

BN seat swaps 'possible'
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This will be done if there is agreement among parties, says Gerakan

BARISAN Nasional component parties may swap several seats in the next general election to strengthen the coalition's chances of winning.

Gerakan president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said seat exchanges would only take place if there was consensus among parties.

"If there are special circumstances which require swapping of seats, it can be allowed, provided there is mutual agreement among the parties. This can only be done after accessing strategies and factors like winning chances.

"It is also subject to the agreement of the Barisan Nasional supreme council," said Koh after opening the Community Social Responsibility for Better Kuala Lumpur forum near here yesterday.

Last September, BN deputy chairman Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the status quo was likely remain in the allocation of seats among the component parties.

However, he did not rule out the possibility of seat swaps.

One seat that will be exchanged is the Grik parliamentary seat in Perak, which is currently held by Gerakan Wanita chief Datuk Tan Lian Hoe.

The seat was given to Gerakan to contest in the 2008 general election and will be returned to Umno in the next general election.

In turn, Gerakan will get back the Taiping parliamentary seat, which was given to the People's Progressive Party (PPP) in the last general election.

However, talk is rife that the Kepong seat, contested by Gerakan in 2008, would be swapped with MCA's Bukit Bintang or Cheras seats.

"As far as we are concerned, Kepong has always been a Gerakan seat unless we have a better offer," said Dr Koh when asked about the possibility.

Koh said details of seat swapping had not been discussed at the BN supreme council although there had been some unofficial "exchange of ideas".

Referring to speculation of seat exchanges as "hot air", Koh said Gerakan's style was not to entertain such talk, but to do real work by serving the people.

He lamented that the political climate of the country had not abated since the last general election.

"I feel that for the first four years, we should concentrate on our work and only campaign in the final six months."

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