# Thailand's Senate Selection Process Faces Allegations of Partisanship and Undemocratic Practices



**Senate Selection in Thailand Under Scrutiny for Alleged Partisanship**

Bangkok, Thailand – Concerns loom over Thailand’s one-month-long Senate selection process, which began last week, amid claims of unfair practices favoring the conservative establishment. The selection is crucial as the opposition faces legal challenges that could impede progress toward democratic reforms.

The Thai military, holding power since the 2014 coup, previously appointed 250 members directly to the upper house, allegedly to hinder political reform during the country’s transition to a flawed democracy. Following last year’s election, these senators blocked the Move Forward Party (MFP) from forming a government despite its parliamentary majority.

Now, 200 new senators are being selected from industry leaders through a complex process where only registered candidates, over 40 years old and with at least 10 years of experience in their fields, are permitted to vote. The process will conclude with a final vote on June 26, and results will be announced on July 2.

Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a professor at Chulalongkorn University, highlights the new senators' significant roles in amending the constitution and overseeing appointments to the Election Commission and Constitutional Court. The current constitution, imposed by the military in 2017, has faced growing calls for amendment or annulment.

The Senate selection's legality is also under question, with the Constitutional Court expected to rule on the matter soon. Advocates like Ruchapong Chamjirachaikul argue the process lacks fairness and democracy, noting instances of irregularities and potential vote-buying.

While the opposition strives for a transparent and inclusive selection process, critics fear ongoing conservative influence will prevent substantial constitutional changes.