



AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE  
**NEWS ARTICLES**

## New Iraqi Police Stations Open for Business

By Sgt. James P. Hunter, USA  
Special to American Forces Press Service

BAGHDAD, Feb. 14, 2008 – Iraqi police stations officially opened for business Feb. 10 in the Adil, Khadra and Jamia neighborhoods in the Iraqi capital's Mansour district.



*An Iraqi policeman takes roll at the Adil police station in western Baghdad, Feb. 9, 2008, prior to police training. Iraqi police stations officially opened for business in three neighborhoods of Baghdad's Mansour district the next day. Photo by Sgt. James P. Hunter, USA*

More than 490 recruits graduated from the Camp Fiji Iraqi Police Training Facility in Baghdad, and more than 260 of them were dedicated to the district.

As new policemen learn the ropes of their duties, coalition forces gradually move to an overwatch posture.

“The implementation of a home-grown police force in suburbs of Jamia, Adil and Khadra will allow local Arab men to secure their neighborhoods and homes,” said Army Maj. Chris Budihis, executive officer of 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment. “This will ultimately facilitate our effort to destroy al Qaeda once and for all in the Mansour district of Baghdad.”

Capt. Azad, commander of the Adil police station, said it is time for Iraqi policemen to take

control of their neighborhoods.

“In the next six months, everything will be safer and quieter,” he said with conviction and guarantee. “Everyone who goes to school and everyone who goes to work will be safe, because the Iraqi police will do their job.”

The Iraqi policemen will help with some immediate problems in their neighborhoods, Army 1st Lt. Benjamin Kim, executive officer, Company A, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, said. One of the biggest problems in Adil is the number of abandoned homes.

When sectarian violence went into full throttle, many people left their homes for the safety of their families. With the security situation stabilized, many Iraqis are returning to find others occupying their homes, he said.

“You have the homeowners coming back with their proofs of deeds,” Kim said. “The Iraqi police will be the legitimate force that helps maintain security in the area while helping to resolve issues of land ownership.”

However, Adil is a relatively safe neighborhood, Kim said, and with the addition of Iraqi policemen operating out of the Adil police station, they “will be able to maintain the stability that already exists in the area and provide more security.”

Army Capt. John Dixon, Company A commander, said nothing can happen if the area isn’t secure. “More security will enable the residents of Adil to feel safer, thus allowing for more stores to open and essential services returned, stimulating economic growth,” he said. “Furthermore, this will show the people that the (Iraqi government) is continuing to make progress to return the area to a sense of normalcy and encourage reconciliation.”

In Jamia, the police force will operate out of Joint Security Station Jamia, with 65 Iraqi patrol officers.

“It will give the residents of the neighborhood hope for continued improvement in the security situation,” said Army Capt. Mark Battjes, commander of Company B, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment. “This will allow coalition forces to deepen our partnership with the Iraqi security forces as we work together to secure the population.”

More than 100 policemen operate out of the Khadra police station. Some are recent graduates of the police academy, but their training will not stop there, as coalition forces want to build the strongest police force possible.

“Discipline is something you have to enforce,” Kim said. “You can’t have people showing up late to formation. It also shows that these people didn’t show up because they were drafted; they showed up because they want to be here. They just need guidance in the right direction, and that is what this is really all about -- giving them the guidance and showing them the way.”

Soldiers will train the new policemen on various tactics to continue to develop their skills, Kim said.

Army Staff Sgt. Terry Blogg, a Bradley fighting vehicle section leader with 3rd Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, said the soldiers will teach various topics such as duties and responsibilities, medical training, reacting to improvised explosive devices, ethics, operating tactical checkpoints, and rules of engagement.

As they continue to train, they will continue to learn and grow as a more organized and legitimate police force, he said. One day, he said, the streets will be solely theirs to control and secure.

“In the future, coalition forces will be able to take a back seat as the people of Iraq begin to solve problems on their own,” Budihhas said. “The need for coalition forces will still be present, but as a facilitator instead of the initiator.”

(Army Sgt. James P. Hunter serves in Multinational Division Baghdad with the 101st Airborne Division’s 2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Office.)