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Court Maintains Arrest Warrants Against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Gandapur

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In a firm rebuke of delays and non-appearances, a local court has upheld non-bailable arrest warrants against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, rejecting his legal team's repeated requests for exemption from personal appearance. The decision comes amid an ongoing case involving the recovery of illegal arms from a vehicle linked to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader in 2016.

Presiding Judge Muhammad Shabbir Chishti made it clear that Gandapur must either record his statement under Section 342 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), which gives an

accused individual the chance to present their version of events, or risk forfeiting that legal right entirely. The court emphasized that the date for this appearance had been previously agreed upon by Gandapur himself, making further delays unacceptable in the eyes of the judiciary.

Gandapur's counsel requested one final opportunity for his client to appear, giving a verbal undertaking that the Chief Minister would present himself at the next hearing. The lawyer noted that seven co-accused individuals in the same case had already been acquitted, and a petition for Gandapur's acquittal was currently under judicial consideration. Additionally, he highlighted that the Peshawar High Court had previously granted bail to Gandapur in all related matters.

Despite these points, Judge Chishti was not swayed. He instructed the defense to submit any formal applications required, but announced that a written order would soon follow. Shortly thereafter, the court rejected the exemption plea outright and reiterated its arrest order, directing law enforcement to detain Gandapur and produce him in court. Proceedings were then adjourned until July 22.

The case stems from an incident in October 2016 when Islamabad police recovered five AK-47 Kalashnikov rifles, a pistol, six magazines, tear gas canisters, alcohol, and a bulletproof vest from a vehicle linked to Gandapur, then a prominent PTI figure. The incident occurred near Bani Gala, an area known for its proximity to PTI leadership, and was registered at Bara Kahu Police Station.

On July 19, Judge Chishti issued fresh non-bailable arrest warrants after Gandapur failed to appear in court once again, instructing the relevant Station House Officer (SHO) to ensure his immediate production.

The situation has reignited questions over the rule of law and the accountability of those in positions of power. Critics argue that current leadership, especially those in provincial roles, should not be permitted to flout legal processes while ordinary citizens face the full weight of the law. The judiciary's insistence on Gandapur's appearance serves as a stern reminder that legal procedures must be upheld, regardless of political office.

As the court reconvenes today, all eyes will be on whether Gandapur finally complies or risks deeper legal repercussions. The outcome may well set the tone for how future cases

involving high-ranking public officials are handled under Pakistan’s fragile judicial framework.