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## Balancing Act: Assessing the Severity of Drug Offense Penalties in Pakistan

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### Abstract

*This research article critically examines the comprehensive and stringent narcotics legislation in Pakistan, with a specific focus on the severity of penalties associated with drug-related offenses. The study delves into the intricate history of Pakistan-Afghan relations within the context of illicit drug trafficking. It highlights Pakistan's initiative to fight drug trafficking by forming strategic partnerships with international organizations such as the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF). The article acknowledges criticisms directed at the perceived severity of these regulations, particularly concerning individuals struggling with drug addiction. It underscores the importance of addressing the underlying causes of addiction while also advocating for the mitigation of corruption within law enforcement institutions. The conclusion underscores the significance of existing laws, emphasizing the need for their continual enforcement and sustained international cooperation to effectively tackle drug usage and trafficking in Pakistan. The article concludes with a call for a concerted focus on providing assistance and rehabilitation for individuals grappling with addiction.*

**Keywords:** narcotics, narcotics laws, criminal justice system, narcotics Pakistan

### Introduction

Although Pakistan's geographic position offers many benefits, its closeness to Afghanistan, the greatest illegal opium producer in the world, makes it susceptible to the scourge of drug misuse and trafficking. Unfortunately, Pakistan has been and continues to be the main conduit for the trafficking of illegal Narcotics produced in Afghanistan. The fact that Pakistan is also one of the countries with the biggest markets for these medications is even more alarming (Asad and Zada, 2006). Opium production in Afghanistan rose from 185 metric tonnes in 2001 to 6,100 metric tonnes in 2006 before declining to 4860 metric tonnes in 2010. It also increased the number of opiates trafficked into and through Pakistan. The UNODC's 2011 Afghanistan Opium Poppy Survey found that two of Afghanistan's five provinces near Pakistan produced 82% of the country's poppy in 2010 (Sajjad, 2011). In addition to Afghanistan, Pakistan's tribal regions have been significant poppy growers. The peak year for poppy production in Pakistan's tribal region was 1979, and the then-Pakistani government reacted by enforcing the Haddood Ordinance 1979. According to trends, Pakistan's poppy cultivation decreased to fewer than 600 hectares by 2000 but increased to 3100 hectares in the country's tribal regions by 2004. According to the Afghanistan Opium Survey 2004, opium cultivation reached a record 131,000 hectares in the same year. Currently, Afghanistan produces enough to satisfy 80% of global demand. 123,000 hectares were under cultivation in 2010;

nevertheless, the Afghanistan 4 Opium Survey 2011 predicts a modest decline in opium production this year (Qureshi, 2017).

## Background

Almost five decades ago, there was a significant increase in the number of offensive advertisements that appeared in newspapers or magazines or elsewhere pertaining to supposed treatments for venereal illnesses, sexual stimulants, and remedies for some other lethal ailments. These commercials tended to cause the ignorant and naïve to turn to self-medication with hazardous Narcotics and equipment, as well as to seek therapy from quacks who engage in such advertisements. As a result, it was deemed imperative in the best interest of society to put an end to such objectionable commercials.

The government of Pakistan took the initiative and passed the Drug Act, of 1976 in this regard. After that the Control of Narcotics Substance Ordinance, 1996(XCLV of 1996) and Control of Narcotic Substance Ordinance 1997 (XL11 of 1997) were also issued for combating Narcotic cases which were repealed by the commencement of the Narcotic Substance Act, 1997 which is still applicable in Narcotic cases of Pakistan. The Anti-Narcotic Force Act, of 1997 was also enacted for the constitution of force to investigate offenses relating to Narcotics cases. The disposal of automobiles and other items associated with narcotics cases as well as regulations for the monitoring of narcotic substances were also established in 2001.

## Literature Review

The CNSA's preamble makes it plain that the law's goal is to “consolidate and revise the narcotics and psychotropic substance legislation and regulate the manufacture, processing, and trafficking of such Narcotics and substances” (Stewart, 1989). This legislation also aims to control the rehabilitation and treatment of drug users. The “cultivation of any cannabis plant, coca bush, or opium poppy or harvest any part of cannabis plant, coca bush, or opium poppy” is forbidden under this Act. The CNSA further states that it is illegal and punitive to possess narcotics, import or export narcotics, traffic in narcotics, or finance narcotics trafficking. Anyone who commits one of the aforementioned offenses shall be punished by Section 9 of the Act, which stipulates various penalties depending on the amount of narcotics involved. If the drug amount surpasses one kg, the worst penalty is death or life in prison. It demonstrates that the Act imposes severe penalties for drug-related offences (Jamshad, 2020). The CNSA also granted the Police and Investigation agencies broad authority in drug-related matters. The investigating officer has the authority to enter and search for narcotics, seize and arrest suspects in public areas, stop and search any vehicle, conduct undercover and controlled operations, and arrest suspects without a warrant (MLD, 2018). While the legislation granted the investigating officer in circumstances covered by this Act broad authority, it also imposed certain constraints and even provided for penalties for the vexatious entrance, search, seizure, or arrest of an innocent person. The legislation further stipulates that no bail shall be given to an accused individual charged with a violation of this Act or any other narcotics-related statute when the violation carries a death penalty (2007 Pcr. LJ 839). It demonstrates how stringent the legislation is, forbidding even the granting of bail in certain situations. The fact that CNSA 1997 turned police officers become credible witnesses is another crucial factor. All searches and arrests are subject to the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898's rules, except those in section 103. Although section 25 of CNSA 1997 exempts the use of section 103 Cr. P.C in drug prosecutions, section 103 Cr. P.C nevertheless requires the participation of independent private witnesses during police searches. This clause was created in part because few ordinary citizens volunteer to testify against powerful and dangerous drug dealers; as a result, police witnesses are now considered competent under CNSA 1997. Some of the most crucial ideas from the CNSA 1997 are those that have already been mentioned. In this respect, the is thorough and offers all additional information, including asset freezing and forfeiture, the creation of special courts, the rehabilitation of drug users, the “National Fund for Control of Drug Abuse,” and international cooperation in drug offences. All of the aforementioned information demonstrates how

extensive, in-depth, and full the CNSA 1997 is, and how its effective execution may rid society of the pernicious effects of Narcotics. 5. A Few Frequently Used Justifications for Higher Courts Approaching Drug Cases First off, higher court judges are much more qualified and experienced than lower court justices (Asad, 2006). They decide pleas by seriously considering every detail, which is commonly disregarded by the lower courts in cases related to drugs. Secondly, the High Court judge thinks that the accused should be given the “benefit of the doubt.” In Pakistan's criminal justice system, there is a well-known adage that it is fairer to exonerate 100 bad persons rather than sentence one innocent person. Higher court judges usually follow this rule by providing the accused the benefit of the doubt. Third, in Narcotics cases, the quality of police or other law enforcement organizations' investigations is quite low. The investigation officers have received insufficient training in modern investigative strategies and methodologies. In drug trials, investigating personnel who are ill-equipped and unskilled is a major factor in the eventual acquittal of the accused. Pakistan has just lately formed independent provincial prosecution offices; therefore, they are still in their infancy. Although the quality of prosecution is rising with time, there is still more work to be done (Uddin & Rahman, 2020).

### **Laws dealing with Narcotics Crimes in Pakistan**

The “Control of Narcotic Substances Act” (CNSA 1997) in Pakistan aimed to tackle the trafficking of Narcotics through and within the country by offering severe penalties for possession, trafficking, production, export, import, and overall funding of the drug trade (Adil, 2022). Several key legislative acts and regulations are in place to address narcotics crimes in Pakistan. These include the Anti-Narcotics Force Act 1997, Control of Narcotics Substances Act 1997, Punjab Opium Rules 1956, Dangerous Narcotics Act 1930, The Opium Acts of 1878 and 1857, Narcotics Act 1976, Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) Act, 2012, Pakistan Civil Servants Act 1973, Drug Trafficking Offences Act 1986, Anti-Money Laundering Act Pakistan, 2010, Prevention Of Smuggling Act - 1977, Qanun e Shahadat Order 1984, The Public Procurement Act 2004, Special Prosecutors (Terms and Conditions) Rules - 2013, National Anti Narcotics Policy, Drug Abuse Control Master Plan 2010-14, ESTACODE, and the Pakistan Penal Code. These legal instruments collectively form the legal framework for regulating, controlling, and combating narcotics-related issues within the country.

### **The Control of Narcotic Narcotics Act's (CNSA) 1997 Structure**

To stop the sequence of actions that collectively make up drug trafficking, the CNSA reportedly established three distinct categories of crime. While cultivation is a separate offence with separate penalties in section 5, the list of acts in sections 6, 7, and 8 collectively fall under the sanctions provided in section 9, as will be covered in more depth below. Producing, manufacturing, extracting, preparing, offering for sale, selling, purchasing, distributing, delivering, transporting, or dispatching any narcotic drug, psychotropic substance, or controlled substance must adhere to the manner and conditions specified by this Act or any other law currently in effect, as stated in Section 6 of CNSA. The statute prohibits the import or export of narcotics, as Section 7 contains the following: (1) Importing, exporting, transporting, or transshipping narcotics is unlawful in Pakistan. Section 8 of the Act prohibits (a) organizing, managing, trafficking, financing, importing, transporting, manufacturing, or trafficking narcotics, psychotropic substances, or controlled substances, or (b) using brutality or weapons to commit or attempt any act punishable under this Act. Sections 6, 7, and 8 list possible legal offences, and Section 2 explains “manufacturing.” It examines how drugs and chemicals are obtained, refined, changed, created, or prepared (Aziz et al., 2020).

The Act's Section 9 addresses sentences under Sections 6, 7, and 8. It should be observed that the clause only refers to one sentencing factor, namely the amount of Narcotics or other illegal substances used in the offense. Chapter 9 states: Penalties for breaking Sections 6, 7, and 8. If a person violates the terms of sections 6, 7, or 8, they may be sentenced to (a) two years in prison, a fine up to \$2,000,

or both, depending on how much of the illegal drug, psychoactive substance, or controlled substance they used; (b) up to seven years in prison and a \$2,000 fine, depending on how much of the illegal drug, psychoactive substance, or controlled substance they used, with the caveat that the punishment cannot be less than life in prison if the weight surpasses ten kg. The CNSA has been given the authority to expressly override sections of the Code of Criminal Procedure as a special statute (Cr.P.C).

Section 25, of the CNSA, pertains to the procedures for conducting searches and arrests. Any warrants issued, as well as detention and inspections conducted under these sections, will be governed by the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, as long as they do not conflict with the requirements outlined in sections 20, 21, 22, and 23, except for those specified in section 103.

Section 29 of this law includes another provision that distinctly deviates from established legal principles, like the presumption of innocence until proven guilty. It introduces a presumption of guilt when it comes to the possession of illicit items. In trials conducted under this Act, it is assumed, unless proven otherwise, that the accused has violated the law concerning: “(a) any narcotic drug, psychotropic substance, or controlled substance; (b) any cannabis, coca, or opium poppy plant found on land they have cultivated; (c) any specialized equipment or utensils adapted for the production of... (d) any materials subject to sentencing based on possession” (Klein, 2009).

Because, of the language, of Section 9 of the CNSA adjusts the penalty depending on the amount of drug, there is an assumption constructed into the statute that the suspect will be having the drug for a valid conviction to be granted. For sanctions to be imposed under Section 9, the prosecution would have to meet the extra burden of proving “constructive possession,” or control over the material in the absence of physical possession. According to remarks made by ANF workers, the obstacles involved in acquiring such proof are frequently insurmountable.

Senior figures responsible for managing Pakistan's drug trade, who profit substantially from it, are quite distant from the actual narcotics. According to ANF authorities, they encounter significant challenges when it comes to locating and apprehending drug kingpins and cartel leaders. They highlight the difficulties of conducting online surveillance as well as the inability to find and confiscate wealth during the investigation phase. Furthermore, the extensive forensic accounting and investigation capabilities needed to unearth the fortunes and resources that support drug-related activities are lacking. The proposed strategy entails strengthening law enforcement organizations' investigation capabilities by granting civil jurisdiction to compel suspects to divulge information about their assets and how they were obtained. This approach would allow a greater emphasis to be placed on destroying organized drug trafficking networks.

### **CNSA Sentencing Guidelines**

Furthermore, despite the death penalty's demonstrated ineffectiveness as a deterrence, the CNSA sentencing guidelines use it as the toughest punishment possible for those found guilty of offences involving substantial amounts of Narcotics. Drug addiction and trafficking rates in Pakistan have risen while anti-narcotics courts continue to sentence low-level drug mules to death; this is because the kingpins are not subject to the same sanctions. A considerably more powerful deterrence would be a mix of custody and monetary sanctions to effectively target traffickers' freedom and liquidity. Asset recovery methods are of significantly higher concern to dealers, according to the UK's Sentencing Advisory Group. Because of the immense gains that may be earned from drug offences, it would seem that criminals are more worried about financial repercussions than they are about losing their freedom. Other jurisdictions have also found success with similar policies; for example, drug trafficking criminals in Germany can be sentenced to imprisonment and ordered to pay a sum of money under “Section 43a” of the criminal code. Judges have the power to confiscate all of a drug trafficker's assets as a form of punishment because the amount that has to be paid is only limited by the worth of those assets.

Section 27 of the Misuse of Narcotics Act of Ireland allows courts to impose "an appropriate fine" in addition to statutorily constrained prison terms for drug offences. As a result, the law allows judges the authority to impose a fine that will serve as a strong deterrent in each case. An unlimited fine can be levied against those accused of selling or supplying banned substances, serving as a powerful disincentive to drug traffickers looking to run successful operations. The Criminal Justice Act of 1994 in Ireland also allows for the seizure and confiscation of any property used in the commission of a crime as well as assets obtained from drug trafficking revenues. vi The Act also calls for international collaboration in enforcement which Pakistan would have better access to if drug criminals were no longer subject to the death penalty.

Nevertheless, merely reassessing the ownership violation independently will not be sufficient to tackle all the concerns within the sentencing system. For instance, within the CNSA, Section 9 fails to discriminate between hard and soft narcotics penalties. As per Section 9(c), an offense involving 1 kg of either heroin or cannabis incurs an identical penalty, which could be either life imprisonment or a death sentence. Given the significant differences in the health and societal harm triggered by these two substances, this approach appears wholly unreasonable. Additionally, it contradicts the worldwide trend of acknowledging and addressing this incongruity. Fortunately, there exists legal precedent from our superior courts that exhibits forward-thinking and recognizes the significance of establishing such distinctions and creating sentencing criteria to accommodate this diversity (Foundation for Fundamental Rights, 2015).

### **Internationalization of CNSA**

In the text of a law in Pakistan, there aren't many direct references to international treaties. In theory, the international obligations that the government of Pakistan has taken on must be written into the local laws to make them happen. In the most recent changes to the CNSA, a new sub-section was added to the definitions section, and a textual link was made between international drug control law and national drug control law. As highlighted by Adil (2022), "International Conventions now refer to the United Nations Convention on Illicit Traffic in Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, the 1971 Convention against Psychotropic Substances, and the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotics."

### **Legal Framework on Narcotics**

Pakistan is thought to have a lot of laws, but most of them are just ideas or rules that need to be carried out. This leaves a lot to be desired in terms of how they affect service delivery, protection of human rights, and crime control. There's no doubt that the most recent changes to the CNSA have made the law better by making the punishments stronger. To match what the law says, the system's approach to rehabilitation, reform, Narcotics in prisons and schools, and other issues needs to be strengthened through budgetary allocations. Most of the time, law enforcement in Pakistan checks the demand side of Narcotics instead of going after the networks that supply Narcotics. Most of the drug supply is tied to an international legal framework that strengthens administrative and prosecutorial systems to stop Narcotics from being used to launder money from crime. At the international level, Pakistan needs to use its position to make deals with other countries and international groups to improve international cooperation and mutual legal aid. At the domestic level, there needs to be a huge improvement in how the federal and provincial police agencies work together to enforce CNSA. This is to make sure that these agencies don't work against each other and move in the same direction by coordinating their efforts. How law enforcement officers and police help stop drug use (Special Courts of Control of Narcotics Substances).

### **CNSA Amendment Act 2022**

The following amendments have been made to the act:



(a) To the Preamble of Act XXV of 1997; In the first paragraph, after the word “substances,” and the comma, occurring for the first time, the words "controlled substances" are inserted. Additionally, at the end, the term "substances" are replaced with the expression “to provide for forfeiture of property derived from or used in illicit traffic in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and controlled substances and to implement the provisions of the international conventions on narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and controlled substances.”

(b) To Section 2 of Act XXV of 1997; (i) Clause (c), paragraph (ii) now replaces the reference to “Companies Ordinance, 1984 (XLVI of 1984)” with "Companies Act, 2017 (XLX of 2017) and the Limited Liability Partnership Act 2017 (XV of 2017)." (ii) Within clause (d), paragraph (ii), the phrase “knowing” is augmented with “and include all forms known as bhang, siddhi, or ganja.” (iii) In clause (k), after the term "substance," occurring at the end, there's an inclusion: “or which is declared to be a controlled substance and given in the Schedule-I under the provisions of an international convention, and by notification in the official Gazette by the division concerned.” (iv) New clauses are introduced post-clause (o), incorporating the definition of "illicit traffic" about narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, or controlled substances, encompassing activities such as the cultivation of coca plants or gathering any part of a coca plant. These modifications have been made to enhance the precision and comprehensiveness of the Act.

(c) To Section 4, Act XXV of 1997; Within Section 4, the words "cultivate" augmented by the inclusion of the phrase “or let his land for cultivation or give possession for cultivation of.”

(d) To section 5, Act XXV of 1997; Section 5 will now read as follows: “but shall not be less than one year and also be liable to a fine.”

(e) To section 9, Act XXV of 1997; Punishment for contravention of sections 6, 7, and 8. (i) “Any person who violates the provisions of sections 6, 7, and 8 concerning narcotic drugs will be subject to the penalties specified in column (3) of the TABLE below, corresponding to the offense committed as described in column (2).”

### Overall Review of Amendment

The Narcotic Substances (Amendment) Bill, 2022, which calls for the death penalty or life in prison for crimes involving the trafficking of narcotics and psychoactive substances in varied amounts, such as heroin, morphine, cocaine, and methamphetamine, is now under consideration (ICE). If the offence involving a narcotics drug or psychotropic substance is committed inside or close to a school, college, university, educational environment, or any other educational institution, the Act specifies the worst penalties. After receiving the President's approval following Article 75 of the Pakistani Constitution, the law was renamed the Control of Narcotic Drugs (Amendment) Act of 2022.

According to the Control of Narcotic Drugs (Amendment) Act of 2022, jail sentences might be as long as life sentences. However, for offences involving heroin and morphine weighing 4kg or more, a sentence of at least 20 years and a fine of at least Rs 1 million is required.

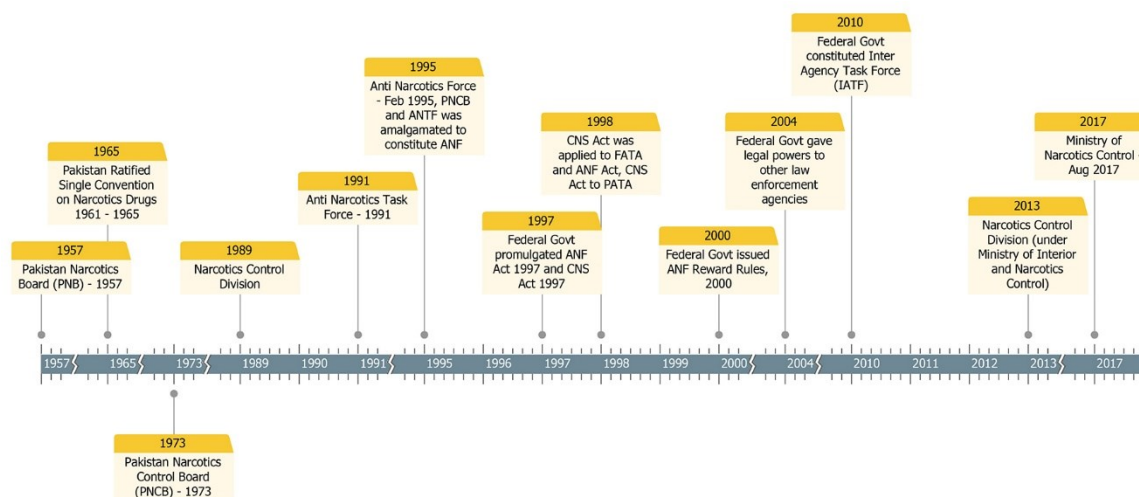
The aforementioned Act further specifies that a prison term cannot be less than life in prison or the death penalty. For offences involving heroin or morphine weighing 6kg or more, it additionally contains a fine of up to Rs 2 million but not less than Rs 1.5 million.

For offences involving cocaine weighing 5kg or more, it permits a death sentence or life in prison with a minimum sentence of 20 years and a fine of not less than Rs2.5 million.

The Act also allows for the death penalty or life in prison. For offences involving the possession of 4 kg or more of the psychoactive drug methamphetamine, also known as Ice, a fine of at least Rs2.5 million is also required.

## Implementing Authority for Narcotics Laws in Pakistan

### History



Establishing the "Pakistan Narcotics Board" (PNB) in the Revenue Division in 1957 allowed Pakistan to satisfy its obligations under the 1925 International Opium Convention. Pakistan Narcotics Board (PNB) members came from various provincial administrations and federal ministries and divisions. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961 was accepted by the state on August 15, 1965.

In 1973, the "Pakistan Narcotics Control Board" (PNCB) was established with five Regional Directorates with the responsibility of combating narcotics in the nation as a response to the United Nations Convention on Narcotics Control. Up until 1989, the Board served as an offshoot agency of the Ministry of the Interior and employed 883 people in various capacities. In 1989, the Board was transformed into an affiliated division, and the "Narcotics Control Division" (NCD) was established. Established in December 1991, the "Anti Narcotics Task Force" (ANTF) is an attached section of NCD with 388 Pakistani Army personnel of varying ranks. It was on February 21, 1995, that the Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) was formed by merging ANTF and PNCB.

### Objectives

The objective of ANF are straightforward: to ensure that narcotics remain available for scientific and medical uses while preventing their abuse. The international narcotic drug instruments specify the controls that must be upheld in each nation in addition to providing guidelines for international regulation in order to accomplish these goals. It goes without saying that there are strong connections and dependencies between these two sets of rules. Thus, by preventing the leaking of narcotic substances into illicit international routes, effective national control not only protects other countries but also prevents addiction at home. However, the enthusiastic collaboration of ANF and other national agencies is necessary for the successful enforcement of all international laws, even while these governments are subject to oversight and control by international bodies. In short, these regulations embody the mutually reinforcing roles of safeguarding oneself and the global community.

### Functions

There is an intricate web-like structural paradigm that established the jurisdiction under which ANF operates. Because in Pakistan, the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) is critical in combating drug-related problems. As noted by the author, the Maritime Security Agency, Coast Guards, Pakistan Rangers

(Sindh), Pakistan Rangers (Punjab), Frontier Corps (Balochistan), Frontier Corps (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Provincial Excise and Police Departments, Customs Department, and Frontier Corps (Balochistan) are just a few of the law enforcement and security organizations to which SRO 787(I)/2004, issued on September 16, 2004, assigns specific duties. This directive facilitates a coordinated and all-encompassing approach to address drug-related challenges by granting these organizations the authority to exercise jurisdiction and carry out their responsibilities as delineated in Sections 21, 22, 23, and 37.

The Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) is charged with carrying out the tasks listed in the National Anti-Narcotics Policy, which provides extensive details. As noted by Adil (2023), “the main duty of the ANTF is to carry out narcotics law enforcement operations in the field while making sure that all legal protocols are adhered to.” This entails looking into, obtaining, prosecuting, and properly disposing of property obtained by narcotics transactions. Furthermore, the task force works with the appropriate Regional Directorate(s) to launch yearly initiatives to stop or eradicate poppy farming.

Training the cadets of the Anti-Narcotics Force Academy is one of ANTF's other key responsibilities. Participants in this training program will leave with the knowledge and abilities necessary to handle drug-related issues. In addition, the task force is in charge of the Inter-Agency Task Force, which is made up of representatives from various law enforcement agencies. This concerted endeavor is essential to combating illicit drug activity. In addition, the ANTF has MOUs with several nations and works closely with national drug-policing groups.

Finally, the DG for Anti-Narcotics is the key coordinating entity for carrying out all of these functions at Headquarters. This collaboration guarantees the smooth and efficient implementation of the ANTF's numerous responsibilities in resolving drug-related concerns.

## Conclusion

As the author has thoroughly mentioned above, the state of Pakistan demonstrates a commitment to eradicating this issue from its roots through strong legislative measures and strict criminal sanctions in drug-related instances. Significant changes include tightening the laws that primarily control drug trafficking and expanding the jurisdiction of courts that have the authority to hear drug-related matters. Furthermore, there is increased collaboration with the UN and other international organizations to solve the problem through collaborative efforts.

The ANF plays a critical role during the drug seizure, follow-up investigation, and prosecution stages, and it can sometimes determine the outcome of the case on its own. Furthermore, the ANF successfully runs drug addiction education and rehabilitation programs at the district and provincial levels.

Furthermore, the ANF collaborates closely with foreign organizations and law enforcement agencies to enhance information sharing and coordinated strategies. Penalties for drug-related offenses in Pakistan include fines, imprisonment, and, in extreme circumstances, the death penalty. The severity of the penalty is influenced by the type and quantity of narcotics involved, as well as the offender's previous history. Furthermore, these regulations allow for the confiscation of assets earned from drug-related operations, which may dissuade traffickers.

Though it is undeniable that without the national and international control system, illicit drug trafficking and addiction would be much more pervasive and pose a far greater threat to global security, the fact that these activities still occur is not a reason to criticize the system. Rather than giving up, ANF and the international organizations need to keep up the fight and work tirelessly to tighten the net in order to obstruct the routes used by this illegal commerce and lessen the destruction it causes.



However, there is still a gap that must be filled by state agencies if the war on drugs is to be won at the highest level. The foremost priorities of the concerned organizations should be determining solutions for resolving systematic issues and further consolidating support networks that assist agencies in combating the drug war.

Maintaining and strengthening current drug laws, expanding assistance and rehabilitation programs, and addressing the underlying causes of substance addiction holistically are critical steps for Pakistan to make major advances toward curbing drug abuse and trafficking, ultimately improving the well-being of its people.

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