

**Koh: 'I'm ready to sacrifice myself for Gerakan'**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**October 16, 2011**  
**By Yow Hong Chieh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 16 — Gerakan chief Tan Sri Koh Tsu Koon said today he was willing to sacrifice himself for the party but stopped short of confirming if this included resigning his post.

"I'm not going to tell you today what I'm going to do... but I assure you I'm ready to sacrifice myself for the party.

"As in what way and how, I'll let you know. Because this is a collective leadership. I cannot charge ahead without asking the party," he said in his closing address to the Gerakan National Delegates Conference here.

Koh, however, declined to clarify if this included the option of stepping down as Gerakan president when asked during a press conference later.

"I'm not going to answer anything. My statement is for today," he responded brusquely.

Koh said there were several options of what he meant by sacrifice but stressed he would come to decision only after he has made a final assessment of what is best for the party and the people.

He said he a "very responsible" person and would only choose the next course of action after taking into account the impact of the various options he had in mind.

Koh added that he had been considering the options for some time now and that none of them came as a result of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's speech today or calls from Wanita Gerakan chief Datuk Tan Lian Hoe for him to shape up or ship out.

Najib, who is also Barisan Nasional (BN) chairman, today sidestepped questions of his support for Koh amid calls within the party for the latter's resignation.

When asked if he backed the beleaguered party president, the prime minister said he would leave it to Koh to decide on the matter.

"Whatever it is I have a good working relationship with Tan Sri Koh Tsu Koon... so I'll leave it in his hands and I think he knows what needs to be done," he told reporters after attending the Gerakan National Delegates Assembly here.

Koh has been repeatedly criticised by Gerakan members and leaders for his "weak" leadership.

Exactly a year ago, he had a falling out with his predecessor, Tun Dr Lim Keng Yaik, who quit his post as party advisor citing dissatisfaction with Koh's performance.

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

Gerakan, which helmed Penang for 39 years, lost the state to the opposition 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.

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