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Court Postpones Arms and Liquor Case Hearing as Gandapur Commits to Testimony

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An Islamabad court adjourned the hearing of a weapons and liquor case against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur on July 22, 2025, after he assured the court he would record his statement via video link. The long-pending case, originally filed in 2016, has drawn attention due to delays and its political implications.

Judicial Magistrate Mubashir Hassan Chishti presided over the district and sessions court proceedings. Despite earlier issuing non-bailable arrest warrants due to Gandapur's repeated absences, the court

granted another opportunity for him to testify under Section 342 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

The case stems from allegations of illegal arms and liquor found in a vehicle associated with Gandapur. He denies the charges, claiming the weapons were licensed Kalashnikov rifles and the alleged liquor was, in fact, honey. His counsel, Raja Zahoor-ul-Hassan, argued that the Peshawar High Court had granted Gandapur protective bail until July 3, questioning the lower court's jurisdiction. However, Magistrate Chishti maintained that the court had full authority to proceed and ruled that the arrest warrants would remain in effect until Gandapur's statement is officially recorded. The next hearing is scheduled for July 24.

Gandapur's legal team cited his official responsibilities in managing flood relief operations in KP as the reason for his absence. A scheduled video testimony at 3 p.m. could not proceed due to an unstable internet connection. The magistrate expressed frustration over the case's eight-year pendency, pointing out that prosecution witnesses have been testifying since May 2024. He warned that continued failure to comply could lead to a verdict in Gandapur's absence.

Critics argue the case has become entangled in political maneuvering, while the government insists it reflects the rule of law. The outcome may influence broader perceptions of judicial independence and fairness, particularly at a time of heightened political polarization.