

CNI, NIFRA and IDML Discuss Shaktikhore Industrial Park with Ministries



The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI), Nepal Infrastructure Bank Limited (NIFRA), and Industrial Development Management Limited (IDML) jointly held a meeting with the Honorable Minister for Forests and Environment, Mr. Madhav Prasad Chaulagain, and Honorable Minister of Industry Commerce and Supplies, Mr. Anil Kumar Sinha, separately, to apprise him of the initiatives undertaken for the development of the Shaktikhore Industrial Park.

CNI President Mr. Birendra Raj Pandey briefed the Ministers on the MoU signed between CNI and NIFRA for the development of industrial parks under a Public-Private Partnership model.

CNI President Mr. Birendra Raj Pandey briefed the Ministers on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between CNI and NIFRA for the development of industrial parks under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. He also requested the Minister's support in addressing issues related to forest clearance required for the implementation of the Shaktikhore Industrial Park.



In response, Minister Chaulagain and Sinha stated that they are well aware of the matter and assured that the issue would be taken up appropriately.

At the discussion, CNI Past President Vishnu Kumar Agarwal, NIFRA CEO Krishna Bahadur Adhikari, IDML General Manager Padam Oli, Director Sanjaylal Manandhar, CNI Director General Ghanashyam Ojha, and others were present.

VP'S MESSAGE



As Nepal prepares for parliamentary elections in March 2026, the business community is cautiously optimistic about a return to peace, stability, and sustained economic growth. The industry was severely affected by the recent Gen-Z protests, which dented investor confidence and disrupted operations across sectors. The announcement of elections has renewed hope that a mandate for constructive governance will restore certainty for entrepreneurs and encourage fresh investment.

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) remains committed to contributing to national prosperity and supporting policies that enable inclusive growth. We believe the incoming government has an opportunity to catalyze a major breakthrough in the country's economic trajectory by prioritizing sound macroeconomic management, investor protection, and infrastructure development.

Nepal's IT sector has shown remarkable momentum and now requires consistent government support and clear policy frameworks to scale further. With targeted incentives, skills development, and improved digital infrastructure, IT services can become a leading export sector, generating jobs and foreign exchange as they already serve clients in many developed markets.

Equally important is harnessing Nepal's abundant water resources beyond traditional uses. Strategic investments in hydropower and modern water management can fuel industrialization, provide reliable energy, and enable sustainable agricultural growth. By adopting progressive, implementation-focused policies and strengthening public-private partnerships, Nepal can turn its natural and human capital into enduring economic gains.

CNI calls on all stakeholders—political leaders, policymakers, and the private sector—to collaborate constructively after the elections to create a secure, predictable, and opportunity-rich environment for businesses and citizens alike.

-Mr. Hem Raj Dhakal

CNI Urges Political Parties to Prioritize Economic Agenda in Election Manifestos; Policy Suggestions Released

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) has urged political parties to formulate their election manifestos by giving the highest priority to the economic agenda. To this end, CNI organized a press conference on January 18, 2026 and publicly released its recommendations on the key issues that political parties should prioritize in their manifestos.

CNI President Mr. Birendra Raj Pandey stated that despite multiple political changes from 2007 BS to the recent Gen Z movement of 2082 BS, economic transformation has not gained the necessary momentum. He noted that although political parties have included economic agendas in their manifestos, these agendas have not been given due priority during implementation once the parties are in government.

Emphasizing that a strong economy is the foremost requirement for national development, alongside political stability, CNI stressed the need for political parties to move forward with national consensus on economic issues and agendas. President Pandey highlighted that good governance, economic growth, employment, and overall national prosperity—key aspirations of the general public—can only be achieved through a shared commitment to economic development. CNI recommended that such national consensus clearly articulate a long-term vision for the country's development, priority sectors and projects, and a time-bound implementation roadmap.

CNI also urged effective implementation of “faceless, contactless, and paperless” systems to promote good governance, and called for high priority to be given to industrialization, production, and entrepreneurship. It further recommended prioritizing an integrated industrial development strategy; enactment of new laws and reforms; improvement in governance through increased use of information technology; and reforms in the tax system to boost investment.

Based on past experience, CNI noted a lack of alignment between commitments made in party manifestos and actions taken once those parties form the government. Political agendas have consistently



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overshadowed economic agendas, making comprehensive reform in the coming days unavoidable. President Pandey pointed out the significant gap between government policies and programs, budget formulation, and their implementation, stressing the need to bridge this gap. He further stated that frequent changes in priorities and lack of ownership of policies and programs have caused the country to lag economically. Although good governance is often emphasized rhetorically, its absence in practice has created public concern. He also underscored the need to hold institutions and individuals responsible for the effective implementation of declared economic policies and plans.

CNI's recommendations encompass priority areas including industrialization, export promotion and import substitution, promotion of domestic products and market regulation, foreign direct investment, skills development and employment, infrastructure development, good gover-

nance, innovation, domestic, small, and medium enterprises, information technology-based industries, education and health, energy, tourism, agriculture, forestry and the environment.

CNI has also emphasized the need for a national consensus and a shared “vision document” on economic development. Drawing lessons from the experiences and practices of neighboring countries, CNI suggested developing a common vision document through political consensus. The Confederation has consistently advocated for expanding Nepal's current economy of approximately USD 44 billion to USD 100 billion within the next 10 years. To this end, CNI is conducting a comprehensive study with the participation of national and international experts, which is expected to be completed and made public within the next few months.

Senior Vice President of CNI, Mr. Nirvana Chaudhary, stated that all political parties should prepare their manifestos with the economy at the center, clearly outlining how the country will move forward in terms of development in the coming days. Taking into account the declining confidence of the private sector, he emphasized the need to reassure stakeholders about the country's overall economic direction and growth prospects.

CNI–NPC Discussion on \$100 Billion Economy Study



The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) held a constructive discussion with the Vice Chairman and team of the National Planning Commission (NPC) on the proposed \$100 Billion Dollar Economy research, being undertaken by CNI in collaboration with national and international experts.

During the meeting, CNI President Mr. Birendra Raj Pandey presented the vision, modality, and scope of the research and formally requested collaboration and partner-

ship from the NPC to ensure the study's relevance, credibility, and effective implementation. He emphasized that close coordination with the NPC would help align the research outcomes with national priorities and policy frameworks.

The NPC emphasized the importance of clearly defining CNI's role, scope, and coordination framework at the outset of the study to ensure institutional clarity and effective collaboration. The Commission noted that while academic inputs are relatively straightforward,

implementation often faces bureaucratic challenges; therefore, the study should be clear, practical, and implementable for operational-level officials.

NPC VC Dr. Prakash Kumar Shrestha stressed that the research should be aligned with existing national policies, periodic plans, and Nepal's LDC graduation pathway. It should identify sustainable and resilient sectors, considering market viability, sectoral shifts, and potential risks such as economic shocks, pandemics, and demographic changes.

CNI Talk Series on “Open Access of Electricity and Benefits to Nepalese Industry”

CNI Energy Development Council (EDC) successfully organized an interaction session under the CNI Talk Series on “Open Access of Electricity and Benefits to Nepalese Industry” on January 28, 2026, at the CNI Secretariat. The session was led by Mr. Prabal Adhikari, Senior Energy Expert and Former Deputy Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority, who delivered a comprehensive overview of Nepal's open access electricity framework. He shared valuable technical insights on transmission capacity allocation, system operation, grid constraints, and regulatory mechanisms, while also highlighting lessons from international experience, particularly India. The discussion helped participants gain a clearer understanding of the opportunities and practical challenges associated with direct power procurement from hydropower and solar sources, and underscored the need for timely power sector reforms to make open access more effective and industry-friendly in Nepal.



CNI–IBN Discuss \$100 Billion Economy Study with Experts

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) organized a high-level interaction meeting at the Investment Board Nepal (IBN) office on Nepal's ambition of achieving an \$100 billion economy on 26 January 2025. The meeting brought together authors of sectoral diagnostic reports and IBN thematic experts to review early findings and align analytical work with practical, investment-driven pathways. The discussion emphasized the need for stronger coordination among CNI, IBN, and the National Planning Commission, alongside system reforms, digitization, and data-driven policymaking.

The IBN CEO Sushil Gyawali highlighted IBN's potential leadership role in structuring PPP-based investments, integrating technology and e-governance into priority projects, and linking capital mobilization with clear deployment and exit strategies.

CNI Director General Dr. Ghanashyam Ojha shared the progress achieved so far on the \$100 billion economy study, stating that CNI is deeply committed to supporting the government's initiative to transform Nepal's economy by identifying priority sectors and aligning policies accordingly.

Experts stressed that Nepal's development challenge lies less in the absence of policies and more in weak implementation, institution-



al capacity gaps, and a lack of locally grounded strategies. Human capital development, private-sector engagement in education and social sectors, and ensuring the social justifiability of profit-driven investments emerged as key priorities.

Sectoral discussions—particularly on tourism, infrastructure, trade, and urban development—highlighted persistent structural bottlenecks. Participants noted inefficiencies in airport utilization, rising tourism

costs, weak linkages between infrastructure development and economic outcomes, and limited private-sector participation in urban development.

In closing, the IBN CEO emphasized the need to address governance and institutional constraints, include urban development as a core growth pillar, and complement economic modeling with comparative analysis and clear storytelling to build consensus around Nepal's long-term growth vision.

First Demo of B2B Swadeshi Portal Presented at MoICS

The framework of the B2B Swadeshi Portal, developed in alignment with the Government of Nepal's guidelines on the use of domestic products in public entities, was presented during its first official demo on 27 January 2026 at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies (Singha Durbar).

The meeting brought together representatives from the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, the Department of Commerce, Supplies and Consumer Protection, the CNI Secretariat, and the Dobato Team, CNI's technical development partner for the platform.

The meeting was formally initiated by Dr. Ghanashyam Ojha, Director General, CNI, who welcomed all participants and outlined the purpose of the session. He emphasized that the B2B Swadeshi Platform is being developed by CNI for eventual handover to the Government of Nepal to support public procurement and the use of Swadeshi products, in line with the Government's guideline on the use of domestic products in public entities, 2081. During the session, Dobato presented the final design and conducted a live walkthrough of the sys-



tem, showcasing key modules including user registration and vendor onboarding, product listing and catalog management, compliance documentation, and administrative control features. CNI highlighted the significant progress achieved and reaffirmed its commitment to close coordination with government stakeholders. The platform is envisioned as a policy-aligned digital system to strengthen the use of Swadeshi products in public procurement.

During the discussion, the Ministry stressed

that, prior to handover, the portal must fully comply with the Public Procurement Act, the E-commerce Act, and other applicable legal frameworks. The Ministry also advised the formation of a dedicated joint team to define government requirements, procurement processes, and compliance standards in detail.

The meeting concluded with the decision to organize follow-up meetings with the dedicated team to advance the next phase of development and handover.

CNI National Council Meeting

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) held its Second National Council Meeting on 9 January 2026 in Chitwan, bringing together National Council members, provincial and district leadership, industry representatives, and key stakeholders to review ongoing initiatives and discuss priority issues facing the private sector. The meeting was held in the touristic hub of Sauraha, engaging members beyond Kathmandu while highlighting the economic and tourism potential of Nepal.

While welcoming the participants, CNI President Birendra Raj Pandey highlighted CNI's role as a research-based policy advocacy body representing industries across all provinces. He emphasized the need for legal and policy reforms at federal, provincial, and local levels to boost investment and competitiveness. While noting stable macro-economic indicators, he pointed out low market demand as the major challenge for industries and stressed the importance of restoring investor confidence through coordinated government action and supportive taxation policies.

During the meeting National Council Members, representing various sectoral committees, provided updates about their respective committees' activities and highlighted major initiatives, being taken by the committees for the sectors' growth. CNI Vice Presidents also shared their views regarding the contributions that the industries can make for the country's economic transformation amidst difficult situations.

On the following day, National Council members participated in a stakeholder engage-



ment and exposure visit, including a jungle safari at Chitwan National Park and a visit to Maula Kalika Temple. The delegation also met

with the Mayor of Bharatpur Metropolitan City to explore areas of collaboration and future economic opportunities.

Policy Dialogue on the Role of Private Sector Engagement in Apprenticeship Programs

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) organized a Policy Dialogue on the Role of Private Sector Engagement in Apprenticeship Programs on 21 January 2026 at the Hotel Himalayan, Lalitpur, under the ENSSURE project. The event was attended by 35 participants from government institutions, including the MoEST, MoLESS, MoICS, CTEVT and NAVT, along with representatives from polytechnic schools and the diverse range of private sectors.

The dialogue focused on strengthening private sector leadership in apprenticeship programs, with discussions on Private Sector-led curriculum development, Industry – run apprenticeship, Diploma in apprenticeship and certification pathways. Participants highlighted the need to update outdated curricula, reduce high dropout rates, and ensure apprenticeship



training is practical, job-focused, and aligned with current industry needs. The event provided an important platform for collaboration among government, industry, and polytech-

nic schools, reinforcing CNI's commitment to promoting skills development, employability, and a demand-driven apprenticeship system in Nepal.