

# I want to be a good Muslim, not popular, says Raja Zarith

**PETALING JAYA:** Raja Zarith Sofiah Sultan Idris Shah does not care if her beliefs make her unpopular, saying that her priority is to be a good Muslim and a decent human being.

In a Facebook posting yesterday, the Permaisuri of Johor said it was unfair for Malaysians to see all Jews as evil.

“For so long now, most Malaysian Muslims see all Jews as wicked and evil. That is like believing that all Muslims are good when we know some have acted against the very

teachings of Islam.

“Listen to what Rabbi Michael Learner has to say about Muslims, about Israel, about Palestine, about peace, and you will understand that it is wrong to pass judgment on anyone,” she wrote.

Raja Zarith, who obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Chinese studies from the University of Oxford in 1983 and her Master of Arts in 1986, said she had both Jewish and Palestinian friends who were kind to her.

“I do have a few Jewish friends,

they have shown me kindness and compassion, especially during my darker days.

“I am also honoured to have Palestinian friends who have remained brave and are still filled with hope that one day there will be peace in their homeland.

“I have lived through the unimaginable as a mother and it has changed me. I now do not care if what I believe in makes me unpopular. What I would like to achieve is to be a good Muslim and a decent human being,” she said.

She then went on to say how her post will not be read by some because it was written in English and added that the existing education system made it difficult for many to read, write or speak English.

“That is another thing which may make me unpopular, that I believe it is for our own good to be fluent in English.

“Why do I think that English is an important language? Because being able to read books, magazine articles, online news, and websites or

listen to lectures by eminent scholars, or watch fascinating and fact-filled documentaries in English opens up such a vast world of knowledge,” she said.

Raja Zarith, who is the UTM Johor chancellor, said nasty comments about her from the public no longer affected her.

“After going through the hellish moment of seeing my son take his last breath, there isn’t much else which can be worse or more painful so I think I can live with that,” she said.