

UNREPORTED
IN THE APPELLATE COURT
OF MARYLAND

No. 1410

September Term, 2023

RINTU RAJ YELURI

v.

SHINY JAQUELINE LIINGALA

Nazarian,
Reed,
Sharer, J. Frederick
(Senior Judge, Specially Assigned),

JJ.

PER CURIAM

Filed: April 5, 2024

*This is a per curiam opinion. Consistent with Rule 1-104, the opinion is not precedent within the rule of stare decisis nor may it be cited as persuasive authority.

In August 2022, the Circuit Court for Montgomery County entered a final protective order against Rintu Raj Yeluri, appellant, and in favor of Shiny Jaqueline Liingala, appellee. In July 2023, appellee filed a motion to extend the protective order, claiming that she was still “scared for her life” because appellant was continuing to send her threatening messages and contact her family and church members. Following a hearing, at which appellant did not attend, the court found that appellant had committed another act of abuse by stalking appellee, and therefore extended the protective order for an additional two years. This appeal followed.

On appeal, appellant denies committing any new acts of abuse and asserts that appellee’s testimony at the hearing consisted of “false allegation[s].” However, appellant did not raise these claims in the circuit court. In fact, he did not attend the hearing on appellee’s petition to extend the protective order. Consequently, we will not address these contentions for the first time on appeal. *See* Maryland Rule 8-131(a) (noting that an appellate court will not ordinarily decide an issue “unless it plainly appears by the record to have been raised in or decided by the trial court”).

In any event, we note that in reviewing the issuance of a protective order, we accept the circuit court’s findings of facts unless they are clearly erroneous. *See* Maryland Rule 8-131(c); *Barton v. Hirshberg*, 137 Md. App. 1, 21 (2001). In doing so, we defer to the court’s determinations of credibility, as it has “the opportunity to gauge and observe the witnesses’ behavior and testimony during the [hearing].” *Barton*, 137 Md. App. at 21 (quoting *Ricker v. Ricker*, 114 Md. App. 583, 592 (1997)). Here, the court’s findings were supported by appellee’s testimony, which the court determined to be credible. And we

cannot say that credibility determination was clearly erroneous based on our review of the record. Therefore, even if appellant’s claims had been preserved, they lack merit.

**JUDGMENT OF THE CIRCUIT
COURT FOR MONTGOMERY
COUNTY AFFIRMED. COSTS TO
BE PAID BY APPELLANT.**