

PM: Don't be emotional over Joy decision
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Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today urged for an open mind and rational thinking from everyone over the recent decision in Lina Joy's case.

"If we allow ourselves to be overcome by emotion, we will begin to have all kinds of thoughts; we will have suspicions about this and that," he was quoted as saying in Bernama.

He also said that his government had played no role or brought any influence on the decision of the Federal Court.

"That is the decision of the court; I don't question them," he said after chairing an Umno Supreme Council meeting today.

Yesterday, the highest court in the country ruled on a 2-1 majority to dismiss Lina's appeal to have the word "Islam" removed from her identity card.

Lina, 43, had claimed to have renounced Islam to embrace Christianity 17 years ago.

The court however ruled that Lina had to obtain a certificate of apostasy from the Syariah Court before the National Registration Department could drop the word "Islam" from her identity card.

Chief Justice Ahmad Fairuz Sheikh Abdul Halim and Federal Court Judge Alauddin Mohd Sheriff dismissed her appeal while Chief Judge of Sabah and Sarawak Richard Malanjum dissented.

No religious divide

Asked if the Federal Court decision would cause a religious divide in the country, Abdullah said: "I don't think there is a divide although the discussion on religion becomes more widespread."

Bernama also reported that at the press conference, Abdullah also dismissed a suggestion from a foreign journalist that Islamic law was now above the Federal Constitution in the country.

"There is no such thing (of Islamic law being above the Federal Constitution). The Federal Constitution is the Federal Constitution.

"There is a set of laws we have to follow. It is something that we have to follow, that's all," he said.

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