

“Greetings from the Chief of Staff, Koku-Jieitai (Japan Air Self-Defense Force)”

The cold eased its grip, and the feel of spring is in the air. To all readers of this website, I hope you have been well.

On March 12, a funeral ceremony was held in Koku-Jieitai Komatsu Air Base (Ishikawa Prefecture) for the two pilots who deceased in the crash of F-15 fighter belonging to the base on the evening of January 31. I attended the ceremony and offered my sincerest prayers for their souls. Koku-Jieitai has strengthened its will to break the chain of aviation accidents over the past several years. We will do our utmost so that such an accident will never happen again.

Even amid such grief, the international situation is changing rapidly. Regarding Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, we will by no means tolerate Russia’s unilateral attempt to change the status quo by coercion, and we affirm that it is an extremely serious situation that could shake the international order, not only in Europe but also in Asia and other parts of the world. Under such circumstances, based on the government’s policy to provide as much support as possible to Ukraine, Koku-Jieitai’s transport aircraft has carried equipment to airports in neighboring countries of Ukraine. In the vicinity of Japan, intercontinental-class ballistic missiles were launched by North Korea in March, as in February. The missile launched on March 24 was analyzed to have landed within Japan’s EEZ. Furthermore, on March 2, presumed Russian aircraft violated the Japanese airspace off Nemuro Peninsula in Hokkaido, and on March 16, a Chinese reconnaissance UAV(BZK-007) operating in the East China Sea was identified for the first time by a Koku-Jieitai fighter during scramble mission. In addition to responding to these intense military activities by countries surrounding Japan, Koku-Jieitai engages fully in regular and continuous information gathering and warning and surveillance day and night, including prompt information gathering by aircraft after the earthquake on March 16, centered off the coast of Fukushima Prefecture. We will continue to maintain our readiness to respond to any eventuality.

In this challenging security environment, the first Japan-U.S. bilateral training with F-35A was conducted on March 10 to strengthen deterrence and response capabilities of Japan-U.S. alliance.

Through various defense buildup effort, including the delivery of the first RQ-4B (Global Hawk) on March 12, and the establishment of the Self-Defense Forces Iruma Hospital and the Space Operations Group on March 17, we are acquiring and strengthening capabilities both in traditional and new domains and steadily building a truly effective, Multi-Domain Defense Force.

While improving defense capabilities of Koku-Jieitai as above, we are striving to maintain readiness, carry out training, and provide logistic support to protect the life and property of the Japanese people.

Throughout FY2021, the Koku-Jieitai has moved forward (進化 : Shinka) steadily and deepened the existing functions and capabilities (深化 : Shinka) to ensure air and space security for the Japanese people. Although things may not have always been smooth, thanks to the support of Japanese people and all the supporters of SDF, I, as Chief of Staff of Koku-Jieitai, would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation that we have been able to face the difficulties and challenges at hand and fulfill various missions while preparing for future threats.

As there is no end to our pursuit of the noble goal of standing by the people and continuing to provide safety in the sky and the space, we will keep committing ourselves in FY2022 to moving forward, pursuing things deeply, and delivering the true value of Koku-Jieitai.

I would like to ask for your continued understanding and cooperation so that we can carry out our missions without fear and with a sense of mission and responsibility to live up to people's mandate.

The Reliable Koku-Jieitai (JASDF) Is Just by Your Side
Looking Up at the Sky and Space 24/7

March 31, 2022

General IZUTSU Shunji

Chief of Staff, Koku-Jieitai (Japan Air Self-Defense Force)



The establishment of the self-defence Force Iruma Hospital



The establishment of the Space Operation Group