branch in Hovsgol Aimag.

Mr Odonbatrar is married and has three sons.



Defence Minister, R. Odonbatrar

Elbegdorj makes public statement

One month after being thrust into the position of Prime Minister, Ts. Elbegdorj made his first public announcements.

Mr Elbegdorj indicated that his new government has steered the same course of the Enkhsaikhan cabinet, while examining the trends and goals of the newly formed cabinet of ministers. He noted that the major difference between the two cabinets is that his is made up entirely of members of parliament.

The prime minister informed that the new government will adhere to the new strategy of social-economic development. He said its greatest challenge will be overcoming economic hurdles and the ever-looming Asian financial crisis. Since the beginning of 1998 the prices of the main export products of Mongolia: gold, copper and cashmere, have been decreasing on the world market. The decreasing prices of goods and products in the Asian market have led to an increase in imports and in foreign trade turnover.

Mr Elbegdorj noted that his cabinet will focus on increasing profits and decreasing expenditures, he also pointed out that numerous negotiations have been held this month with representatives and leaders of the International Currency Fund, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. The prime minister summed up the report with a statement about his recent visit to the western aimag.

Carbon Monoxide
average - .4
3 is unhealthy.
Sulphur Dioxide
average - .005
.51 is unhealthy
Nitrogen Dioxide
average - .020
.04 is unhealthy.

INSIDE

- Green Revolution.....2
- Traffic Halted.....3
- Privatisation Hol.....4
- Coal Fever.....5
- Grab Bag.....7
- Man On A Mission



Page 8

MARKETS

CURRENCY	
US\$1:17924.61	
GOLD	
US\$299.00/oz	
COPPER	
US\$1688.0/t	
OIL	
US\$12.96/bbl	

of Bayanzurkh mountain peaks, as well as a number of ancient hands and golden straps for horses. The inscription was engraved

President Demirel of Turkey visited the inscribed stone in 1995.

In search of a fresh Guinness, the hard way

If insanity could be measured in kilometres travelled on a bike then let there be no mistake, Yasuyuki Ozteki could well be considered crazy. And that's exactly what his friends and parents thought when he announced he was packing up his belongings and riding from Osaka to Ireland.

And what could possibly drive, or should that be ride, a 26-year-old to such extremes?

"I love Ireland and I needed to get away from Japan for a while, so I decided to travel to Ireland and see what lies in between," he said as he was about embark on the next major leg of his journey.

Ozteki spent a week in Ulaanbaatar after a treacherous trek across Mongolia's famed Gobi desert.

"I lost my way constantly as there is no clear route across the

desert. I tried to follow cars, but when there weren't any - the guessing game began. Sand was a problem too, at times it was so deep that I could do nothing else but get off the bike and push."

Ozteki spent his time in Ulaanbaatar recovering, and was aided by the help and generosity of an English woman named Wendy and two Irish nurses - Orna and Annette.

The hospitality of these three women made it hard for the cycling ace to leave.

"I am really enjoying Mongolia, the food is great, the mutton is great!"

Ozteki's adventure will take him through several countries covering more than 12,000 kilometres over six months. He aims to ride more than 100 kilometres a day.

"I trained hard in preparation for this expedition. And I have received sponsorship from Bridgestone Ireland to help with finances, so I should be all right."

From Ulaanbaatar, Ozteki pedaled his way north to Darkhan en route to Russia. Russian visa re-

strictions will force him to make double time to Europe. His Euro agenda is still unclear, though he noted that by then the smell of a fresh Guinness will keep him on line to his ultimate destination.

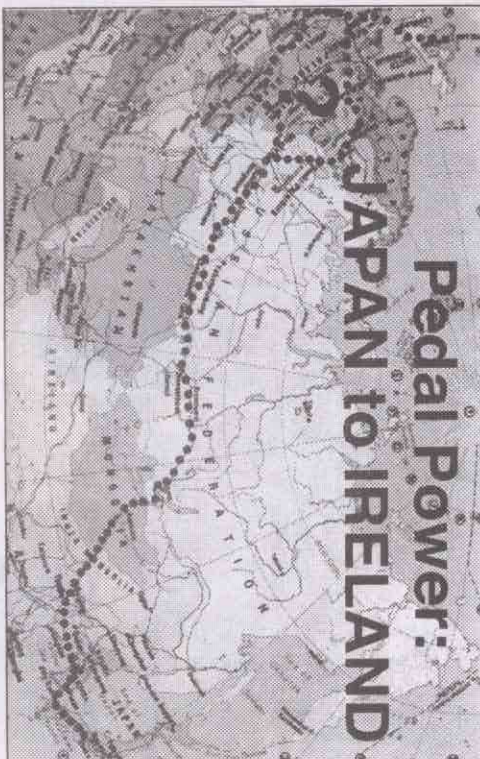
After driving trucks for two years in Osaka, he knew the wasn't the life for him, and more exciting adventures awaited him.

"Nature is calling me," he claims with a sheepish grin.

However, despite his admirable attempt there are those back home that think he is crazy.

"I dreamt it and the idea was there so I had to do it. My family thinks I am crazy but they know they cannot stop me, nobody can stop me because I have this dream, especially my parents they feel very worried about me, but they are happy now because I survived the Gobi and I am in Ulaanbaatar."

So for next six months, if you are feeling a little leg weary, spend some time thinking about this former builder and truck driver from Osaka who will be peddling his way across Europe bound for his adopted home in Ireland.



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- 3pm: Wrestling match
- 11am: Concert, Cultural Palace of Trade Union
- 1pm and 3pm: Circus performance, State Circus
- 7pm: Concert, Central Palace of Culture
- 7pm: Concert by Ch. Amarjargal, Top Ten disco club
- June 1
- 7pm: Concert, Central Palace of Culture
- 9pm: Concert, Top Ten disco club
- June 2
- 6.30pm Mongolian Hash House Harriers meet outside Bayangol Hotel for run or walk. Open to all. Contact Keith Hudson, 372966 (H), 328555 (W), khudson@magicnet.mn for further details.
- 6pm: Basketball game

Don't miss the
Curley, Short and Grey
Hour on Khokh Tenger Radio, 100.9 FM LIVE every Tuesday at 5.10pm. Groovy tunes and English Broadcast

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