

Dagestani Doctor Refused Russian State TV Appearance in Hijab

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Aishat Idarmacheva. **Social Media**

A female doctor from the Muslim-majority republic of Dagestan was not permitted to appear on Russian state television in a hijab, she said on social media Thursday.

Immunologist Ayshat Idarmacheva said that she had been asked to appear in a segment of flagship state-run broadcaster Channel One's morning show.

But the show's producer soon withdrew the invitation, saying that the planned segment "isn't religious" and therefore Idarmacheva cannot appear in the Islamic head covering.

"I don't really watch Channel One...but this was very hurtful," Idarmacheva wrote in an Instagram story. "This means that knowledge and [professional] competencies mean nothing if you wear a hijab."

"Just [seems like] our country is fighting against nationalism wherever [possible], but not within the country itself," she added.

The doctor said she was aware of multiple instances where women in hijab have been denied jobs or housing based on their looks, but that she found being refused a brief television appearance “particularly shameful.”

Human rights groups and regional media outlets regularly [report](#) instances of discrimination against women in Islamic religious dress in Russia.

Earlier this year, five female students were [expelled](#) from a medical college in the southern Rostov region after they refused to take off their hijabs.

Russia is home to a large population of Muslims that is mainly concentrated in its North Caucasus and Volga regions.

Officials in Moscow regularly boast of the country’s ethnic and religious diversity as a source of its strength, but many societal divisions remain.

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