

---

Research Article

## The role of Marxism in the Lao political system in the contemporary era

*Yu Dahuai<sup>1</sup>, Sybuamala Phouthaphone<sup>2</sup>, Wu Jing<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>Yu Dahuai, College of Marxism, Hohai University. No.8, Focheng Road, Jiangning, Nanjing, Jiangsu province, China, 211100.

<sup>2</sup>Sybuamala Phouthaphone, College of Marxism, Hohai University. No.8, Focheng Road, Jiangning, Nanjing, Jiangsu province, China, 211100.

<sup>3</sup>Wu Jing, College of Marxism, Hohai University. No.8, Focheng Road, Jiangning, Nanjing, Jiangsu province, China, 211100.

---

**Abstract:** Marxism has played very important role in the political system in Lao PDR, which the LPRP holds Marxism-Leninism as the political ideology in the people's democratic regime to forward socialism in the future. The Lao political system has provided into the central and local administrations with three balance powers as legislative, executive and judicial organisations as arms of the LPRP. In addition, the LPRP leads and directs the governmental and social organisations by the policies, and the government manages society by the constitution and laws. While the LFNC, LWU, LPRYU, LFTU, and other social organisations are the organs to unite and mobilise all strata of the Lao multi-ethnic people to take part on the tasks of the country's protection and construction. However, the LPRP and the government attempt to promote the foreign policy for regional and international integrations in developments.

---

**Keyword:** Marxism, Political system, Political party, Political participation, Rule of law, Lao PDR.

### INTRODUCTION

The ideology is a powerful tool of any political system, it has the power to inspire, to enlighten and to change the world (Hutchison, 2009: 40). Marxism was developed in the middle of the nineteenth century in Europe by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (Kellner, Douglas, n.d), Karl Marx supported the socialism that envisioned the world free of capitalist exploitation and inequality that he offered a clear vision of a human in the world that requires replacing the domination of circumstances and chance over individuals by the domination of individuals over chance and circumstance (Soukamneuth, 2006: 35). Marxism as an ideology and as a movement that has always involved fierce controversies that Marxism has always been rooted in political struggle. The success of the 1917, the revolution in Russia inspired the growth of Marxism-Leninism elsewhere. In Asia, the first growth of Marxism occurred in the Dutch East Indies (later Indonesia) that Indonesian Communist Party was found in 1920 by a Dutchman called Sneevliet, and he helped to establish the Chinese Communist Party along with representatives of the Communist International from Russia in 1921. The single most important figure in Chinese Marxism, Mao Zedong gave his name into Marxist lexicon, as Maoism. Thus, by 1950, the Soviet Union and the P. R China instituted two powerful Marxist states that could provide support and aid to the Marxist parties and national liberation movements throughout

the third world countries. It is noteworthy that the great successes of Marxism in terms of achievement power that have large occurred in the developing countries, which until 1989, the Berlin wall was collapsed that was the end of the Marxist regime in East Germany and in 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed that was failure of the communist empire in Europe (Walker and Gray, 2007: 25-36). However, Marxism is a political philosophy of redistribution and a revolutionary programme for the power gaining (Soukamneuth, 2006: 47). As during 1975 to 1980, there are some of Marxist-Leninist regimes came to power at the exercise of the official party, while others like the people's democratic party that have gone to elaborate lengths to conceal their communist programs, which there still be various form of Marxism that cropped up throughout the world (Fukuyama, Francis, 1984: 2-5). After the end of 20 years of Vietnam War in 1975, which changed the political landmark of Indochina, Vietnam and Laos, systematically moved toward liberal nations, which the politically, the communist party's grip of power is omnipotent. However, economically, the countries are opening their doors to foreign investments. The communist countries are People's Republic of China (P.R China), Republic Socialism of Vietnam (R.S Vietnam), and Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) that is following socialism (Lesmana, 2016: 1-2). Socialism undoubtedly originated in some such sense of revolution as a legitimate collective means to

happiness (Feenberg, 1981: 1). In Laotian context, The name remained in common use as the Lao Communist that mentioned to political party as the name of the armed force “Lao Patriotic Front” was formed in late 1955 (Langer and Zasloff, 1969: 2). The revolutionary socialism emerged not in mature capitalism and not through crisis tendencies of capitalism but rather as a reaction to capitalist imperialism, and the same is true of Lao communism as the Lao People’s Revolutionary Party (LPRP) controls the state by the policies that exists to fulfill a central plan, rather than to satisfy market demand, while overseeing a more market-oriented economy (Soukamneuth, 2006: 37-47). Since 2 December 1975, the LPRP took the power from the former royal Lao regime, destroyed the monarchy, and formed Lao PDR that the new institution of the government was modeled from the former Soviet Union, and Lao PDR is today one of the five remaining Marxist-Leninist states (as China, Vietnam, Cuba, North Korea and Lao PDR), which China and Vietnam are the powerful neighbors and models. The LPRP grips on power and to preside over the change from a centrally planned to a free-market economy. The LPRP is the sole political party to determine who may stand for election to National Assembly (NA), to lead and control the government, and to direct all mass organisations. The bureaucracy is a highly politicised arm of the party, as is the media (Stuart-Fox, 2011: 2). The LPRP is observed by foreign diplomats in Lao PDR and foreign observers ascertain that the LPRP plays a crucial role in the political life and control the political power in Lao PDR (Lesmana, 2016: 8). This is a crucial time both in Lao history and for the present regime, there remain only three nominally communist states in Asia as China, Vietnam and Lao PDR. Like these precursors, China and Vietnam have been relatively successful in improving living condition and generating wealth, and provide models for Lao PDR to follow. Lao PDR lags far behind due to the material resources are difficult to exploit and the human resources are developing. However, consequently, Lao PDR is far more dependent than either China or Vietnam on foreign aid (Stuart-Fox, 2005: 339-59). In addition, Lao PDR should concentrate that although the LPRP has taken China and Vietnam as models for economic liberalisation along with tight political control, the political culture of the party in Lao PDR, due to it is very smaller and it draws on traditional Lao values and modes of social interaction (Stuart-Fox, 2005: 10). Therefore, the aims of this study, the author would like to study the role of Marxism in the Lao political system in the contemporary era that stress on the functional structure of the political system in Lao PDR. This study used the qualitative method, which secondary data was collected from a number of local and international published and unpublished books, journals, and other documents such as constitution, laws and textbooks of the Lao political system by observation, summarisation, analysis, interpretation, and explanation.

## Result of study

### THE LAO PEOPLE’S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (LPRP)

The LPRP was established by H.E Kaison Phomvihon on 22 March 1955, which originated from the Indochinese Communist Party that found by Ho Chi Minh on 3 February 1930. The LPRP with the Lao multi-ethnic people have carried out arduous and difficult struggles with full of great sacrifices that until they could break the yokes of oppression and domination of the feudal regimes and colonialisms, which could completely liberation and form Lao PDR on 2 December 1975. Since the country’s liberation, the people have together been implementing the two strategic tasks of the national defence and construction as to preserve the Lao people’s democratic regime and to create conditions to move towards socialism (The LNA/C, 2003: 3). The LPRP is a powerful party as the leadership of the political system of the people’s democracy to guarantee the people’s rights; to be the leader, director and policy maker that to provide the growth and development of the country with appropriate law of social development and the epoch tendency to support the demands and the great will of the Lao multi-ethnic people and to guarantee the united solidarity of Lao nationally people; to be the leader of the state management precision, the subjection of the Lao Front of National Construction (LFNC), the mass and other social organisations; and to respect and organise by following the constitution and laws with the objectives to lead Lao people together implement two tasks of the national defence and construction; to develop the country with new policy on principle of the LPRP with completed and new change policy; to continue and expand people’s democracy with the socialism’s goals that people exploit wealthy and happiness, the country’s wealthy and strength, social solidarity, democracy and prosperity. The LPRP holds Marxism-Leninism and heritage of the LPRP are the fundamental notion, norm, attitude, compass of the organisation and movement; expand and combine the patriotism and internationalisation of working class; receive the excellent and update concepts of humanity to apply for policy provisions and development plans of the LPRP; enhance leadership ability and efficiency of the LPRP; and struggle every aspect and kind of multi-party system.

The LPRP is formed and improved by five principles as 1) the LPRP holds Marxism-Leninism and the good heritage of the party to be the fundamental notion and theory of the party, expand the advantage aspects, aspect struggle of working class to form and improve the party be honesty, stability and strength; 2) the LPRP is organised by principle of democratic centralism, group leadership, individual responsibility, and strictly regulation; 3) the LPRP holds solidarity be the fundamental principle to guarantee the political unity, notion, organisation and implementation of the party; 4) the LPRP holds the people be the root, honestly serve the people, follow public performance of the party, according to public and through public performance to form and expand the party; and 5) the LPRP holds criticism of himself and each other to be the rule of existence and expansion of the party. In addition, the LPRP is formed and improved by three principles as 1) to form the party as honesty, stability and strength in politics, notion, organisation and plan of the party’s leadership; 2) to

form and improve the quality as the root that to receive the excellent persons with the standard and completed condition to be the members of the party, to strictly take un-valuable persons off the party, and to continue of the party improvement and development to meet the needs of the party's leadership in each era; and 3) to combine tightly between the enhancement of the party's leadership and legalisation of the government's management, and to expand the role of subject of the LFNC and the social organisations (The LPRP, 2011: 2-6). Furthermore, there are some important roles and duties of the LPRP's leadership as to lead and direct the government and the society with his policies as a whole; leads and directs the politics, notion and organisation with forces of the party, the government and the society; to lead and direct in the formation and improvement of the governmental structure to become "the government of the people, by the people and for the people;" to lead and direct the governmental officer's formation, improvement, selection and provision; and to lead and direct the inspection and audit. Moreover, in term of the LPRP leads and directs the government and the society with the completed and new change policy that holds some principles that to holds the socialism's goals; to hold Marxism-Leninism and applicable innovation; to hold the party's leadership and enhances solidarity within the party; to expand democracy and rights of multi-citizens and form social solidarity; to enhance the solidarity of people's democratic system that base on the people, for the people and obstruct crime; and to enhance self-independence combine with the national force and era's forces. (Namlummoun, 2000: 4-10)

### POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The election's members of the National Assembly (NA) of Lao PDR is held in every five years that to carry out that according to four principles such as 1) universality; 2) equality; 3) directly suffrage; and 4) secret ballot, which all Lao citizens are irrespective of their ages, genders, ethnicities, beliefs, social statuses, places of residence and professions, who are at least eighteen years old that have right to vote and anyone who are at least twenty-one years old that have right to be elected to be the members of the NA. The members' number of the NA is determined by the principles such as 1) every 50, 000 people of the population will be represented by a member of the NA; 2) in case of any province or special zone that the population is less than 150,000 people will be represented by three members of the NA; 3) according to importance and characteristics of political, economic, social, cultural conditions, national defence and public security of each province, municipality, or special zone; and 4) the members' number of the NA will be including an appropriate proportion of people's representative of different strata, gender and ethnic groups (The LNA/LN, 2001: 1-3). The Lao people elect the members of the NA as their representatives to ensure their rights, benefits and powers are addressed. The members' election of NA is carried out through the universal, equal, direct suffrage and secret balloted principles. The voters have the rights to remove thee representatives if they are

found that their behaviors are unbefitting with the honourable positions and to loss the people's confidence (The LNA/C, 2003: 2). As the LPRP is the nucleus of the political system that no other parties are allowed, which besides a few independents and all candidates are the members of the party and are vetted by the party. Thus, the power is firmly in the hands of the party that to determine all policy matters and the legislative programs. However, the voters have the choice of the candidates. Lao PDR is a one-party state as the political leadership and the political decision-makers. The potential veto players either are central components of the political structure, as in the case of the military, or have been agreed on as key partners of it, as in the case of entrepreneurs. All media organisations in Lao PDR are controlled by the LPRP, and while large parts of this decree were unremarkable, provisions seeking to protect the LPRP and the nation's peace, independence, sovereignty, democracy, and prosperity replicated existing laws (Bertelsman, 2016: 7-9). In addition, the party's elections have led to substantial change in the central committee and the government itself with the new generation of the emergence of the politicians, and Lao PDR has also ratified to the international covenant on economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights to apply for the national convention on the elimination of all forms of radical discrimination that is implementing to ensure that all the national policies and laws are following these (Lao PDR-European Community, 2007: 7).

### POLITICAL AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

As we know that, the LPRP leads and directs the governmental and social organisations by his policies. The party's organs are the LFNC was formed on 8 August 1950, that is a united organisation that plays very important role as political foundation has the duty to unite solidarity among multi-ethnic Lao people that base on relation of workers, farmers and intellectual students under the party's leadership; the Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Organisation (LPRYU) is a public organisation that was formed by the LPRP on 14 April 1955, that has duty to be the front force in every mission, to unite solidarity and train the youths to be patriotic and love people's democracy, loyalty to the country, ability, responsibility, and legitimately living plan, scarifying of the national defence and development with new change policy of the LPRP; the Lao Women's Union (LWU) as formed on 20 July 1955, as an orgnisation that be the representative organisation of the rights and interests of women and children that duties to train and enhance knowledge and capacities for the women and children, to be the subject of implementation on gender equality and play important role in the country development with new change policy of the LPRP; and the Lao Federation of Trade Union (LFTU) as formed on 1 February 1956, as an organisation that to be the representative of the rights and interests for the workers and working class as a whole, which has duty to organise and unite solidarity, to train and direct them to be good citizen, loyalty and regulative of working, and participate into the national defence and development with the new change policy of the LPRP

(Namlummoun, 2000: 4-10). Thus, those unions/ organisations are the organs and tools to unite and mobilise the Lao multi-ethnic people to take part of the two tasks of the national defence and construction; to develop the right of self-determination of the people and to protect the legitimately rights and interests of the members in their respective organisations. The LPRP and the government pursue the policies to promote and develop the unity and equality among all ethnic groups that they have right to protect, preserve and promote their great customs and cultures of their own tribes and the nation. Therefore, all acts that lead to create separation and discrimination among ethnic groups are prohibited. While the party and government are implementing gradually improve and enhance the socioeconomic development of all ethnic groups (The LNA/C, 2003: 2-3). The LPRP is the ruling party and stable party that is well institutionalised and deeply rooted in the Lao society, the party holds on the political power, the membership is attractive to those who are politically ambitious. Since 1975, the independent organisations were not yet permitted and the most of interest groups function under and close with the party. The mass organisations are represented at the party meeting as the party's membership, and all formal activities were channels through the mass organisations and the state bodies. However, the social relations have improved and developed due to the good and trustworthy regulations and conditions of cooperation (Bertelsmann, 2016: 11-12). Nevertheless, the non-governmental organisations at local levels are not yet allowed, but there are some trades and professional organisations are permitted to register, some community service groups have grown up and work with local communities. The NA plays more active role and corruptions are reported to the medias. The religions' freedom has improved and the government's strategies designed to bring the remote communities to be closer to service, markets and politics (Lao PDR-European Community, 2007: 7).

## THE RULE OF LAW

The Lao government manages the society by provision of the constitution and laws, and the party and the governmental organisations, as well as the LFNC, mass, social organisations and all citizens have to function under control of the constitution and laws. According to the constitution and laws provide a formal separation of powers, rights and duties between the citizen, legislative, executive and judicial organisation as the arms of the LPRP as following.

1. THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF LAO CITIZENS: The rights of the Lao multi-ethnic people to be master of the country are ensured and exercised through the political system's functioning. The Lao citizens are the persons, who hold Lao nationality as provided by the laws that they hold rights as 1) all Lao citizens are equal in front of the laws that is irrespective of their ages, genders, social statuses, educations, beliefs and ethnic groups; 2) Lao citizens age at eighteen years old and above that have right to vote, and those age twenty years old and above that have right to be elected. Exception, insane persons, mental disorders and

persons have been revoked by a court; 3) the equal right in the political, economic, cultural, and social fields and family affairs; 4) the right to receive education and upgrade themselves; 5) the right to work and hold in occupations that are not contrary to the laws, the right to rest, to receive treatment, assistances and other cases as provided by the laws; 6) the right to be freedom of settlement and movements as provided by the laws; 7) the right to complain, petition and propose ideas to the relevant governmental organisations' issues about the public interests or their own rights and interests that provided by the laws; 8) the right of citizens' bodies, honours and houses are inviolable, if without the orders of the public prosecutor or the people's courts that exception if provided by the laws; 9) the right of freedom to believe or not believe in any religions; 10) the right of freedom of speech, expression and assembly that are not contrary to the laws; and 11) the right of freedom to study and apply advanced sciences, techniques and technologies, to create artistic and literary works, and to participate into cultural activities that are not contrary to the laws (The LNA/C, 2003: 2-9).

2. LEGISLATIVE INSTITUTION (NATIONAL ASSEMBLY): The National Assembly (NA) is the representative of the rights, interests and powers of the Lao multi-ethnic people, it is also the legislative branches that have the right to make decisions on the fundamental issues of the country, and oversee the activities of the executive organs, the People Courts (PCs) and the Office of the Public Prosecutors (OPP). The NA has rights and duties as 1) to prepare, adopt or amend the constitution; 2) to consider, adopt, amend or abrogate the laws; 3) to consider and adopt the determination, amendment or abrogation of duties and taxes; 4) to consider, adopt the government's reports on the implementation of the socioeconomic development and the state's budgets; 5) to elect or remove the president, the vice-presidents and members of the National Assembly Standing Committee (NASC), to form or dissolve the committees of the NA, to elect or remove the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the committees, the director of the cabinet of the NA, and to form or dissolve the international parliamentary committees of the NA based by the recommendation of the NASC; 6) to elect or remove the president and vice-president of the state by recommendation of the NASC; 7) to consider and approve the proposed appointment or removal of the prime minister by the recommendation of the president; 8) to consider and approve the organisational structure of the government and the appointment, transfer or remove the members of the government by the recommendation to the prime minister; 9) to elect or remove the president of the People's Supreme Court (PSC) and the Supreme Public Prosecutor (SPP) by the recommendation of the president; 10) to decide on the establishment or dissolution of the ministries, ministry-equivalent organisations, provinces and cities, and to determine boundaries of the provinces and cities by the recommendation of the prime minister; 11) to decide on granting amnesties; 12) to decide on the ratification or withdrawal from treaties and agreements signed with foreign

countries in accordance with the laws; 13) to decide on the matters of war or peace; 14) to oversee the observances and implementations of the constitution and laws, resolutions of the session of the NA, resolutions of the NASC, the socioeconomic development plans and budgets of the state, and national projects; 15) to cancel legal acts of the government, the prime minister, the PSC, SPP, LFNC and mass organisations at the central level that are contrary with the constitution and laws; in this provision, legal acts of the PSC and the office of the SPP refer only to the legal acts that are not related to case of proceeding; 16) to make decisions that regarding to coordination and cooperation with the parliaments and international organisations at the regional and international levels; and 17) to exercise and perform other rights and duties as provided by the laws. However, the NA is organised and implemented as according to the principle of the democratic centralism and works through meetings, and to take decisions by the majority of the votes (The LNA/LN, 2006: 1-3).

**3. EXECUTIVE INSTITUTION:** The Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) is an independent country with sovereignty and territorial integrity including territorial water and airspace that belong to all Lao multi-ethnic people that is indivisible. The Lao PDR is a people's democratic state, which all powers belong to the people, by the people and for the Lao multi-ethnic people's interests and rights that the workers, farmers and intelligentsia as the key components (The LNA/C, 2003: 1). The Lao PDR organises and implements to follow four principles as 1) The leadership by the LPRP as the determined principle of his existence; 2) the people's participation in the state and social management; 3) the democratic centralism; and 4) the legal principle. The Lao government plays important role to be the main organ to guarantee the party's leadership to society and rights of the people; to convert the policies of the party to become the detail plans and projects, to organise, inspect, evaluate and innovate the party's policies; to manage society by the constitution, laws, plans and organisational structures in every level; and to use method of managing, training, economic and inspection for management and administration. There are the central and local administrations, in the Local administration divides into provincial, district and village administrations as following (Namlummoun, 2000: 4-10).

- *The president:* The president is the Head of the Lao PDR that is a representative of the Lao multi-ethnic people in both the country and abroad. The president has rights and duties as 1) to promulgate the constitution and laws that already adopted by the NA; 2) to issue the presidential decrees and edicts; 3) to propose the appointment or removal of the prime minister to the NA to consider and decide; 4) to appoint, transfer or remove the prime minister and members of the government after approved by the NA; 5) to appoint or remove the vice-president of the PSC by the recommendation of the president of the PSC, and to appoint or remove the deputy of the SPP by the recommendation of the president of the SPP; 6) to appoint, transfer or remove the provincial and

city governors by the recommendation of the prime minister; 7) to be the Head of the Lao people's armed forces; 8) to decide on promotions or demotions of the general ranking in the national defence and the security by the recommendation of the prime minister; 9) to convene and preside of the government's special meetings; 10) to decide on the conferring the national gold medals, orders of merit, victory medals and the highest honorific titles of the state; 11) to decide on granting amnesty; 12) to decide on general or partial military conscription and to declare emergencies all over the country and any particular locality; 13) to issue the ratification or secession of treaties and agreements with foreign countries; 14) to appoint and recall plenipotentiary representatives of Lao PDR to or from foreign countries by the recommendation of the prime minister, and to accept the plenipotentiary representatives of foreign countries accredited to the Lao PDR; and 15) to exercise and perform other rights and duties as provided by the laws (The LNA/C, 2003: 12-13).

- *The government:* The government of Lao PDR is the executive branch of the state to exercise administrative role to uniform the aspects of politics, economy, society, culture, resources, environmental protection, national security and defence, and foreign affairs based on the principle of democratic centralism that based on the constitution and laws that has rights and duties as 1) to perform the constitution, laws and resolutions of the NA, and the presidential edicts and decrees, to disseminate the laws, educate people to respect and perform the laws and regulations that to define measures and to protect lawful rights and interests of the people; 2) to determine strategic plans, socioeconomic development plans and the state's annual budgets and then submit them to the NA to consider and approve; 3) to manage uniformly socioeconomic and cultural developments, to build and develop scientific and technical foundations, to perform fiscal and currency policies, to manage and assure the effective use of the national assets, and to protect the properties of the state, private sectors and individual based on the constitution and laws; 4) to report operations to the NA, or to the NASC and the president of the state; 5) to examine and comment on, and submit, drafts of laws to the NA for consideration and approval, and to draft the presidential edicts to the NASC for consideration; 6) to examine and comment on, submit and draft the presidential decrees to the president for consideration and approval; 7) to issue decrees and resolutions on the state administration, socioeconomic management, to manage the sciences and technologies, capacity building and to utilised use and protect the national resources, environment, the national security and defence, and foreign affairs; 8) to organise, direct, facilitate and oversee the activities of concerned organisations in the central and local administrations to ensure the effectiveness and compliances with the laws and regulations; 9) to organise and administer the people in an uniformly manner in the country; 10) to strengthen force of the national security, defence and social order, to form and execute the people's armed forces to protect the country; 11) to suspend the implementation of or cancel decisions, guidelines and notifications of the ministries,

ministry-equivalent organisations, and the governmental and local administration that are contrary to the laws; 12) to form, abolish and define the borderlines of the districts or municipalities based on the proposal of the provincial governors or the city mayors; 13) to organise monitoring and inspection of the state, to combat against the non-observance of the laws, corruptions and other negative occurrences, and to consider the complaints or petitions of the people based on the laws and regulations; 14) to coordinate, cooperate, negotiate and sign conventions and agreements with foreign countries, and to administer and monitor foreign affairs activities and the implementations of signed conventions and agreements; and 15) to exercise and perform other rights and duties as provided by the constitution, laws and regulations (The LNA/LG, 2003: 1-2).

- *The Prime Minister:* The Lao Prime Minister is the Head of the government that he/she directs, facilitates and controls the activities of the government and local administrations that has rights and duties as 1) to call and chair the meeting of the government; 2) to direct and facilitate activities of the government, to monitor the implementation of resolutions of the NA and meeting of the government, and to monitor the activities of ministries, ministry-equivalent organisations, provinces, cities and other organisations, which are directly under the government; 3) to propose to the president for appointment, transfer or removal of deputy-prime ministers, ministers and chairmen of the ministry-equivalent organisations and to submit such proposals to the NA for consideration and approval; 4) to propose to the president for appointment and recall of the plenipotentiary representatives of Lao PDR to foreign countries; 5) to propose to the president for appointment, transfer or removal of provincial governors and city mayors, and to propose the promotion or demotion of the generals in the national security and defence forces; 6) to appoint, transfer or remove vice-minister, vice-chairmen of ministry-equivalent organisations, chiefs and deputy-chiefs of sub-ministries, director generals of departments, vice-governors, vice-mayors, chiefs of districts and municipalities and chiefs of organisations that are directly under the government and equivalent organisations; 7) to promote or demote colonels in the national security and defence forces; 8) to issue decrees, orders, edicts and guidelines on the implementation of policies, laws, regulations and the government plans, and to issue decrees on the establishment and operation of ministries, ministry-equivalent organisations, sub-ministries and local administrations; 9) to submit annual reports on the operation of the governmental activities to the NA or the NASC and the president; 10) to assign rights and duties to any deputy-prime ministers when the prime minister is not available; 11) to dismiss him/her shelf when he/she is incapable of carrying out duties as a result of any problems; and to exercise and perform other rights and duties as provided by the constitution, laws and regulations (The LNA/LG, 2003: 5-6).

- *The provincial administration:* The province is a local administrative that comprise many districts and municipalities,

it is the centre of the political, socioeconomic and cultural activities and services. The authorities and duties of every governor are 1) to ensure the effective performance of the constitution, laws and regulations of the state; 2) to convene and preside over provincial administration meetings; 3) to discover and develop strategies for provincial socioeconomic development and budget plans; 4) to perform the socioeconomic development plan, budget, measures for the provincial security and defence, and to prevent the negative occurrences, to monitor and inspect the central government projects' performance in the province; 5) to facilitate and manage concerned organisations to ensure the timely and accurate accounting of the local revenue collections; 6) to facilitate, promote and motivate the participation of the LFNC, mass, social organisations and all socioeconomic developments in the province; 7) to issue decisions, orders, edicts, notification and other rules in accordance to the constitution and laws; 8) to perform citizens management at the local level; 9) to suspend or cancel the legal acts of the lower-level local administrations, or to propose to higher-level authorities that the legal acts are cancelled due to the conflicts; 10) to propose the establishment and abolition of the districts and municipalities, and any local division within the provincial administration; 11) to form, abolish, merge and delineate village boundaries; 12) to propose the appointment, transfer or removal of the chiefs of the districts and municipalities; 13) to appoint the directors and deputy directors of the local divisions of the line ministries and ministry-equivalent organisations at the provincial level, and to appoint the heads of the offices of the line ministries and the ministry-equivalent organisations at the district level; 14) to appoint, transfer or remove the chief or deputy chief of the provincial cabinet, the deputy chief of district or municipality, the chief and deputy chief of district and municipal cabinet, and the deputy director of the local offices of the line ministries and the ministry-equivalent organisations at the district or municipal level, and others in accordance with regulations; 15) to manage the implementation of organisations and personnel in accordance with their authority to supervise and report on the performances of civil servants to the ministries and line ministry-equivalent organisations; 16) to consider, advise or resolve complaints, petitions and proposal forms within civil services that relate to inappropriate behaviour or unsatisfactory performances in accordance with the laws and regulations; 17) to regularly report the overall situations in the province to the government; 18) to cooperate with international organisations as assigned by the government ; and 19) to exercise other rights and duties as provided by the laws and regulations.

- *The district administration:* The district is a local administrative territory under the supervision of a province or a capital city that comprises many villages. The authorities and duties of the chief of the district are 1) to ensure the effective performance of the constitution, laws and regulations of the state; 2) to convene and preside over the meetings of the district administration; 3) to discover and develop strategies for the socioeconomic development and budget plans of the

district; 4) to perform the socioeconomic development plan, budgets, measures for the district's security and defence, to prevent the negative occurrences, and to monitor and inspect the central, provincial and capital city investment projects' implementation in the district; 5) to facilitate and manage concerned organisations to ensure the timely and accurate accounting of revenue collection in the district; 6) to facilitate, promote and motivate the participation of the LFNC, mass, social organisations and all socioeconomic developments of the district; 7) to issue decisions, orders, edicts, notifications and regulations in accordance with laws; 8) to perform citizen management in the district; 9) to suspend or cancel the legal acts of the lower-level local administrations, or to propose to higher-level authorities that legal acts are cancelled due to conflicts; to propose the establishment and abolishment of the villages and any offices with the structure of the district administration; 11) to propose the appointment, transfer or removal of deputy chiefs of the district, and chiefs and deputy chiefs of the district cabinet; 12) to propose or acknowledge the appointment of the deputy directors of the local offices of the ministries and ministry-equivalent organisations in the district; 13) to appoint, transfer or remove the Heads and deputy Heads of units in the district administration and to approve the election of the Heads of Villages; 14) to manage the implementation of organisations and personnel within the authority as to supervise and report the performance of civil servants of the line ministries or ministry-equivalent organisations; 15) to consider, advise or resolve complaints, petitions and proposals from the civil services that relate to inappropriate and unsatisfied performances in accordance with the laws; 16) to regularly report the overall situations in the district to the governor; 17) to cooperate with international organisations as assigned by the province or capital city; and 18) to exercise and perform other rights and duties as provided by the laws and regulations.

- *The village administration:* The village is a local administrative territory at the grassroots level that is under the supervision and direction of the district or municipality. A village comprises many households and it is governed by the Head of village that his/her authorities and duties are 1) to perform the constitution, laws, orders and socioeconomic development plans to improve and develop the living conditions of the population, to protect natural resources and environment, and to maintain the peace, security and public order in the village; 2) to disseminate the government policies and laws to all people in the village, to educate, mobilise and encourage harmony and solidarity of the people, and to promote the people to exercise their rights and obligations; 3) to facilitate, promote and motivate the participation of the LFNC, mass and social organisations, and all socioeconomic developments in the village; 4) to preserve and promote the good national traditions and cultures of the Lao multi-ethnic people, to discourage negative occurrences and superstitious beliefs, to promote education within the community to be responsible to the hygiene and sanitation; 5) to manage and support the people in the village in order to bring about more stable employment and sustainable livelihoods; 6) to convene

and preside over the meetings of village administration and to attend meetings that are convened by the higher-level authorities; 7) to propose that appointment or removal of the deputy-Head of the village to the chief of the district or municipality; 8) to issue rules and notifications in accordance with the laws and regulations; 9) to propose to the higher-level authorities to suspend and cancel the orders and activities that against to the laws, rules and common interests of the people; 10) to resolve the local conflicts and complaints of the people within the scope of the authority; 11) to regularly report the overall situation in the village to the chief of the district or municipality; 12) to receive some allowances in accordance with the laws; and 13) to exercise and perform other rights and duties as provided by the laws and regulations (The LNA/LLA, 2003: 1-21).

4. *JUDICIARY INSTITUTION:* In judiciary institution, there are the People's Courts (PCs) and People's Prosecutors (PP). The PCs are the judicial organs of the state that have roles to adjudicate cases. The PCs are authorised to strictly adjudicate cases in accordance with the laws, which the rights and duties of the PCs are 1) to adjudicate, educate and punish violators of the laws; 2) to discover and eliminate the causes and conditions that lead to violations; 3) to increase the people's knowledge about the political regime, to increase the people's awareness and implementation of the laws and regulations, and to maintain the discipline of the living in the society; 4) to coordinate to both relevant internal and international organisations with their performances; and 5) to coordinate and cooperate to foreign countries on the legal and judicial matters. The system of the PCs comprises the people supreme court (PSC), the appellate court (AC), the people's provincial and city courts (PPCs), the people's district and municipal courts (PDMCs), and the military courts (MCs). The PPCs and PDMCs are the local people's courts. The PSC is the highest judicial organ of the state that plays important roles to adjudicate cases, to administer the organisations of the PCs and to supervise the administrative affairs of the local courts and the MCs as provided by the laws. The MCs are a component of the court system of Lao PDR that have important role to adjudicate criminal cases that involving offences about military matters (The LNA/LPC, 2003: 1).

The Office of the Public Prosecutor (OPP) is a governmental organisation that plays important role for monitoring and inspecting, which its rights and duties are 1) to monitor and inspect the properly and uniform adherence to the laws and regulations by all governmental and social organisations from the central to local administrations, enterprises, and citizens that will be referred to general monitoring and inspection; 2) to monitor and inspect compliance with the laws by investigation organisations; 3) to monitor and inspect adherence or the laws in court proceedings and judgment enforcement; 4) to monitor and inspect adherence to the laws in places of arrest, places of detention, re-education centers and prisons during the implementation of deprivation of liberty and enforcement of the court measures; 5) to examine proposals for granting pardon to prisoners; 6) to undertake

measures to counter crime and other violations of the laws; to eliminate and prevent the causes and conditions that result offending; 7) to ensure complete, thorough and objective investigation of criminal cases and to issue measures to prevent offending in coordination with governmental organisations and others; 8) to ensure that offenders receive punishments that according to the laws and to not allow the unconcern people to be punished; 9) to undertake the whole investigation or portions of it within its authority as provided by the laws; 10) to exercise and perform other rights and duties as provided by the laws. The structure of the OPP consists of the office of the SPP, office of the APPs, office of the PCPs, office of the DMPP, and office of the military prosecutors (The LNA/LPP, 2003: 2).

5. *INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION*: The Lao PDR have persuaded the foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation to promote relations and cooperation with all countries based on the foundation of principles as peaceful coexistence, respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, and equality and mutual benefits. The Lao PDR supports the struggle for peace of the people in the world, the national independence, democracy and social progress (The LNA/C, 2003: 2). However, in the recent years, the Lao PDR's foreign policy has improved toward regional integration that the country has also taken more active stance into international arena and it is engaged initiative into the Greater Mekong Sub-region, and Lao PDR will be expected to integrate its obligations under the international laws into the domestic legislation and there will be pressure to improve the rule of law, as well as for more concerted performance of laws that is already on the statute books (Lao PDR-European Community, 2007: 7-8). In addition, Lao PDR has been remarkably successful in attracting foreign aids from across the ideological spectrum, and it appreciates the ASEAN principle of non-interference and is more comfortable cooperating with other ASEAN countries than western countries. Lao PDR has also embraced the advantages of an extensive communications network among GMS members that allowing the "Land-locked Country" to be regarded as the "Land-Linked Country." Lao PDR still retains the closest relationship with its "fraternal" communist ally, as Vietnam, and has progressively grown closer to China. Lao PDR also continues to entertain good relations with its neighbours, ASEAN members and western powers that for both internal and external security reasons and to ensure the continued flow of the foreign aids and investments. While recognition of significant political change remains extremely unlikely in the near future, international actors should continue and pursue the strategies are 1) to keep economic reform on the agenda in two ways as by stressing the attractiveness of the transparent processes for the foreign investors, and by the demonstrative benefits for socioeconomic growth and development where the reforms have been introduced; 2) to strengthen to rule of law by providing programs to support the NA that help to disseminate laws, which have been passed and encouraged performance by

stressing the benefits for the society; 3) to promote education as the national priority through support for the Ministry of Education and Sports (curriculum workshops, producing and printing textbooks, teacher trainings, etc.) by stressing economic interests, and by making comparisons with ASEAN countries and other Asian countries; and 4) to provide the fledgling civil society sector with responsibility and context-sensitive support as monetary, in kind and moral that to assist it into maintaining a presence, however limited, as the regime seeks to close political space (Bertelsmann, 2016: 28-29).

## Discussion

According to this study found that The LPRP as the leader of working class and proletariats in Lao PDR has innovated and applied Marxism in to Lao people's revolutions and won that indicated the proof of scientific practice and reality, which based on historical application and innovation of Marxism in conditions, situations of the age that certified reality and truth, and became fundamental science to determine knowledge and change imagine to believe and motivate them to follow rational reasons of Marxism as well as the policies of the LPRP and the government of Lao PDR that to guarantee the truth, reality, visibility, scientific and realism. Marxism is a scientific of social sciences and opinion system of working class and proletariats in Lao PDR and the world, the LPRP has applied and innovated Marxism in to his tasks of struggle for independence, and national prevention and development. Thus, context of Marxism has guaranteed to unity and interaction of scientific, political party, classical and innovative features to fulfill interests of working class as well as multi-ethnic Lao people that base on historical evolution. The political party and scientific features are unity and interaction in Marxism, which appeared in the policies of the LPRP and administrative management of the Lao government. In currently years, the political party's principle of Marxism is an important strategy to teach scientific, attitudes, morality, ethics and political notion to be loyalist, patriotic and young generation in new reform. In the world today, even socialism and capitalism tended to integration of socioeconomic development, but in deeply context, there are seriously oppressions, conflicts and struggles between workers and capitalists, and socialism and capitalism. Therefore, since the new reform (1986), the LPRP has opened policies to regional integration and cooperation for foundation of socioeconomic growth and country development to follow socialism in the future that Marxism is required to pay attention to the political party feature on the teaching that implies scientific knowledge transferring together with ethics, morality and political attitude trainings. Hence, political party feature consists of fundamental expectations: (1) loyalty to Marxism and innovative application base on conditions and reality; (2) loyalty, well understanding and holding to policies of the LPRP and laws of the Lao government; (3) the government and Lao multi-ethnic people have to pay much attention to study in Marxism and policies of the LPRP; and (4) they have to be tactically and high decision making to struggle oppositions, as Walker and Gray (2007: 25-36) pointed out



that “Marxism as an ideology and as a movement that has always involved fierce controversies that Marxism has always been rooted in political struggle. It is noteworthy that the great successes of Marxism in terms of achievement power that have large occurred in the developing countries,” and Soukamneuth (2006: 47) also pointed out that “Marxism is a political philosophy of redistribution and a revolutionary programme for the power gaining”. The political system in Lao PDR is a single party system that implements democratic centralism. The LPRP is the nucleus party that leads and directs all levels of the governmental administrations and social organisations by his policies. The party’s organs are the mass organisations as the Lao Front of National Construction and the Lao Women Union, the Youth ‘s People Revolution and the Lao Trade Union that play very important role as political foundation has the duty to unite solidarity among multi-ethnic Lao people that base on relation of workers, farmers and intellectual students under the party’s leadership, as Stuart-Fox, Martin (2011: 2) mentioned that “the LPRP grips on powers, it is the sole political party to determine who may stand for election to National Assembly (NA), to lead and control the government, and to direct all mass organisations. The bureaucracy is a highly politicised arm of the party, as is the media.” Therefore, as Lesmana (2016: 8) pointed out that “the LPRP is observed by foreign diplomats in Lao PDR and foreign observers in the crucial role in the political life and control the political power” that is right, there are many international organisations and some groups of people have tried to argue and pressure the Lao PDR to open and improve the participation of the political system to be more democratic and freedom, but it is actually, the LPRP, as well as the Lao government belong to the people, by the people and for the people. The members of the NA are elected by the Lao multi-ethnic people, those members are representatives of the people in the country as a whole. The Lao PDR is a people’s democratic regime; there is a democratic system under the constitution and laws that all people and organisations function base on their duties and rights, which are provided by the constitution and the laws. However, there are some issues about the political affairs and socioeconomic development due to the implementation and operation of the rule of law is un-strictly and less inspections, which are leading to corruptions and criminals, that is right, the Lao government has attempted to improve and resolve those issues in all levels of administrative management by more paying attention on the human resource development, socioeconomic development , political participation, and international cooperation and integration, which is according to Stuart-Fox (2005) pointed out that “this is a crucial time both in Lao history and for the present regime that Lao PDR should concentrate that although the LPRP has taken China and Vietnam as models for economic liberalisation along with tight political control, the political culture of the party in Lao PDR, due to it is very smaller and it draws on traditional Lao values and modes of social interaction.”

## Conclusion

Marxism is a theoretical weapon, compass, attitude and scientific method for working class and proletariats to struggle to be independence from oppression of capitalists, but in Lao context, application of Marxism must be innovated by according to reality of situations, conditions and practices in the country, regions and the world. Thus, Marxism has to concentrate, hold and contain scientific knowledge, information, skills and experiences to solve and explain the real issues in the society. Since 1975, Lao PDR has been independence that remained a stable one-party state, which id the LPRP has become the only legal political party and to continue to be the pre-eminent political institution in the country. The LPRP has come to the political power, as the Marxist-Leninist regime with a system of the democratic centralism and it is the official political ideology with transformation of the orientated market economy. The administrative structure provides from the national to local administrations (provincial, district and village levels), which the rights, duties and powers of each governmental administration are provided by the constitution and laws of Lao PDR. The appointments are made directly by higher levels to lower level that according to election of the concerned institutions. The political system is led and directed by the state’s president and the central committee of the LPRP at the party congress elects the politburo and the members of the politburo. In Lao PDR, as a single-party Marxist-Leninist state that the political power is monopolised by the LPRP, which the NA and every level of the governmental and social organisations are entirely led and directed by the LPRP due to it is instituted in all levels of the governmental organisations and almost of social organisations in the society, and the constitution and laws have already provided separately rights, duties and powers for them. However, in the practices, all governmental administrations are the instruments of the LPRP. As according to the system of the democratic centralism that the powers run from the top to the bottom, and decisions by the party leadership have to be accepted. According to the political context, the LPRP has powerful support from the communist parties of both Vietnam and China, which are closely relationships and completed cooperation. In addition, Lao PDR holds the foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation to promote relations and cooperation with all countries in the world that based on the foundation of principles are peaceful coexistence, respect for each other’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, noninterference into each other’s internal affairs, and equality and mutual benefits. Lao PDR also supports the struggle for peace of the people in around the world, national independence, democracy and social progress with the regional and international governments. Nevertheless, in the past decades, Lao PDR has attempted to improve and develop civil society and to lay foundations for a more democratic system that the Lao government has attempted to uphold the constitution and laws to strengthen the rule of law based on the socioeconomic development to enclose to the regional and international integrations. However, Lao PDR

has to more develop and enhance democracy to respond to the open economy in the globalized society, to be more democratized political regime and to be seriously implementation of the LPRP's policies and the Lao government's laws to anti-corruptions in the political system and socioeconomic developments, and Lao PDR has to attempt seek the benefits of the cooperation with ASEAN and other democratic countries, particularly foreign investors, and the Lao government continues to derive domestic and international legitimacy from the relations with the western countries that to bestow these development partners with a significant degree of influence if exercised appropriately.

### Acknowledgement

This article acknowledges to those institutions, papers and authors that were mentioned and used for this particular article.

### References

- [1] Hutchison, Jason R. 2009. "For Passion or Power: Buddhism and Communism in Cambodia and Laos." Yale Journal of International Affairs. USA, p. 40.
- [2] Kellner, Douglas. n.d. "Marxian Perspectives on Educational Philosophy: From Classical Marxism to Critical Pedagogy." Hesse, Germany.
- [3] Soukamneuth, B. J. 2006. "The political economy of transition in Laos: From peripheral socialism to the margins of global capital." PhD dissertation, Cornell University, USA, p. 35.
- [4] Walker. D, and Gray. D. 2007. Historical Dictionary of Marxism. The Scarecrow Press. Inc, UK, pp. 25-36.
- [5] Soukamneuth, B. J. 2006. "The Political Economy of Transition in Laos: From Peripheral Socialism to the Margins of Global Capital." PhD dissertation, Cornell University, USA, p 47.
- [6] Fukuyama, Francis. 1984. The New Marxist-Leninist States in the Third World. Santa Monica, California, USA, pp. 2-5.
- [7] Lesmana, Tjipta. 2016. "The Freedom of the Press in Vietnam and Laos: Fred Siebert's Communist Media Theory Re-Examined." Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies. Universitas Pelita Hatrapan, Indonesia, p.1.
- [8] Feenberg, Andrew. 1981. Lukács, Marx and the sources of critical theory. Rowman and littlefield, Totowa, New Jersey, USA, p. 1.
- [9] Langer P. F and Zasloff J. J. 1969. Revolution in Laos: The North Vietnamese and the Phated Lao (Laos). Santa Monica, California, USA, p. 2.
- [10] Soukamneuth, B. J. 2006. "The political economy of transition in Laos: From peripheral socialism to the margins of global capital." PhD dissertation, Cornell University, USA, pp. 37-47.
- [11] Stuart-Fox, Martin. 2011. "Countries at the Crossroads 2011: Laos." Freedom House, Brisbane, Australia, p. 2.
- [12] Lesmana, Tjipta. 2016. "The Freedom of the Press in Vietnam and Laos: Fred Siebert's Communist Media Theory Re-Examined." Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies. Universitas Pelita Hatrapan, Indonesia, p. 8.
- [13] Stuart-Fox, Martin. 2005. "Challenge for Lao Historiography." South East Asia Research, 14 (3): 339-359.
- [14] Stuart-Fox, Martin. 2005. "Politics and Reform in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Working Paper No.126." University of Queensland, Australia, p. 10.
- [15] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Constitution of Lao People's Democratic Republic of 1991 with Amendments 2003. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, p. 3.
- [16] The Lao People's Revolutionary Party. 2011. The Regulation of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp. 2-6.
- [17] Namlummoun, Khamphiew. 2000. "Lao Politics." The textbook for teaching and learning, the National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital Lao PDR, pp. 4-10.
- [18] The Lao National Assembly. 2001. The Law on the Election of Members of the National Assembly. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp. 1-3.
- [19] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Constitution of Lao People's Democratic Republic of 1991 with Amendments 2003. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, p. 2.
- [20] Bertelsmann, Stiftung. 2016. Laos Country Report. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp. 7-9.
- [21] Lao PDR-European Community. 2009. Strategy Paper for the Period 2007-2013. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, p. 7.
- [22] Namlummoun, Khamphiew. 2000. "Lao Politics." The textbook for teaching and learning, the National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital Lao PDR, pp. 4-10.
- [23] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Constitution of Lao People's Democratic Republic of 1991 with Amendments 2003. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp. 2-3.
- [24] Bertelsmann, Stiftung. 2016. Laos Country Report. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp. 11-12.
- [25] Lao PDR-European Community. 2007. Strategy Paper for the Period 2007-2013. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, p. 7.
- [26] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Constitution of Lao People's Democratic Republic of 1991 with Amendments 2003. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp.2-9.
- [27] The Lao National Assembly. 2006. The Law on the National Assembly. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp. 1-3.

- [28] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Constitution of Lao People's Democratic Republic of 1991 with Amendments 2003. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, p.1.
- [29] Namlummoun, Khamphiew. 2000. "Lao Politics." The textbook for teaching and learning, the National University of Laos, Vientiane Capital Lao PDR, pp. 6-10.
- [30] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Constitution of Lao People's Democratic Republic of 1991 with Amendments 2003. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp.12-13.
- [31] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Law on the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp.1-2.
- [32] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Law on the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp. 5-6.
- [33] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Law on the Local Administration of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp. 1-21.
- [34] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Law on the People's Courts of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, p. 1.
- [35] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Law on the Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, p. 2.
- [36] The Lao National Assembly. 2003. The Constitution of Lao People's Democratic Republic of 1991 with Amendments 2003. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, p. 2.
- [37] Lao PDR-European Community. 2007. Strategy Paper for the Period 2007-2013. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp. 7-8.
- [38] Bertelsmann, Stiftung. 2016. BTI2016-Laos Country Report. Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, pp. 28-31.