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Dr Mahathir: Koh should give way to younger, capable leaders

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KUALA LUMPUR: Gerakan president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon should step down and give younger capable leaders a chance to lead the party, said former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

He said it boiled down to the question of whether Dr Koh's leadership would help Gerakan win in the next general election.

"Besides not contesting in the next general election, he should resign as president because Gerakan has failed under his leadership," he said after launching the "War is Crime" exhibition here yesterday.

Dr Mahathir said it was still not too late for Dr Koh to resign before the election.

"I am sorry to say this of Tsu Koon but politically, it's his duty to resign," he said.

Asked if Gerakan could regain seats in the next election under a new leadership, Dr

Mahathir said whoever leads the party would face a tough time but that it had enough supporters.

He said the problem in Malaysia was that "ministers were reluctant to resign and wanted to hold on to their positions for life", adding that he himself had stepped down to give way to his then deputy Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

On Wednesday, Dr Koh announced that he would not contest in the next general election

to start a "leadership renewal" in the party but did not indicate if he would resign from his president's post.

In **George Town**, former Gerakan vice-president Huan Cheng Guan claimed it was not Umno that made Dr Koh decide not to contest but Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng.

Huan, who is now Parti Cinta Malaysia vice-president, said it was "distasteful" for Lim to insinuate that Umno was behind Dr Koh's decision.