

## *Original Paper*

# Quest of Transitioning towards Socialism: Concept

## Here-so-forth & Course That Nepal Should Command Ahead

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### **Abstract**

*Socialism is one of the key phrases on political landscape across the world, at current time. Among few major buzzwords in global politics of this century, i.e., Nation Building, State Re-structuring, Advanced Democracy, Welfare State, Public Sovereignty, and so on, currently, socialism also has been sufficiently dragging the attention of the politicians, political scientists, scholars and/or researchers in domain of Political/Social Science.*

*All the pro-progressive scholars and politicians urge in adopting socialism orientated advancement in each sector or domain of the society including education, health, economy, governance, judiciary, bureaucracy and so on. But, there is an evident lacuna in exploring the commencement and progress track-record of socialism in terms of both practice and acknowledgement. A clearly comprehensible and communicative blueprint of-long waited and highly touted-socialism prone society is still an absolute missing. Nepal is no longer an exception with the situation of being at this sheer crossroad.*

*Thus, this paper digs out the origin of socialism along with its base concept and gradual development of practice across the world. Further, major features that Nepal ought to embody for pro-socialism transformation as well as political activities and societal reflection prone to socialism will be minutely unearthed here on.*

### **Keywords**

*Socialism, democracy, development, progress, Nepal*

## 1. Introduction

Socialism is one of the key words and high public expectations in the recent world politics. “Societies missing pro-socialism orientation take an apocalyptic move, drive at a full decay, head at transgression, and present a travesty of development”, often many scholars argue. Most of them firmly believe that every existing con and curse can be well cured through transformation of respective sectors as per principle of socialism. Caring the density of use and level of politicians’ obsession on this term, Lebowitz (2015) assumes it a “rich experience of the countries”. Opting for pro-socialism transformation in each sector of society is assumed as an inevitable conduct for nation building. Unfolding the gist of socialism, Selwyn (2018) considers it “building a new and heavily reformatory society”, “the panacea of all forms of existing global development crisis” and prior to this, “struggle for dependable and pro-commoner progressive march” (Selwyn, 2014).

Nepal is a socialism oriented country pursuant to the constitutional pronouncement. The term socialism has gained increasingly growing prominence in every political party, among almost leaders, in academic and political debates within the university, and it has existed as most popular rhetoric for public consumption. It is “a domino effect” as Hodgson (2019) argues in context of global epiphenomenon of profound political wave. As an extenuating effort, parties sometimes hold customary discussions on the subject with mere cosmeticized experts. No party, albeit, has a clear outline of socialism and concrete roadmap cum plan that is intelligible for the cosmopolitan general public. At the top of dismay, there has not been any prescribed and structured outline on the claims proposed on their behalf. Such an apparent and evident gap has plunged both the expectants and explorers of socialism at full jittery, has landed them at utterly dismal confusion and at high sixes and sevens in regard to its features and modality. Now, an incisive and scholarly engagement to explore concept and frame-out an evident outline in regard to socialism is an exigent essentiality, now. This paper tries to serve the very purpose.

## 2. Method of Studies

This research work embodies a rightful blend of Descriptive and Analytical studies. The Delphi method, which allows research scholars to infer conclusion or deduce the arch argument from experts’ opinions, largely amounts on the completion of this article. Along with these two prime methods, observed realities and lived experiences from the researcher too contribute to add and uphold the intensity of claim argued in this paper. Since the numeric data are also cited from other scholars and their published works, only secondary data is used to finalize this research work.

In total, contributions from various 79 scholars are cited. Those works were explored through Google scholars, academia.edu and research gates as well as Z library since those are prime search engines among researchers at the present. Materials that are recently published, more frequently consulted, widely discussed and published into highly credible gateways or sources are given priority as

references.

### 3. Result

Socialism can be set up if and only if beneath mentioned 10 point way-outs can be ensured. The claim of pro-socialism move or effort (which are intermittently made by most political parties around election time or other political meetings or in close plenum or in different plenaries), these days, will turn mere a psychological satisfaction cum invented illusion. Those could create a transitory wave for public consumption but can mark no any permanent solution. Unless having the firmed and marked initiations in evidently endorsing these 10 point gains, it is less likely possible to pitch pro-socialism pavement. Nepal ought to warrant an important breakthrough and powerful positive intervention to command significant achievement on below discussed 10 points in order to initiate a seamless journey towards socialism.

### 4. Discussion & Analysis

#### 4.1 Background

Some societal praxis are such in nature that even if those are given conceptually appropriate and refined words later, the practice may have been on place since time immemorial. Playfoot et al. (2016) regard that various practices were apparently embedded in society despite sets of fancy words of modern-day uses were seldom coined. The word entrepreneurship is very popular nowadays but various practices and dimensions of entrepreneurship were in place in the society even when the word was not in use at all. Similarly, classical economy had apparently manifested many features those are close to the concept of modern day entrepreneurship as Jonsson (2017) argues. Further, he writes, “we had a number of different words which stressed various aspects of entrepreneurial behavior and function” (p. 25). Owing to not having a phrase business ethics, commercial activities were not entirely devoid of expected conducts and admissible ethics. Most family laws, these days, state that husband and wife should love each other but this won't infer that they did not love when it was not coded in the law. In fact, an enviously true love would loom large the then. Muravyeva (2014) lays stress that ancient families had much of harmony, hobnobbing and complacency along with sober family code than in modern time. Although most theories have only recently been framed in terms of thought, their multifold dimensions and practices must have existed and have been exercised for centuries. Therefore, when it comes to debate, socialism also should be considered and construed, inter alia, from two lenses of conceptuality and practice.

#### 4.2 Conceptuality

Based on etymology, what means “the study of the history of words, their origins and how their form and meaning have changed over time” as claimed by Braha (2015), the word socialism is traced to have been derived from the ancient Latin word “Socia”. It aims at dividing or distributing the pool of

resources and power in the common good of all. Alike many other branches of human knowledge, Myneni (2018) regards it politico-economic doctrine and the product of the western thought. Harnecker (2014) writes “this is essentially a democracy that allows people’s protagonism” (p. 12). In terms of official documentation, author Pierre Leroux is attributed to have used the term Socialism firstly in 1832 AD. Following the advent of use, the development of socialism seems to have passed different three stages. “The early nineteenth century saw a flowering of utopian ideas, designed to avoid the ills of industrial capitalism and to create social harmony”, Hodgson (2019, p. 27) writes. Further more, Laibman (2015) too cedes on the very assumption and agrees it to have gone through several phases. This is moreover an apparent outcome of mixture between, as he stresses, existence and action, between reality and revolutionary will.

The period of about 113 years from 1832 to 1945 AD is considered to be the earliest stage of socialism. At that time, socialism was just a word of budding use especially expressing “certain negative connotations” as Harnecker (2014) recalls. There were speeches and rhetoric emphasizing that socialist transformation should be done in every field including politics, economy, society and justice. It stood as cheap subject of intellectual luxury and discourse, however, Kennemore & Weeks (2011) claim that no one had an accurate and exact blueprint or clear plan on Socialism. Nevertheless, all endlessly wished to espouse the new development strategy centering in rapid political, socials and economic transformation.

The second period of socialism spanned from 1945 to 1990. A set of radical beliefs like “all the structures and concepts till this stage should be dismantled, the status quo should be abolished, the present situation should not be accepted even if there is no alternative, it should be destroyed anyway, and destruction only leads for development” held the society hostage. Steger (1997) uses the term “Marxist Socialism” and believes that Rulers like Lenin, Stalin, Ho Chi Minh, Pol Pot established themselves by committing genocide in plank of changing the status quo and giving the socialism a comfortable commencement. The second phase grew in the illusion along with maze of terrorizing socialism and eventually ended with autopsy of the wave. Tsipko (1991) & Leontyev (1958), in their respective studies, claim that Marx was being referred and considered as reference for socialism and all movements intended vis-à-vis socialism. However, Engels (1980), a close friend of Marx and who assisted to publish manifesto, also has claimed it as mere a utopian concept.

As the modern phase of socialism, the set of alternative roadmaps has been developed and practiced since 1990. Terms like “modern socialism” (Nithya, 2019), “new socialism” (Roemer, 2020), “new model of socialism” (Jossa, 2018), and “productive socialism” (Sangroula, 2019) are used in various related resources while tracing the advanced and refined practice of socialism. Recently developed concept suggests tips and tricks then presents recourses to build new societies and cultures, prioritizing on “less political and more socio-economic” characteristics. Various concrete practices and strategies have also been formulated.

### 4.3 Practice and Tactics

In practice, two stages of socialism seem to have predominantly existed till the date. The period of barbaric civilization is described as primitive communism, in most of Marxist history based documents. Saitta (1998) tags it as initial communism, wherefrom the classes originated in societies, in course of progress and prosperity. Observing the chronological record over African history, Jense (1982) confirms the similar nature. Primitive and pristine socialism was prevalent in the practice of Buddhist philosophy and societies inheriting Buddhist civilization; even Shields (2019) also thoroughly traces its leverage in modern Japan as well. Many documents accept a fact that the new restructuring and reconstruction of Japanese societies are credited by the doctrines of Buddhism. It gains so especially by maintaining a deep consonance with the messages of “*Vinaya Pitak*” and “*Jakata*” Stories. Preaching from Buddha was significantly close and in bottomless sync with norms of social activism and progress. Concept of *Dhammic Socialism* by Yuttitharo and Khathaisong (2019) further highlights about the very issue and that is akin to present day socialist democracy. Equality, progressivism, emancipation of commoners from core of miseries and pain, achieving *Nirvana*, and implementations of five precepts, eight precepts and ten precepts in each of societies at that time were major manifestations of all Buddhist companies and communities. Most of those principles and practices would reflect the essence of socialism that is discussed and opted these days.

Recently, there are some countries which have become economically very strong. A pleasant surprise is that majority of them are Buddhist in religion. Economists have named Japan, China, Thailand, Vietnam, South Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong “tiger economies” for such a growth. Emeka & Ozor (2018) call them “Asian tigers” and rate them “Asian Miracle”. They further explore the cause as “the success of this development model of the Asian Tigers can be attributed to the leadership of these states in their genuine pursuit of economic development” (p. 20). This also reinforces the claim of socialism in primitive Buddhist societies.

Some scholars have assumed the growth speed of Vietnam, Korea, China and Taiwan as “dragon economy” and have asserted that their ballooning graph can’t be accurately measured in the speed that tigers gallop. In their studies, Anand et al. (2014), Eichengreen et al. (2013), Kawai & Wignaraja (2014), and Lucas (2015) also synopsise that these East Asian countries are dragon on reason of an oversized overall growth at understandably significant and stupendous speed. Conceding with other authors, Banuri (2013) regards that as an attempt for sustainable development and Shirley (2014) considers that as an outcome of conspicuous cusp from independence to industrialization.

A significant quarter of scholars and researchers in the international community are now agreeing that the rapid development of such a large number of Buddhist nations in East Asian region is based on the pursuit then leverage of pro-socialism Buddhist civilization. The government, geography and growth were true drivers of that type of “speedy development prone to socialism” in ancient Buddhist societies as Sachs (2012) praises it with pride. Major concepts from Buddhist philosophy like “*Sarman*”,

“*Sarvodaya*”, “*Dhammaprashasana*”, “*Chakravarti Raja*”, “*Dashavidha Rajdharmā*” and more had adorned the then societies with socialism.

At present, China has done its best and unique practice to attain socialism. Alike a pool of many other authors, Albert (2014) claims that China itself has admitted that it is keen and eagerly motivated towards socialist goals. Other countries claim that China is on the professed journey of socialism. The positive forward quantum leap that China has made, especially since the rise of Xi Jinping, has sent shockwaves throughout the world. Different studies on Chinese political systems and constitutionalism from scholars like Guo (2013), Yang & Li (2013) and Wu (2013) proudly call the system originally Chinese, indigenous and primitive one than mere a copycat of western liberal democratic model. Author Zakaria (2012) had already made such a prediction through his book “*Post American World*”. Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte is said to have remarked like “China is a sleeping lion. Let him sleep now. When she wakes up, the world will tremble”. Dushi (2021), with his much read publication *Long Game, Great Strategy to Displace the American World Order*, also confirms this. In particular, China has been credited with this success over the past two decades due to its remarkable positioning in information technology, military power, economic power and international relations. It is becoming clear that the Chinese Communist Party has pronouncedly embarked on vigorous activities, including a two-century dream, a half-century strategy and a 30-year action plan, with “the declaration” of working for advanced socialism. China, with this, has succeeded in creating new world order and global equation as Li (2015) has claimed. The following ten indicators are deliberately and decisively manifested in Chinese political spectrum in route of remodeling and branding socialism. Needless to say, Nepal should aptly opt to overtly exercise and endorse similar tendencies to ensure Pro-Socialism transformation.

#### *4.4 Nepal's Need*

Primarily, self-reliant economic development that is measured on per person purchasing parity is the first requisition of socialism. Gilbert (2020) regards it as the prime performer along with foundational focus on the ecological equilibrium. Some authors even use the term ‘collective economy’ whereas Zalesko (2015) calls it “planned economy” as it is self created. Gardiner (2013) regards distinct standard of living (which is highly reflected with the self-built economy) & Schwab (2013) presents 12 indexes of competitiveness (which a welfare society desperately requires) respectively, as the prime quests of socialism. The eventual goal is economy that is factor driven, efficiency driven and innovation driven. This situation must be maintained to make and mark Nepal successfully heading towards socialism.

But Nepal has hopelessly adopted remittances and foreign aid as the main economic characters. According to the World Bank’s report titled “Large Scale Migrants and Remittances in Nepal”, the number of Nepalese nationals is also much high among 232 million foreign workers across the globe. Nepal ranks as the third largest “remittances sustained country” after Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz

Republic. About 12 billion dollar is assumed to have been generated from remittance in the budget which sets ceiling of 17 billion dollar. About 4 million fertile and faithful people are working day and night to make others' countries prosperous. Highlighting the pathetic situation, Sah (2019) writes "remittance has emerged as a backbone of Nepal's economy in the last two decades". Dahal and Maharjan (2018) cede the apathetic fact by uncovering a sordid reality of more than 1500 youths flying daily for overseas jobs.

Foreign aid, on the other hand, was close to 15.6 dollar per head in 1954; but today, it is about 300 dollar. It has increased 200-folds in the last 70 years, and now amounts for a huge share on the budget. Pradhan et al. (2020) write, "among the South Asian countries, Nepal is one of the highest aid receiving nations [...] but it still remains one of the poorest countries in the world (p. 44)" and uncover the darkest sides of our slackening and stagnating success. Over their separate studies apropos to impact of foreign aid over development of the nation, Dornan & Pryke (2017), Bhatta (2017), Tait et al. (2015) & Elayah (2016) conclude with similar inferences that it has mostly nil or scant impact on various nations alike Nepal.

If socialism is an expected goal ahead, Nepal must leave both lethal ways and seek economic development based on her own potential proficiency. Rogers and Balázs (2016) remark that attempting to reduce poverty and ensuring growth of the economy requires an aggressive plan. Agreeing with Baer (2016) to his argument that socialism demands strong and all determining government in the state, Koirala (2018) appeals to revive the democratic socialism, for what Nepali congress had assumed and assimilated economic development as one major feature. As Mishra (2019) feels, it is less probable to make socialist oriented eco-politics possible in Nepal at present as the condition of production is very low and above stated current economic nature shall never nurture the pro-socialism quest even at minimal or marginal manner.

To revamp Nepal's economic miseries, business loan should be ensured and agriculture should be industrialized. In-house nationals should be given priority in employment opportunities. Knowledge should be imparted in business motive, plan and employment generation. Tourism and other prospective areas should be identified for revenue maximization. Emphasis should be placed on consumption of self-produced indigenous goods. Work should be worshipped and treated with dignity. Different types of factories should be opened at a faster pace. Emphasis should be placed on extraction and consumption of valuable minerals. Self-reliant economic development and prosperity should be fully devised and practiced by all nationals. The economic index should be assessed by mapping the purchasing power of the person's wealth but not on the per capita income by adding the wealth of other rich people in the society. Pokhrel (2018) & Sharma (2021) blame that Nepali congress too failed on materializing these launches, initial quest of marching towards socialism. Export-orientated agro-industrial model might serve the goal as foundational factor as Akram-Lodhi (2015) muses but Chaulagain (2021) feels the situation of Nepal understandably despairing and clearly driving towards

downward ends. Believing that there is no commitment and competence on rulers on these issues, he writes, “Although the parties have theoretically promised to begin the journey to socialism, their practical activities, the culture and schooling they have promoted, their nexus to capitalists, extreme privatization in education and health sectors, uncontrolled expenditure during the election, luxury of party leaders, hold of financial donors in the powerful posts of parties, and augmentation in the distance between rich and poor signify that the journey of socialism is still far from the reality in Nepal” (p. 73). Civic unity and priority is the second need. Pena (2014) deals with the six essential components for sustainable socialism and rates this as one of prime one under progressive socialist quests and cultures. Nepal has apparently high divisions among commoners, increasing civilian discords and conflicts amid the citizens. By conflicting on various pretexts, people are heading towards destruction and annihilation. The leadership also gives an inadmissible priority and disproportionate importance to the people who have gone abroad, grown as diaspora and helped the development of others. Assessing the situation, Sharma (2021) calls it as a notable rise in non-state actors’ influence and increasingly growing leverage on internal affairs. Similarly, Emre (2018) too presents this tendency as a ubiquitous global culture. He writes that “country’s diaspora community has become considerably more important as a subject of interest”. It sponsors government to neglect those who live in-home by contributing on the progress of the country. Therefore, managing relationships between people is more important, like Sharp (2019) urges, if Nepal expects to expedite its mission intending towards socialism.

Third, the galaxy of mega changes that intend to ensure scientific progress in every activity is an important manifestation of socialism. However, Nepal has lost the sets of scientific behaviours, which prevailed since long, and has capaciously copied mere fashionable previsions from others, especially the West. Social deeds and demeanors to foster equality among all, as Bui (2020) has traced, has been grossly denied. And fourth, positive psychology and greater happiness, as recommended by Mateo (2021), ought to be created in all general human societies. At present, there is a higher graph of negative situation on both these sides. The line of despair and negativity is compounded up to the bottom most sphere.

Five, socialist system should be able to build high moral conduct and strong thinking in everyone from leaders to citizens. Notwithstanding, the graph of morality is sufficiently declining down here in all individuals. Dhakal (2020) infers that immorality is rife and abundant among politicians and the same has been injected upon all others in every sector. That gets embedded enormously. All the sectors display sheer deviation from morality and virtues in terms of duties and works to be done. Rise of crony capitalistic mindset and rent seeking attitude is limpid. People are affording lavish life, however, state economy is powdered portending the complete crash ahead. Issues of corrupt conducts, economic scamps, sexual scandals and suits for divorce are in oodles and abounding a lot. Only after such alarming features are seriously healed everywhere, pro-socialism society will be likely to take place.



Sixth, clear action plans must be put in place and strongly followed to make the country internally strong and externally respected. Kotz et al. (2002) have called it an innovative approach of socialism. But leadership in Nepal does not seem to have deep interest and presentable mastery over it than mere a rich but annoyingly rote rhetoric. High-sounding speeches are made. Promises usually go very high but are found being followed with dismal and dwarf performance. This situation sufficiently amounts to stymie the lane for pro-socialism transformation. Seven, an environment of quality living should be created for the citizens. Noonan (2012) remarks this feature as one alpha and omega in socialism. This is usually guaranteed by the indicators dotting the material convenience and leadership's affinity. Nepal needs to work hard and high for this achievement. Currently sensed slow pace and sluggish approach passes a hint that socialism may remain mere a fashionable ambition than mission.

Eight, all citizens from professionals to business community people should have a sense of responsibility for nation building through their deeds. Newman & Enriquez (2019) call it primary base for transition towards highest form of socialism. But the graph of selfish attitude is unchecked and trend of indulging in extraction of national treasure gets charted as center of attraction among all. All individuals are abundantly self-centered. Each one tries level the best to ensure better returns and indulges into embezzling the national treasure for it. Harnecker (2014) writes "everything that can be done at the lower level should be decentralized to this level" and owned by the public there to cure this curse.

Any work should be aimed not only for the livelihood and benefit of oneself and one's family but should be devoted for the development of the country. Nine, there should be a flawless and immaculate similarity between philosophy and life among the general people or mass commoners and the leaders from the highest to the bottom-most level. Brining an example from Vietnam, Tran et al. (2017) concede on the same supposition. Even Chinese president Xi is reported of stressing that the Socialist leaders should never opt and engage in vying for amassing personal properties. But leadership in Nepal loves delivering pro-proletariat ideology based speeches but enjoys consuming the omnipotent and lavish luxury. It is costing them for losing both civic attraction and trust. Thus, Hoy and Sumner (2016) argue that existing wealth redistribution to jeopardize the capacious net inequality among people can gear significant effects. This could set a brilliant example of setting socialism.

Ten, collective and social welfare should be at the center of every activity instead of individual freedom. Kyriacou (2015), Alesina & Giuliano (2014), Gorodnichenko & Roland (2015), in their separate studies, deduce that collectivism can promote growth so far as it facilitates the coordination of production factors and multiplies the collective actions. Thus, benefit of mass should be given the first priority over to the advantages for few and handful of people having influence on state mechanism.

In the core heart of these ten aspects, "expert-centered and intellect guided politics" functions as an instrumental igniter or spark. Intensive discussions between experts and intellectuals along with concerned stake-holders and expected beneficiaries should be effectively executed. Politics should

fearlessly implement the referred ideas. Bell (2012) gives a detailed description of such political culture in China, and the very tendency is popularly phrased “political meritocracy”. In current practice of Nepal, the ten indices are heavily dominated with negativity, less probability and more doubt. In order to really adorn socialism, the practice of expert-centric politics should be commenced with the aim of charting commendable positive graph on each of ten indicators; otherwise, the dream of socialism will only become only a pro-narcissist pipe dream.

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