

New Police Academy for the North

Author: [Sayed Yaqub Ibrahimi](#)

Police training seen as central to building stable environment in a region that has seen violent clashes.

A new police training academy that opened in the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif earlier this year will eventually train thousands of officers from the country's five northern provinces.

It's the third such training centre to be established by the new government. Similar facilities are already operating in Kabul and Gardez, and four more are planned for Kunduz, Kandahar, Herat and Nangarhar provinces.

Police officers from Balkh, Jowzjan, Faryab, Sar-e-Pol and Samangan provinces are to be trained by more than 40 of their colleagues who have already undergone 50 days of special training in Kabul.

The lack of trained officers in the region forced the central government last year to dispatch 300 policemen after serious fighting broke out between forces under the control of General Abdul Rashid Dostum and General Ata Mohammad. Colonel Abdul Mohammad Zimerai, the head of the new training facility here, said that "once policemen begin to graduate from the new academy here, the 300 extra policemen can be returned to Kabul".

The academy is currently located in a temporary facility in the south of Mazar-e-Sharif, but a new centre is scheduled to be built with aid provided by the United States. Three American advisers have already been helping to set up courses for the centre.

"At first, we will have 15 day courses for 25 senior policemen. When the facilities are expanded, we can train larger numbers," Zimerai said.

"The initial trainees must have previous police experience and be recommended by the heads of police in the different provinces," he said. "In the long term, we will be [offering] three-year training courses for those who have successfully completed high school. At the end of these courses they will be given the equivalent of a university degree."

Overall, Zimerai said, the country's academies are expected to train 36,000 police officers.

General Abdul Razaq, the head of the security department of Balkh province's Police Commission, was one of the first officers to attend the academy.

"The training is completely different to the past," the senior officer from Mazar-e-Sharif said. "The teaching methods set up by the international advisers take into account human rights and United Nations conventions. They also bear in mind the new democracy being set up in Afghanistan," he said.

Captain Tom Barker, a spokesman for the British Provincial Reconstruction Team, PRT, said that his government is currently paying the salaries of the American trainers, although all other costs are being paid for by the United States. "Once the buildings are completed and the British advisers arrive, Britain will then take over the responsibilities being carried out at present by the United States," he said.

Sayed Yaqub Ibrahim is an independent journalist working with IWPR in Mazar-e-Sharif.

Location: Afghanistan

Focus: Afghanistan

Source URL: <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/new-police-academy-north>