

Marine Corps reactivates base on Guam



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ASAN BEACH, GUAM – The U.S. Marine Corps reactivated a new base on Guam in a ceremony, Jan. 26, honoring the long-shared history of the Marine Corps and Guam and establishing a forward presence in the Indo-Pacific that will endure into the future.

Marine Corps Base (MCB) Camp Blaz is the first newly constructed Marine Corps base in 70 years and serves as a testament to the U.S.-Japan alliance. Guam was chosen as the location for the new base during the 2012 Bilateral Agreement between the U.S and Japanese governments, under the Defense Policy Review Initiative, which set the framework for the relocation of Marines from Okinawa to Guam. The base is named in honor of Brigadier General Vicente Tomas “Ben” Garrido Blaz, the first CHamorro Marine to attain the rank of general officer.

“Today is an important day that marks the future of the Marines on Guam, and it is also a day to reflect on the century-long history of the Marine Corps in this beautiful place we call home,” said Col. Christopher Bopp, Commanding Officer, MCB Camp Blaz. “On this island Marines and their Chamoru brethren have lived in peace and fought in war together and we are proud to carry on this legacy of honor and courage.”

Guam’s history is marked by the enduring partnership between the U.S. military and the people of Guam. Since the establishment of Marine Barracks Guam in 1899, the Marine Corps has had a nearly continuous presence on Guam. The Marine Barracks was reactivated after World War II and deactivated November 10, 1992.

During the ceremony at War in the Pacific National Historical Park, honors were rendered to the Honorable Lou Leon Guerrero, Governor of Guam; Commandant of the Marine Corps; U.S. Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environmental; Japanese Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Defense and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs provided remarks. The ceremony ended with a traditional pass and review.

“I believe that on the horizon lies the opportunities that Ben (Blaz) wished for our people,” said the Honorable Leon Guerrero. “No longer are we dealing with challenges and isolation, we are cultivating a more sustainable and comprehensive Indo-Pacific allyship. The future of Guam is inseparable from the future of the broader Indo-Pacific and the success of the Marines is inseparable from the success of Guam’s people. Together we are an island and an ocean united; together we are always better and always stronger; together we are always faithful. Semper Fidelis.”

Situated on Guam’s northern plateau, Camp Blaz will serve as a strategic hub as the Department of Defense realizes the vision

of the 2022 National Defense Strategy. The base construction projects currently underway are partially funded by a large monetary contribution from the Government of Japan.

“Forward, persistent presence is key to the regional security and stability in the Indo-Pacific. Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz is a critical part of that. More than that, it shows our undivided relationship with the Government of Japan,” said the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. David H. Berger.

Camp Blaz represents a significant milestone for the future of both the Marine Corps and Guam. The base’s forward presence and engagement in the Pacific will play an essential role in strengthening the ability of the U.S. and its allies and partners for a collective defense and to promote regional security.

“The Japan and U.S. alliance is the cornerstone of the people, the peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region and the linchpin of Japan’s foreign policy,” said Ms. Yoshikawa Yuumi, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Marine Corps is committed to upholding the legacy of Brig. Gen. Blaz’s, prioritizing environmental and cultural stewardship, and building on the established relationships with the people of Guam remains integral in all aspects of development of this installation.

“It is right here, today, that we come together to demonstrate the power of partnership and the importance of community,” said the Honorable Mrs. Meredith Berger, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment.

For additional information, visit <https://www.mcbblaz.marines.mil>.