

As chairman of the Malaysian Red Crescent Society fund-raising committee in the 1970s, her deep care for humanity saw her campaigning for funds all over the country.

After retiring from Government, she has been concentrating on social work and religious activities. She is the patron and advisor to the newly-formed Bangsar Muslim Women's Welfare Association.

It is in honour of her dedication and contributions towards the progress of women that the **Avon-Tan Sri Fatimah Woman of Distinction Award** was named after her.

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### **Fatimah relearning religion**

By Noraini Sharif

Pix:- Fatimah then and now ... I am still interested in politics but I am no longer active.

THE gates to the home of Tan Sri Fatimah Hashim were not locked the day I went. In fact, they are hardly ever closed, proof of her belief that God will take care of those who have faith in Him.

In the days when **she was politically active**, the gates were always open to allow in the hundreds of people who came to see her or **her late husband, Tan Sri Abdul Kadir Yusof**.

That was the time when she was **Kaum Ibu president and Welfare Services Minister (the first woman to be made a minister)** and her husband was the **Law Minister**.

These days, they remain open all the time because one or the other of her six children and 16 grandchildren would visit her.

"Safety? I believe Allah will look after us," she said, when it was pointed out that her open gate may invite intruders.

In fact, 20 years after she left the political arena, Fatimah's life revolves around religion. Her days and nights are spent in the pursuit of a better understanding of Islam and today, her face mirrors the inner calmness that she has derived from it.

There are, however, some habits from the old days that she has not discarded. Like the meticulous diaries she keeps neatly on her study table - one for her memoirs and one for her appointments. The entries are written neatly and systematically, according to the time of the day.

And lest one begins to think that at **68 years old**, she may be doddering on senility, think again. Her walk may be a little slow, due to a bad back and arthritis, but Fatimah enjoys good health and her memory is as sharp as a woman half her age.