

Koh rebuffs quit calls, to remain Gerakan president
The Malaysian Insider
October 15, 2011
By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 15 — Tan Sri Koh Tsu Koon today insisted on leading Gerakan into the next general election despite calls from his Wanita wing leader to buck up or step down.

The Gerakan reportedly sniped back at Wanita Gerakan chief Datuk Tan Lian Hoe for her remarks during the wing's annual general meeting earlier today, and said he will stay in his post until polls are called.

According to media reports, Tan had called on Koh (picture) to "shape up" or ship out of the party, labelling him a weak leader.

"We want him to be brave and make decisions that can bring a new life into the party," she was quoted as saying in TheStar Online.

The Gerik MP stressed, however, she was not demanding Koh's resignation, but wanted the party president to reinvigorate Gerakan and listen to its grassroots leaders.

"It (criticisms) should be looked at in a positive way, as a turning point for its survival," the daily quoted her as saying.

Speaking at a press conference later, Koh reportedly claimed Tan was often absent from leadership meetings and would have likely voiced a different view if she had been present.

He said he would be making "tough decisions" after the delegates' conference regarding the party's future direction, candidates for the coming polls, and his own position in Gerakan.

Without offering details, Koh said he would continue to lead the party into the polls and shrugged off Tan's words, saying she was entitled to her opinion.

Coming to Koh's defence earlier, Gerakan Youth chief Lim Si Pin called on all party leaders to close ranks and support the party president.

"He was democratically elected. Like it or not, he is still our president, and we have to stand behind him," said Lim was quoted as saying by TheStar Online after a press conference.

Koh has been repeatedly criticised by party members and leaders for his leadership.

Exactly a year ago, the former Penang chief minister had a similar falling out with his predecessor in the party, Tun Dr Lim Keng Yaik, who had even quit his post as adviser to the leadership, citing dissatisfaction with Koh's performance.

In an outburst, Lim had also griped over the direction of the flailing Barisan Nasional (BN) component party and claimed he was merely articulating the views of many party leaders.

Gerakan, which had helmed Penang for nearly 40 years since 1969, lost the entire state to the Pakatan Rakyat parties of DAP, PKR and PAS in an embarrassing defeat during Election

2008.

The party failed to secure a single seat during the polls, while Umno won 11 seats in the 40-seat state assembly. DAP made a clean sweep and secured all 19 state seats it contested, while PKR won nine and PAS, one.

The Malaysian Insider

Copyright © 2011 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/koh-rebuffs-quit-calls-to-remain-gerakan-president/>