

FEMALE MAGISTRATE IN HITHADHOO FACES DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT FROM MALE COLLEAGUES



A female magistrate in Hithadhoo faces constant verbal discrimination and bullying from her male colleagues.

The magistrate district in question has five serving judges, four of whom are male and one of whom is female. The female magistrate's male colleagues are accused of repeatedly making lurid and inappropriate comments about the female judge's choice of attire and subjecting her to constant verbal harassment.

The male judges are reported to be particularly unhappy with her rulings in cases involving domestic abuse and divorce requests on the basis that her rulings favored women in such disputes.

The male judges are reported to constantly question her competency to serve as a judge on account of her gender, despite the female judge in question being the only judge with a law degree on the district – and collectively advocate for her resignation.

Furthermore they are reported to have appealed to the Judicial Services Commission with regard to her ability to preside over cases involving Hudhoo offences, as reportedly, they do not find it appropriate that a woman should preside over

cases of that nature. Reportedly the JSC were in agreement with this view and she is no longer able to preside over such cases. Sources also informed that, in accord with their belief that female judges should not be able to rule over certain types of cases, they also advocate that she should only be given half the salary of a male judge.

Transparency Maldives would like to note that observers and stakeholders in the judicial affairs of the Maldives have repeatedly observed that there is prevalent gender discrimination in our Judiciary, and furthermore that, as a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Maldives has a responsibility to ensure that the type of behavior described above does not occur or go unpunished.