

Tsu Koon: I'm staying on as Gerakan president
By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal
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GEORGE TOWN, Nov 19 — Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said today he will not step down as Gerakan president despite announcing on Thursday he would not be contesting in a general election expected soon.

The minister in the Prime Minister's Department said he still needed to handle party matters while other Gerakan leaders prepared for polls expected early next year.

He said resigning would be the "easy way out" after coming under pressure from several Umno leaders including former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to make way for younger leaders.

Koh's announcement on Thursday came after he said last month he would make "the ultimate sacrifice," leading to speculation that he would set a timeframe to quit politics.

Gerakan has failed to regain support over the last three years since it was wiped out in its former stronghold of Penang in Election 2008.

Following the former Penang chief minister's announcement, the MCA, its fellow Chinese-based Barisan Nasional (BN) component, said yesterday it wants Penang voters to give the party a chance in the coming national polls.

Although his successor as Penang CM Lim Guan Eng said Umno had forced Koh out, the senator insisted it was a "personal decision" and he was not succumbing to any political pressure.

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