



## News and Current Events :: Refused the Right to Convert

Refused the Right to Convert - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/10/20 15:36

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### Refused the Right to Convert (Malaysia)

In 1998, Azlina Jailani became a Christian and adopted the name Lina Joy. She then began a process to have her religious status changed from Muslim to Christian on her identity card; a process which has now taken six years.

According to Compass Direct, Lina Joy's case was rejected in May 2001, when a judge ruled, "As a Malay, the plaintiff exists under the tenets of Islam until her death." He also ruled that, since this was a religious matter, the case should be heard by the Islamic Sharia court, rather than the secular court. Since Islamic law declares that conversion from Islam is punishable by death, Joy knew that a Sharia court would not rule in her favour. She appealed the decision, on the basis of the Malaysian constitution which guarantees freedom of religion. Her case was heard by the Court of Appeal on October 14 and a decision is expected shortly.

Under Malaysian law, apostates from Islam can face a three year sentence in a "faith rehabilitation center," where counselors try to persuade them to return to Islam. If they fail to repent in that time, they could face an additional six years. A similar case was heard by the High Court in July 2004, which upheld the sentence of four converts to Christianity.

Pray for Lina Joy and other Christians facing discrimination and prison for their faith in Jesus Christ.  
Pray for strength to endure and the wisdom and faith to stand.

From the news flow at Intercessors Network