

**BN should welcome two-party system, says Gerakan
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By Ida Lim**

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 30 — Gerakan today expressed support for a two-party system and urged the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition to “welcome” political competition in the run-up to national polls.

“As I have said before, Gerakan is basically supportive of a two-front system, especially if both coalitions are multi-racial and multi-religious,” Gerakan’s president Tan Sri Koh Tsu Koon (picture) said at the party’s 41st national delegates conference today.

“The two coalitions would then compete to be moderate, to move towards the middle and not towards the extremes,” he added in the copy of the speech that was made available to The Malaysian Insider.

“Therefore, as BN is committed to 1 Malaysia, BN should welcome competing in a two-front system.”

Koh also said the BN component party is “keenly aware” that “some Malaysians, especially the younger generation and those in the urban areas, are now advocating a two-party, two-front or two-coalition system as practiced in many advanced countries. Some are attracted by the prospect of a change in government.”

Malaysia is largely dominated by one coalition, with BN having been in power since the country’s formation, and previously ruled as the Alliance Party.

Talk of a viable two-party system has been gaining ground following the 2008 elections which saw the rise of Pakatan Rakyat (PR) as a formidable opposition.

The opposition pact composed of DAP, PAS, PKR had managed to wrest control of five states — Penang, Selangor, Kedah, Kelantan and Perak.

Perak has since then fallen back into BN’s fold after a few state assemblymen defected from PR.

PR has come up with promises to carry out policy reforms and also an alternative Budget 2013 ahead of the 13th general elections that must be called by next April.

The BN government has stepped up its pace in the run-up to polls and seems to be leeching steam from PR’s electoral campaign after announcing a slew of Budget 2013 goodies across the board last Friday, including another round of cash handouts to low-income households and the youth through discounts for federal tertiary study loans.

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