**ANF-A Potent Force**

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Youth in general and educated youth in particular are the asset of any nation. Any nation’s progress and future depends upon how the youth is educated, trained and equipped to deal with the future challenges. Such an investment in youth helps any nation to progress and live proudly among the comity of nations. Concurrently, progressive nations are also alive to any challenges which ham­per or handicap youth in their progress. Among other challenges, the demon of drug menace has menacing­ly taken over the lives of youth, especially in countries such as Pakistan, which has porous borders with coun­tries known for poppy cultivation around the world.

Drug consumption has assumed an alarming proportion among our youth. General depressing economic conditions, high cost of living, low employment opportunities are the fac­tors which are driving more and more youth to drug abuse to escape reality. Further, in recent years, youth from elite insti­tutions have started using recreational drugs in rave parties. It is ‘cool’ to use these drugs. The increasing drug demand in the country and abroad has but only encouraged drug lords and their vassals to devise more and more ingenious ways to smug­gle and distribute drugs. Recent use of drones in cross-border smuggling was one instance where technology was used by drug smugglers to evade law-enforcement agencies.

[PPP entrusts mandate to PML-N for Govt formation](https://www.nation.com.pk/15-Feb-2024/ppp-entrusts-mandate-to-pml-n-for-govt-formation)

Fortunately, under the Ministry of Narcotics Control, the country has a strong, potent Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) to combat the drug menace in the country. ANF is a multi-facet­ed force, which is combating the drug menace both at nation­al and international level. ANF has a strong training academy, where competent officers are selected through Federal Pub­lic Service Commission, while staff level recruitment is made through a rigorous and robust criterion. At academy, the re­cruits, both male and female, are put through rigorous phys­ical, educational and psychological training. There are simu­lation labs where recruits are put through various scenarios which they would encounter in the field. Many courses in the academy are sponsored by various international agencies such as United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. ANF acad­emy also has the honor of training personnel from regional countries such as Maldives, UAE, Dubai.

[Pakistan, Turkiye reaffirm commitment to forge deeper strategic ties in defence sector](https://www.nation.com.pk/15-Feb-2024/pakistan-turkiye-reaffirm-commitment-to-forge-deeper-strategic-ties-in-defence-sector)

Along with its trained manpower, army, rangers and police have representation in ANF board, which helps ANF to seam­lessly integrate with various law enforcing agencies and call upon their resources when and where required. ANF has re­gional directorates in all the four provinces of Pakistan, which monitor drug related activities in their respective regions. Re­sultantly, ANF has been making drug busts all over Pakistan, arresting drug peddlers and disrupting their networks. Fur­ther, ANF has also dovetailed with judiciary to speed up drug related cases, and thus ANF has a high conviction rate. How­ever, in its fight against drugs, several ANF personnel have embraced martyrdom. Services of shuhada for the country can never be forgotten and ANF has taken special steps for the welfare of shuhada families.

ANF also holds seminars inviting local academics, celebri­ties, students and various local and international stakehold­ers to engage with and to create awareness about its efforts, challenges faced and successes achieved in war against drugs. These seminars also help to integrate various inputs and gen­erate consensus for future strategies to be employed and ca­pabilities to be developed or acquired. Inputs from foreign agencies at these seminars are also invaluable as this also helps ANF to integrate at international level.

[Arrest warrant issued for Gandapur in a case related to AJK elections](https://www.nation.com.pk/15-Feb-2024/arrest-warrant-issued-for-gandapur-in-a-case-related-to-ajk-elections)

On the welfare side, ANF has setup a drug rehabilitation cen­ters where drug addicts are comprehensively treated to help them again become useful members of the society. Many suc­cess cases have become goodwill ambassadors of ANF, who speak about their experiences at various forums, especially in educational institutions. Thus, ANF, under its present DG, Maj Gen Aniq ur Rehman, has evolved into a dynamic organisation with multi-faceted capabilities. However, continued vigilance and evolution is of essence. Accordingly, continued support of the government, intelligentsia, celebrities and international bodies is required towards the aim of a drug free Pakistan: to save our youth and our future generations from drugs.

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