

Chang slammed over swearing on holy books

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PETALING JAYA: Matthias Chang, the former political secretary of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, had acted "beyond the boundaries of a wise man" when he swore on the Quran and four other holy books on Wednesday, said Putera Umno.

Describing this action as "unacceptable, insulting and manipulative, movement head Datuk Abdul Azeez Rahim said the former had displayed little or no respect for the various religions in Malaysia.

Even Muslims are not encouraged to swear on the Quran, he added.

"It was not wrong for Chang to speak up for his former boss because this is a democratic country. But the moment he decided to manipulate Islam in pursuit of his goals, he had insulted Muslims in the country," Azeez said.

"First of all, Chang is not a Muslim and secondly, he is not an Umno member. So why is he manipulating religion in trying to resolve a matter of internal party conflict?

"Chang should not tread on dan-

gerous ground."

Abdul Azeez was commenting on Chang's statement on Wednesday, challenging Umno Youth deputy chief Khairy Jamaluddin, and *New Straits Times* deputy group chairman Datuk Kalimullah Hassan to openly debate the controversial issues raised by Dr Mahathir.

In the press conference, Chang sworn on the holy books that he was not involved in any businesses directly or indirectly, either in the country or abroad, and that he had only one bank account.

Abdul Azeez said there was no need for Chang to make the statement as no one had accused him of anything.

On Chang's move to invite only major Chinese dailies and the foreign press, Abdul Azeez claimed he had "humiliated" the country' by doing so.

On a related matter, he said Putera Umno stood 100% behind the party led by Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and the movement would assist in the effective implementation of the Ninth Malaysia Plan by going down to the ground.