

CNI and NIFRA Sign MoU for Development and Operation of Industrial Estates



The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) and Nepal Infrastructure Bank Limited (NIFRA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the development and operation of industrial estates. The agreement aligns with the Government of Nepal's policy to develop and operate industrial estates under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Engineer Padam Oli, General Manager of Industrial Estate Management Limited. The agreement was signed on behalf of CNI by Director General Dr. Ghanashyam Ojha and on behalf of NIFRA by Assistant Chief Executive Officer Surya Bahadur Tamang.

As per the MoU, priority will be given to the development and operation of the Shaktikhor Industrial Estate in Chitwan under the PPP framework announced by the Government of Nepal. The agreement also includes cooperation between CNI and NIFRA for the development and operation of the Mayurdhap Industrial Estate in Hetauda and the Motipur Industrial Estate in Rupandehi.

Following the government's announcement to allow the construction and operation of industrial estates under the PPP model, CNI has entered into this agreement with NIFRA to move forward with industrial estate development. With this MoU, CNI and NIFRA will jointly submit proposals and urge the Government of Nepal to allow the private sector to develop and operate industrial estates under the PPP framework.

On the occasion, CNI President Birendra Raj Pandey stated that the agreement with NIFRA marks the beginning of concrete initiatives for the development and oper-

ation of industrial estates. He emphasized that the MoU between CNI and NIFRA is highly significant.

NIFRA Chief Executive Officer Krishna Bahadur Adhikari noted that NIFRA considers this MoU with CNI as a starting point for collaboration on industrial estate development. He expressed confidence that, in partnership with CNI, such initiatives can be effectively advanced under the PPP model.

Similarly, Engineer Padam Oli, General Manager of Industrial Estate Management Limited, remarked that as the government has opened the door for private sector in-

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volvement in the construction and operation of industrial estates under the PPP model, this MoU sends a positive message.

The event was attended by former CNI President Bishnu Kumar Agarwal; CNI Vice President Gokul Bhandari; President of Chitwan Chamber of Industries Madan Ghimire; former President of Bagmati Chamber of Industries Bhesraj Duwadi; Chair of CNI Industry Committee Rahul Agrawal; Vice Chair Guru Adhikari; Chair of CNI Infrastructure Committee Ram Krishna Khatibada; NIFRA Deputy Chief Investment Officer Rabin Shrestha; and other representatives.

VP'S MESSAGE



Nepal stands at a defining moment in its economic journey. Amid global uncertainties and recent domestic challenges—including the voices and concerns raised through Gen Z-led protests—our economy is being called to respond with resilience, reform, and renewed purpose. These expressions reflect legitimate aspirations for opportunity, accountability, and inclusive growth, and they must inform the path we choose ahead.

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries remains committed to advancing sustainable business practices that balance industrial growth with environmental responsibility, social inclusion, and strong governance. ESG principles are no longer optional; they are essential to building competitive industries, attracting investment, and ensuring long-term national prosperity.

CNI believes in strengthening domestic production, supporting innovation, and enabling Nepali products to compete in regional and global markets. We can reduce import dependence and create quality employment for our young population through innovation and best industry practices. For this to happen, we need a stable and united government for at least five years.

CNI believes that Nepal's current economy can be transformed into a USD 100 billion economy, and this ambition is achievable through collaboration between the private sector, government, and society. With policy stability, investment-friendly reforms, and responsible entrepreneurship, we can turn current challenges into catalysts for growth and build an economy that is resilient, inclusive, and future-ready.

Together, let us move forward with confidence, responsibility, and shared vision.

-Mr. Raj Bahadur Shah

Highest Taxpayers Honored by the Confederation of Nepalese Industries



The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) has honored outstanding taxpayers in recognition of their significant contribution to the national economy. On the occasion of National Tax Day 2082, CNI recognized high taxpayers who were formally honored by the Government of Nepal.

On National Tax Day 2082, the Government of Nepal honored a total of 16 entities and individuals as high taxpayers. CNI, representing the private sector, extended its own recognition to the same outstanding taxpayers.

Among those honored were Dabur Nepal Pvt. Ltd. for paying the highest income tax among exporters of goods; Unilever Nepal Limited for the highest income tax contribution among special industries; Soaltee Hotel Limited for the tourism sector; Bhatbhateni Super Market and Departmental Store Pvt. Ltd. for goods trading; and Bhote Koshi Power Company Pvt. Ltd. for energy-based industries.

Similarly, Posak Breeder Farm Pvt. Ltd. was honored for the highest income tax contribu-

tion among agriculture and livestock-based industries; Verisk Nepal Pvt. Ltd. for information technology service exports; Third Eye International among sole proprietorships; Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited among banks, financial institutions, and insurance companies; and Nobel Medical College Teaching Hospital among health and educational institutions.

In addition, IME Limited was honored for the highest income tax contribution in remittance and money transfer services; Nepal Telecommunications Authority among public entities; CDS and Clearing Limited among taxpayers with annual turnover exceeding NPR 500 million up to NPR 1 billion; and VFS Services (Mauritius) Pvt. Ltd. among taxpayers with annual turnover up to NPR 500 million.

Nepal Telecom Limited was recognized for paying the highest value-added tax (VAT) among taxpayers who consistently submitted VAT returns and paid taxes on time during the tax period from Shrawan 2076 to the end of

Ashad 2082. Among individual taxpayers, Raj Bahadur Shah, Managing Director of Jawalakhel Group of Industries, was honored for paying the highest income tax. Mr. Shah also serves as a Vice President of CNI.

At the felicitation ceremony held on Tuesday at the CNI Secretariat, CNI President Birendra Raj Pandey presented the awards to the outstanding taxpayers. On the occasion, he stated that being recognized as an outstanding taxpayer is not only an individual or institutional achievement but also a meaningful contribution to the state. He emphasized that CNI honored these taxpayers in appreciation of their significant role in strengthening the national revenue system.

The ceremony was attended by CNI Vice Presidents Raj Bahadur Shah, Hem Raj Dhakal, and Amit More, Governing Council Member Bijay Shah; Chair of the Revenue Committee Gopal Kumar Agrawal; Director General Dr. Ghanashyam Ojha; and other distinguished participants.

CNI Holds Discussion with Minister of MoLESS

A delegation of the Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI), led by President Mr. Birendra Raj Pandey, met with the newly appointed Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS), Mr. Rajendra Singh Bhandari, at the Ministry on 21 December. The CNI delegation congratulated Minister Bhandari and extended best wishes for a successful tenure.

During the meeting, President Pandey briefed the Minister on the current state of the country's economy and shared the sentiments and concerns of the private sector. He committed to working closely with the Ministry for the betterment of the national economy.

Minister Bhandari emphasized that the private sector must come forward with increased



investment to strengthen the economy. He stated that the Government is fully committed to holding elections on time and urged the private

sector to create more employment opportunities, particularly for Generation Z, to address emerging workforce challenges.

CNI Tourism Committee Holds Discussion with NTB CEO on Reviving Nepal's Tourism Sector



The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) Tourism Committee held a discussion meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Mr. Deepak Raj Joshi, focusing on strategies to revive Nepal's tourism sector at the earliest.

During the interaction, CEO Joshi shared updated tourist arrival statistics and outlined ongoing and planned initiatives aimed at strengthening the tourism industry. He emphasized the need for Nepal to shift towards consumer-based publicity and targeted promotion to effectively attract international visitors.

Chair of the CNI Tourism Committee, Ms. Pamfa Damala, highlighted that the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model must be actively utilized to boost the tourism sector. She noted that one of the major challenges facing Nepali tourism is high airfares, stressing the need to identify measures to reduce travel costs. She also pointed out the importance of expanding direct flight connectivity to European destinations.

CNI Tourism Committee Member Mr. Ravi Singh suggested promoting Nepal more intensively in Buddhist countries and recommended the provision of free visa facilities for tourists from these regions to encourage higher arrivals.

Participants at the meeting further urged for policy advocacy to remove the 13 percent VAT on air tickets, stating that such a measure would significantly support tourism recovery and improve Nepal's competitiveness as a destination.

CNI and SSF Sign MoU to Strengthen Workers' Social Security



The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) and the Social Security Fund (SSF) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen the social security of workers.

The MoU aims to enhance awareness of social security in the industrial sector and encourage workers to enroll in social security schemes. The agreement was signed on 8 December during a joint orientation and interaction program on social security, organized by CNI and SSF at the CNI Secretariat.

Under this collaboration, CNI will support the enrollment of its member industries in social security schemes, conduct awareness programs across the country, disseminate necessary information, and work toward safeguarding the long-term interests of workers.

The MoU was signed on behalf of CNI by Director General Dr. Ghanashyam Ojha and on behalf of SSF by Executive Director Kabin Raj Adhikari.

Speaking at the program, CNI President Birendra Raj Pandey stated that this collaboration is highly important for both workers and industries. He reaffirmed CNI's commitment to continuously supporting industrialists in enrolling with the Social Security Fund and expressed confidence that this partnership would help make the social security system more

practical and accessible.

Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Dr. Krishnahari Pushkar, highlighted that the Social Security Fund is a key pillar in making workers' lives more secure and dignified. He noted that this MoU would play an important role in increasing active participation from workers and employers across all sectors and in bringing them into the registration system.

CNI Vice President Bhim Ghimire remarked that the Social Security Fund is not merely a welfare program but a foundational element of human capital development. He added that CNI would expand such awareness and interaction programs at the provincial level as well.

SSF Executive Director Adhikari emphasized that this collaboration is significant for further strengthening the social security system and expanding benefits for workers.

The program was attended by Dhruba Rijal, former Board Member of SSF and Chair of CNI's Employers' Council, Jagat Bahadur Simkhada, Board Member of SSF and President of the Joint Trade Union Coordination Centre, officials from affiliated federations, representatives of SSF, members of the Employers' Council, and representatives from the industrial and business community, among others.

CNI Holds Discussion with Newly Appointed NPC Vice-Chair

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) met with the newly appointed Vice-Chair of National Planning Commission (NPC) Dr. Prakash Kumar Shrestha, on 21 December. CNI President Mr. Birendra Raj Pandey congratulated Dr. Shrestha and wished him a successful tenure.

During the meeting, President Pandey briefed the Vice-Chair on CNI's ongoing research on achieving a \$100 billion economy in



Nepal within the next 10 years. The discussion focused on strategies to accelerate economic growth and strengthen collaboration between the private sector and the government.

During the meeting, NPC Vice-Chair Dr. Shrestha reaffirmed that the government stands with the private sector and pledged to contribute his best efforts toward developing policies that support the country's economic growth.

CNI Holds Discussion with Newly Appointed Industry Secretary

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) held a discussion with the newly appointed Secretary of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, Mr. Madhu Sudan Burlakoti, at the Ministry on 21 December, focusing on key industry and economic issues.

During the meeting, CNI President Mr. Birendra Raj Pandey congratulated Secretary Burlakoti on his appointment and extended best wishes for a successful tenure. President Pandey briefed the Make in Nepal – Swadeshi Campaign, which is being implemented in collaboration with the Ministry. He emphasized that achieving the objectives of the campaign requires the full implementation of guidelines mandating the use of domestically produced goods by public institutions.

The discussion also underscored the necessity of formulating a comprehensive Industrial Development Strategy to strengthen the industrial sector. CNI further stressed that the difference in customs duty rates between finished goods and raw materials should be maintained



at a minimum of two tariff slabs to encourage domestic value addition and industrial growth.

Additionally, the need to initiate negotiations for mutual recognition of standards, ensuring Nepal's NS and India's ISI certifications are

recognized by both countries, was highlighted.

Industry Secretary Burlakoti committed to promoting the private sector and stated that the Ministry will work closely with stakeholders to boost the national economy.

Discussion on LDC Graduation with Commodity Associations



A multi-stakeholder discussion on Nepal's graduation from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category highlighted serious concerns about whether graduation would be beneficial for the nation at this stage.

Participants noted weak preparedness, low negotiation progress on Smooth Transition Strategy (STS), and uncertainty if neighboring countries like Bangladesh receive defer-

ral. Industry representatives from garments, carpets, and pharmaceuticals emphasized Nepal's low competitiveness, high costs, lack of infrastructure, weak diplomacy, and limited government facilitation.

Particular concern was raised over the pharmaceutical sector, where loss of TRIPS deferral could severely affect access to affordable medicines and local manufacturing capacity, while Bangladesh's experience showed how

deferral enabled capacity building and exports. Export-oriented sectors warned of job losses, reduced market access in the EU and US, and minimal gains even during a grace period due to unresolved structural issues.

Overall, the discussion reflected broad apprehension, limited confidence to invest, and a strong call for high-level dialogue, policy reforms, and capacity building before any irreversible graduation decision.



Swadeshi Bazar 2025 Successfully Organized Under Make in Nepal – Swadeshi Campaign

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI), in collaboration with the Department of Industry, Government of Nepal, successfully organized Swadeshi Bazar 2025 on Saturday, 13 December 2025, at the International Club, Sanepa, Lalitpur. The one-day exhibition was held from 10:30 AM to 7:00 PM under the theme “Make in Nepal – Swadeshi Movement”, with the objective of promoting Nepali-made products and strengthening domestic industries.

The event was formally inaugurated at 10:30 AM through a ribbon-cutting ceremony by Mr. Rajeshwar Gyawali, Director General, Department of Industry, Mr. Birendra Pandey, President, CNI, and Mr. Ghanashyam Ojha, Director General, CNI. Following the inauguration, the dignitaries visited the exhibition stalls and interacted with participating entrepreneurs.

Swadeshi Bazar 2025 featured a total of 41 exhibition stalls, representing a wide range of Nepali industries, includ-



ing agriculture and agro-based enterprises, food and processed products, textiles and fashion, handicrafts and creative industries, Ayurvedic and health-related products, lifestyle and household goods,

and women-led and social enterprises. This sectoral diversity reflected the innovation, quality, and growth potential of domestic enterprises.

The bazar witnessed strong participation from entrepreneurs, industry representatives, and the general public throughout the day. Visitors actively engaged with vendors to learn about product quality, production processes, and the importance of supporting Nepali-made goods. All participating vendors expressed satisfaction with the event, noting good customer interaction and encouraging sales performance during the exhibition.

The event successfully created a marketplace for direct producer–consumer interaction, enhanced business networking opportunities, and contributed to increased awareness of Nepali products. Overall, Swadeshi Bazar 2025 reinforced the objectives of the “Make in Nepal – Swadeshi” Movement by promoting local production, consumption, and economic self-reliance.

SSC Manufacturing Begins Functional Analysis with Footwear Sector

The Sector Skill Committee (SSC) – Manufacturing meeting was held on 1 December 2025 at CNI. The meeting discussed functional analysis, NCS development, and the selection of an occupational coordinator. Members emphasized private sector leadership in skills development to better match industry needs. It was decided to start functional analysis with the footwear sector, followed by cable and conductor, and to develop NCS under SSC Manufacturing’s guidance.



CNI and SCAEF Sign MoU to Strengthen Collaboration in Infrastructure Sector



The Society of Consulting Architectural & Engineering Firms (SCAEF) and the Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance collaboration in infrastructure development, policy reform, research, and capacity building. The MoU was signed on December 17, 2025 at Hotel Yak & Yeti, Kathmandu.

The agreement was signed by Er. Thakur Prasad Sharma, President of SCAEF Nepal, and Mr. Birendra Raj Pandey, President of CNI, in the presence of senior officials from both organizations.

The MoU aims to provide a structured framework for cooperation between the two institutions, focusing on professional development, innovation, research and development, societal well-being, and policy advocacy in Nepal's infrastructure sector. Under the agreement, CNI and SCAEF will jointly engage with public and private stakeholders at the federal, provincial, and local levels to promote sustainable and resilient infrastructure development.

Key areas of cooperation include organizing joint seminars, conferences, symposiums, and capacity-building programs; undertaking collaborative research and policy-oriented studies; advocating for reforms in infrastructure-related laws, standards, and procurement systems; and fostering collaboration among academia, industry, and professional institutions. The MoU also emphasizes promoting inclusive, environmentally responsible, and ethically sound infrastructure practices.

The MoU will remain valid for five years and reflects a shared commitment by both organizations to strengthen Nepal's infrastructure ecosystem through coordinated efforts and constructive policy engagement.

CNI Holds 'Budget Watch', Underscores Need for Leap in Industrial Development



The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) organised the second edition of its CNI Budget Watch for the current fiscal year on the theme "Leap in Industrial Development" on December 2, 2025 at the CNI, Kathmandu.

Welcoming the participants, CNI President Birendra Raj Pandey underscored the importance of effective and timely budget implementation to revive industrial confidence and accelerate economic growth. He stressed that meaningful industrial progress depends not only on policy announcements but also on their execution.

The programme featured a detailed presentation on the budget implementation status of the first quarter of fiscal year 2082/83 by President of the Society of Economic Journalists Nepal (SEJON), Bhagwat Bhattarai. The presentation was based on the Budget Implementation Report prepared by SEJON for CNI under its ongoing Budget Watch initiative.

According to the report, CNI had identified 74 private sector- and economy-related points from the current fiscal year's budget across seven key sectors of the economy. Of these, only 2.7 percent have been fully implemented by the government by the end of the first quarter. While 45.9 percent of the identified points show partial implementation, as many as 51.4 percent have seen no progress at all. A comparative analysis with the same period of the previous fiscal year shows that 4.8 percent of the identified points were fully implemented, 38 percent partially imple-

mented, and 57 percent showed no progress. The comparison indicates a weakening trend in full implementation of budget announcements, although marginal improvements are observed in partial progress and reduction in the "no progress" category.

Following the presentation, a thematic interaction on "Leap in Industrial Development" was held in a panel discussion format. The panel comprised Secretary at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies Mr. Krishna Bahadur Raut, former Secretary of the Government of Nepal Dr. Toya Narayan Gyawali, and Vice President of CNI Bagmati Province Mr. Swagat Raj Pyakurel.

During the discussion, speakers stressed the need for stronger coordination between policy formulation and execution, improved inter-agency collaboration, and a predictable regulatory environment to enable industries to expand, invest, and generate employment. Panelists also highlighted that industrial growth cannot be achieved without addressing implementation bottlenecks, procedural delays, and financing constraints faced by the private sector.

Around 45 participants, including industrialists, business leaders, sectoral stakeholders, and journalists from various media houses, attended the programme. CNI reiterated that its Budget Watch initiative will continue throughout the fiscal year, with regular monitoring and constructive engagement with policymakers to ensure that budget commitments translate into tangible economic outcomes.

All-Stakeholders Meeting on the \$100 Billion Economy

An all-stakeholders strategic visioning meeting was convened to guide the completion of CNI's USD 100 Billion Economy Study, with a special invitation to Mr. Sushil Gyewali, CEO of the Investment Board Nepal, along with policymakers, private sector leaders, economists, and development experts to align on pathways for transforming Nepal's USD 44 billion economy.

The discussion emphasized evidence-based macroeconomic modelling, private sector led investment, and strong coordination with line ministries and implementing agencies. Participants highlighted the central role of fixed capital investment, manufacturing, energy, transport, and technology in driving growth, while cautioning against premature deindustrialization and fragmented project implementation. The need for realistic assumptions, a viable project bank, clear Terms of Reference, and



phased short, medium, and long-term milestones was repeatedly stressed.

The meeting concluded with agreement to form sectoral and thematic working groups, identify quick wins, and institutionalize peri-

odic reviews, ensuring the final report, scheduled for publication at the CNI AGM in April 2026, serves as a practical, non-partisan roadmap owned by both the government and the private sector.

Talk Series; 'AI for Business Growth & Transformation'



The AI Tech Peak Talk on "AI for Business Growth & Transformation", jointly organized by the IT Council of the Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) and AI Association Nepal (AIAN), was successfully held on December 28 at CNI. The closed-door executive roundtable brought together industry leaders, CEOs, and AI practitioners to focus on practical AI adoption beyond theory.

Sanjay Golchha, Chair of the CNI IT Council, opened the session by highlighting the digital imperative for Nepal-

ese industries, while Shailendra Raj Giri, President of AIAN, emphasized that AI transformation must be driven from the top through leadership, skills development, and an innovation-friendly culture.

The session featured expert insights from Suresh Pokharel, Vice President of AIAN, on adopting a data-first strategy; Ram Bhattarai, Executive Member of AIAN, on enabling AI through cloud, compute, and AI agents; and Santosh Sigdel, General Secretary of AIAN, on the importance of responsible AI,

ethics, and trust.

Kiran Bhatt, Executive Member of AIAN, shared practical AI use cases in agriculture and the medical sector, demonstrating AI's potential in precision farming, crop monitoring, diagnostics, and healthcare operations. The program concluded with closing remarks by Karvika Thapa, Co-Chair of the IT Council, CNI, who reinforced the importance of cross-sector collaboration and a clear roadmap for accelerating AI-driven transformation across Nepalese industries.

Functional Analysis Workshop for the Footwear Sector

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI), in coordination with the Footwear Manufacturers' Association of Nepal and with technical support from the National Skill Testing Board (NSTB/CTVET), successfully conducted a two-day Functional Analysis Workshop for the Footwear Sector on 14th and 15th December 2025 at Goldstar Stride Ltd., Kathmandu.

The workshop brought together representatives from leading footwear industries to strengthen understanding of functional analysis and its role in developing National Competency Standards (NCS) under the National Vocational Qualification Framework (NVQF). Through interactive presentations and discussions, participants identified and finalized key functions, sub-functions, job roles, and competency levels within the footwear sector.



The functional analysis developed during the workshop will serve as a foundation for occupational mapping and future NCS

development, contributing to a skilled and standardized workforce in Nepal's footwear industry.



CNI Staff Retreat

The Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) organized a two-day staff retreat on 26 and 27 December 2025 at Kulekhani, Makwanpur, as part of its regular quarterly initiative to promote staff well-being, motivation, and team bonding. The retreat was designed to provide a refreshing break from routine work while fostering a positive, friendly, and collaborative working environment.

Set amidst the natural surroundings of Kulekhani, the retreat offered staff members an opportunity to relax and reconnect in a serene environment. The program included a range of recreational and team-building activities such as adventure-based engagements, dance, singing, bonfires and outdoor experiences. Key highlights of the retreat included boating on the Indrasarobar Lake, as well as hiking and sightseeing at the scenic Mohini Waterfall.

Through such initiatives, CNI continues to emphasize the importance of work-life balance and employee engagement. The two-day retreat at Kulekhani proved to be a refreshing and meaningful experience for participating staff, contributing to enhanced morale, stronger interpersonal relationships, and a more cohesive organizational culture.

