

**LAUNCHING OF FORMER PLANNERS' FORUM NEPAL  
(FPFN)**



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Former Planners Forum Nepal (FPFN)  
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## **Background**

The Former Planners Forum Nepal (FPFN) was formally launched on May 15, 2025, as a professional platform dedicated to strengthening planning discourse and practice in Nepal. Comprising former Vice-Chairs and Members of the National Planning Commission (NPC), the Forum seeks to provide a non-partisan, knowledge-based space for research, strategic policy dialogue, and collaborative action in support of Nepal's development goals. The FPFN is grounded in the belief that Nepal's development trajectory can benefit significantly from the experience, expertise, and critical reflection of those who have previously contributed to shaping national plans and public policies.

The Forum is established to foster research, collaboration, and policy advocacy, while also promoting sustainable planning practices in line with Nepal's long-term national aspirations. The Forum will serve as a hub for generating critical analysis, enhancing the capacity of planners, and partnering with national and international stakeholders to ensure coherent and effective development planning.

The formal launch of FPFN was marked by a special event hosted at The Malla Hotel, Kathmandu. The event was organized in solidarity with Action Aid and Oxfam. It included two major thematic workshops, focusing on Nepal's fiscal future and its position in a shifting global geopolitical landscape- two issues of critical relevance in the current socio-economic context.

## **Objectives**

The primary objectives of the launch event were threefold: to formally introduce the Former Planners Forum Nepal (FPFN) as a strategic and professional network; to create space for dialogue on critical national issues through high-level thematic workshops; and to generate policy insights that can inform the country's fiscal planning and geopolitical positioning. The event also aimed to foster collective learning, consensus building, and the formulation of evidence-based, actionable recommendations that align with Nepal's development priorities.

## **Methodology**

The one-day event was conducted in an in-person format at The Malla Hotel, Kathmandu, and brought together around 100 participants representing a cross-section of stakeholders, including current and former government officials, development partners, economists, researchers, private sector representatives, civil society leaders, and media professionals.

The program featured two major thematic presentations, followed by expert commentary and interactive discussions. The event was hosted by Mr. Min Bahadur Shai, the Secretary General of FPFN, and the former Member of Nepal Planning Commission. Each session included a presentation from a distinguished expert, a formal response from a high-level commentator, and an open discussion with the audience. The sessions were designed to encourage participatory engagement, cross-sectoral exchange, and grounded reflection.

The event also featured remarks by Prof. Dr. Shiva Raj Adhikari, the current Vice-Chair of the National Planning Commission, who acknowledged the importance of the Forum in providing continuity in national planning and contributing to the enhancement of policy quality. The formal vote of thanks was delivered by Ms. Saloni Singh Pradhan, the Treasurer of FPFN and the former Member of Nepal Planning Commission, who expressed appreciation to all presenters, partners, and participants for their contributions to the successful launch.

### **Rt. Honorable Prime Minister's Remarks**

The Rt. Honorable Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli graced the event as the Chief Guest and delivered a keynote address marking the official launch of the Former Planners Forum Nepal. In his remarks, the Prime Minister warmly welcomed the formation of the Forum and acknowledged the critical role that former planners can play in enriching the national discourse on development and governance. He commended the Forum's commitment to fostering knowledge exchange and emphasized the value of drawing from the country's institutional memory and collective expertise.

The Prime Minister underscored the importance of aligning policy with people's aspirations, particularly the national vision of a "Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali." He further stressed the need to bridge the gap between policy design and implementation, particularly in areas such as fiscal responsibility, economic reform, and geopolitical engagement. He called for a renewed commitment to evidence-based planning and emphasized the importance of a transparent, accountable, and citizen-centric governance model.

### **Presentations**

#### **Shifting Geopolitical Landscape: Navigating Nepal's Economic Challenges**

The first thematic presentation was delivered by Dr. Posh Raj Pandey, Vice-Chair of FPFN and former Member of the National Planning Commission. Dr. Pandey's presentation explored the global shifts in power dynamics and economic governance, drawing attention to the increasing securitization of trade, the resurgence of protectionism, and the vulnerabilities faced

by small economies like Nepal. He highlighted how geopolitical competition and the weaponization of economic tools are reshaping development strategies worldwide.

Dr. Pandey outlined several strategic directions for Nepal, including the diversification of trade partnerships, investment in domestic value chains, recalibration of diplomatic engagement, and the strengthening of regional economic alliances. He advocated for a multidimensional foreign policy and active participation in regional and multilateral institutions.

The presentation was followed by expert commentary from Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, former Ambassador of Nepal to the United Kingdom and former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations. Mr. Acharya reinforced the need for Nepal to adopt a proactive and balanced foreign policy. He emphasized the importance of economic diplomacy, soft power, and multilateral cooperation to manage geopolitical risks and build economic resilience.

### **Leveraging the Upcoming Budget for Inclusive Growth and Prosperity**

The second thematic presentation was delivered by Dr. Dilli Raj Khanal, a former Member of the NPC and Executive Member of FPFN. Dr. Khanal addressed Nepal's current fiscal condition and the challenges posed by economic stagnation, inequality, debt burden, and institutional inefficiencies. He underscored the need for a people-centered, performance-based budget that prioritizes inclusive growth, social protection, and employment generation.

Dr. Khanal recommended systemic reforms in revenue mobilization, budgetary efficiency, and expenditure management. He emphasized that inclusive growth must be rooted in equity, gender sensitivity, and institutional accountability. Among the practical measures he suggested were expanding the tax base, curbing unproductive spending, formalizing the informal economy, and investing in digital infrastructure.

Commentary on Dr. Khanal's presentation was provided by Mr. Deependra Bahadur Kshetry, former Vice-Chair of the National Planning Commission and former Governor of the Nepal Rastra Bank. Mr. Kshetry endorsed the proposed fiscal strategies and added insights from his own experience in macroeconomic policy. He emphasized the need for fiscal discipline, transparency in public finance, and a strong regulatory framework to ensure the sustainability of budgetary reforms.

### **Discussion and Question-Answer**

Following each thematic presentation, the floor was opened for questions and reflections from participants. The discussions were insightful and enriched the deliberations with perspectives

from civil society, academia, government, and development partners. Participants raised concerns about the gap between policy intent and execution, the urgency of fiscal reforms, and the vulnerabilities posed by geopolitical uncertainties.

Key issues discussed included the need for fiscal transparency, mechanisms for ensuring inter-provincial equity, strategies to reduce youth unemployment, and the role of digital transformation in improving public service delivery. Participants stressed the importance of aligning Nepal's development planning with both domestic priorities and global trends, especially in light of climate change and shifting global power dynamics.

### **Conclusion and Way Forward**

The event concluded with closing remarks by Prof. Dr. Puspa Raj Kadel, President of the Former Planners Forum Nepal and former Vice-Chair of the NPC. He thanked all speakers, commentators, organizing partners, and participants for their valuable contributions. Dr. Kadel reaffirmed the Forum's commitment to providing an independent, professional platform for policy engagement and institutional learning. He emphasized that FPFN will serve as a repository of experience and a catalyst for forward-looking policy solutions in Nepal.

In summary, the launch of the FPFN and its inaugural thematic workshops successfully provided a strategic space for cross-sectoral dialogue, expert exchange, and actionable policy recommendations. The event demonstrated the critical value of institutional memory and experienced voices in shaping Nepal's fiscal and geopolitical strategies. Going forward, the FPFN will continue to convene thematic policy dialogues, produce research outputs, and engage with stakeholders to support Nepal's journey toward inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development.