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**Senate has role of checks and balances to play, says Wong**  
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# Senate has role of checks and balances to play, says Wong

**Sharon Tan**

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Outgoing senate president Datuk Wong Foon Meng hopes the upper house will not be merely a venue for debating and passing laws but will also play a role of checks and balances.

"I am satisfied with the role played by the senators throughout my six years in the senate as we can see a change, which was different from the past 20 years.

"We can see that the senators come well prepared with facts and figures. They are also able to debate and make suggestions that many had been taken into account by the government when making policies," said Wong, whose term as senate president ended yesterday.

Wong, the former MCA secretary-general, had served two full terms as senator, deputy president as well as the president of the House since April 13, 2004.

"I have learned a lot over the past six years especially from my predecessor, former president Tan Sri Dr Abdul Hamid Pawanteh, who had guided me well and given me a lot of opportunities to develop my career.

"After I took over the presidency, I had given the same encouragement to my deputy and fellow senators that whatever they do to develop their career and serve the parliamentary system, it must reach a state which is respectful," he said after launching the AIDS exhibition in parliament.

Wong, who plans to continue to assist the government and party upon retirement, said the senate will elect a new president on April 26.

However, he said the government would decide on the candidacy and the successor would not necessarily be Datuk Armani Mahiruddin, the first woman deputy president of the House.