CURRENT AFFAIRS — 24 NOVEMBER 2026

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Tuesday, 24 November 2026 • Asia/Kolkata (IST) • Prelims + Mains GS-wise digest

TODAY AT A GLANCE — 10 THINGS TO REMEMBER

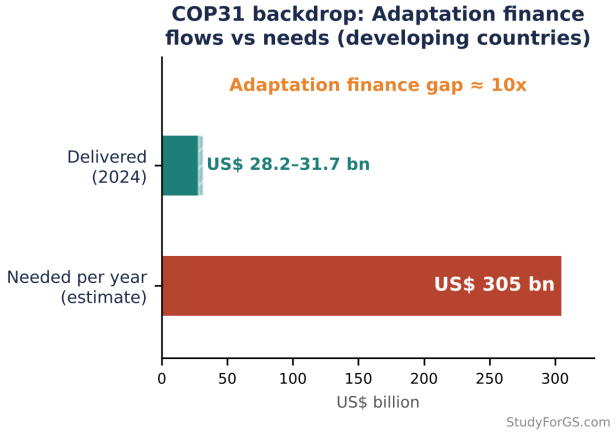
- **COP31** (Antalya, Türkiye) ended on **22 Nov** without a deal; **COP32** goes to **Addis Ababa (2027)**.
- India–Nepal: **₹15,000 crore** package; Joint Vision '**Viksit Bharat and Samunnat Nepal**'.
- **Sarayu-Kamala Express** now links **Ayodhya** and **Janakpur**.
- Foundation stone laid for the **669 MW Lower Arun** hydro project in Nepal.
- 1st **SCO Civilisational Dialogue Forum** adopted the **Indraprastha Communique**.
- Monsoon Session un-prorogued for a record **100 days** (earlier record **87 days, 2008**).
- GRSE delivered ASW-SWC **Ashank** (**~88%** indigenous) on **23 Nov**.
- Exports to **Africa** rose **44%** in **Apr–Sep 2026-27**.
- Small hydro: only **5,182 MW** of **21,134 MW** potential harnessed.
- **Asia Power Index 2026**: India **3rd**, score **40.5**.

SECTION A | GS-III: Environment, Energy, Economy & Security

1. COP31 at Antalya ends without a deal; India regrets lack of consensus

ENVIRONMENT COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	GS3 – Environment & Climate Change (UNFCCC, COPs); GS2 – International institutions. Prelims: **UNFCCC**, **CBDR-RC**, **LMDC**, COP hosts.
Context	The **COP31** UN climate conference at **Antalya, Türkiye** closed on **22 November 2026**, two days past schedule, **without a final agreement**, as countries split over the pace of moving away from **fossil fuels** and over new **climate-finance** commitments.
Key Facts	■ Held from **9 November 2026** (scheduled close **20 November**); COP President: Türkiye's **Murat Kurum**; Australia's **Chris Bowen** was **President of Negotiations**. ■ Described as the **first collapse of UN climate talks since 2000 (The Hague)**. ■ India, speaking for the **Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)**, said the draft did not adequately reflect **equity** and **CBDR-RC**. ■ Minister **Bhupender Yadav** regretted the lack of consensus, cited India's **170+ GW solar** capacity and backed **consensus-based multilateralism**. ■ **UNEP Adaptation Gap Report 2026**: adaptation finance to developing countries was **US$ 28.2–31.7 bn (2024)** against estimated needs of about **US$ 305 bn a year**.
Way Fwd	Rebuild North–South trust with a credible finance roadmap, a clear baseline for adaptation finance and early consultations so that **COP32 (Addis Ababa, 2027)** avoids a repeat deadlock.
Concept	**UNFCCC** (1992, Rio Earth Summit) – the **COP** is its supreme body and decides by **consensus**. **CBDR-RC** = Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities. **NCQG** (COP29, Baku): developed countries to take the lead in mobilising **US$ 300 bn a year by 2035**.



2. Small Hydro Power: only a quarter of 21 GW potential harnessed

ENVIRONMENT COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

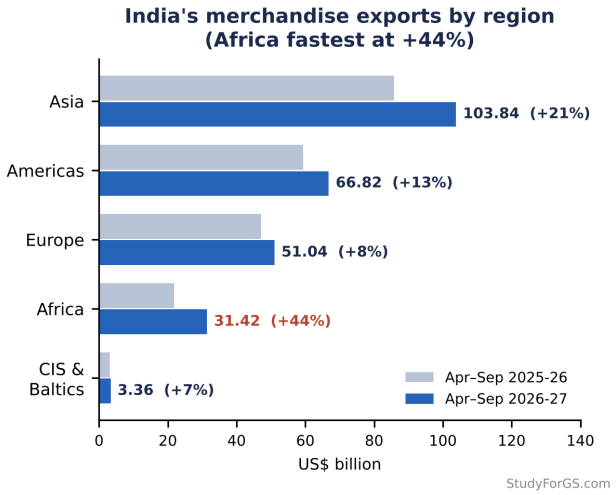
Syllabus Linkage	GS3 – Infrastructure: Energy; Renewable energy. Prelims: **SHP definition**, nodal ministry, region-wise potential.
Context	An official backgrounder on **Small Hydro Power (SHP)** (22 November 2026) shows India has tapped only about **one-fourth** of its assessed potential; the **SHP Development Scheme (2026-27 to 2030-31)** aims to speed up capacity in hilly, North-Eastern and border areas.
Key Facts	■ Assessed potential **21,134 MW** at **7,133 sites**; installed about **5,182 MW** (≈ **25%**) as on **30 September 2026**. ■ Scheme outlay **₹2,584.60 crore**; target about **1,500 MW** new capacity; **₹30 crore** for DPRs of at least **200 projects**. ■ North-East and international border districts: **₹3.6 crore per MW** or **30%** of project cost (whichever is lower), capped at **₹30 crore** per project. ■ Region-wise: the **Northern region** has the largest share (about **38%** of potential), followed by the **Southern region (5,490 MW)**.
Way Fwd	Fast-track clearances and grid links for remote sites, and pair SHP with local mini-grids to cut diesel use in hill and border villages.
Concept	**SHP = hydel projects up to 25 MW**, handled by **MNRE**; bigger hydro is under the **Ministry of Power**. Sub-classes: **micro (up to 100 kW)**, **mini (101 kW–2 MW)**, **small (2–25 MW)**. Since **2019**, large hydro (above 25 MW) is also counted as **renewable energy**.

3. Africa leads India's regional export growth in H1 2026-27

ECONOMY COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	GS3 – Indian economy: external sector, trade; GS2 – India–Africa relations. Prelims: export destinations, trade data.
Context	Commerce Ministry data released on **21 November 2026** show India's merchandise exports grew across **all major regions** in **April–September 2026-27**, with **Africa** posting the fastest growth.
Key Facts	■ **Africa: +44%** to **US$ 31.42 bn** (from US$ 21.87 bn), led by **petroleum products (US$ 11.85 bn, +137%)**. ■ **Asia** is still the largest market: **US$ 103.84 bn (+21%)**; exports to Singapore grew **103%**. ■ **Americas: US$ 66.82 bn (+13%)**; the **US alone US$ 50.80 bn (+11%)** is the largest single destination. ■ **Europe: US$ 51.04 bn (+8%)**; **CIS & Baltics: US$ 3.36 bn (+7%)**. ■ Top African markets: **South Africa US$ 5.69 bn (+52%)**, **Tanzania US$ 4.77 bn (+121%)**, Kenya and Egypt.
Way Fwd	Use the momentum to diversify beyond petroleum into pharma, engineering and electronics, and deepen trade agreements and local-currency settlement with African partners.

Concept	**Merchandise exports** = trade in goods (services counted separately). Market diversification lowers **concentration risk**. **India-Africa Forum Summit** – first held in **2008, New Delhi**. **AfCFTA** (African Continental Free Trade Area) – trading began on **1 January 2021**.

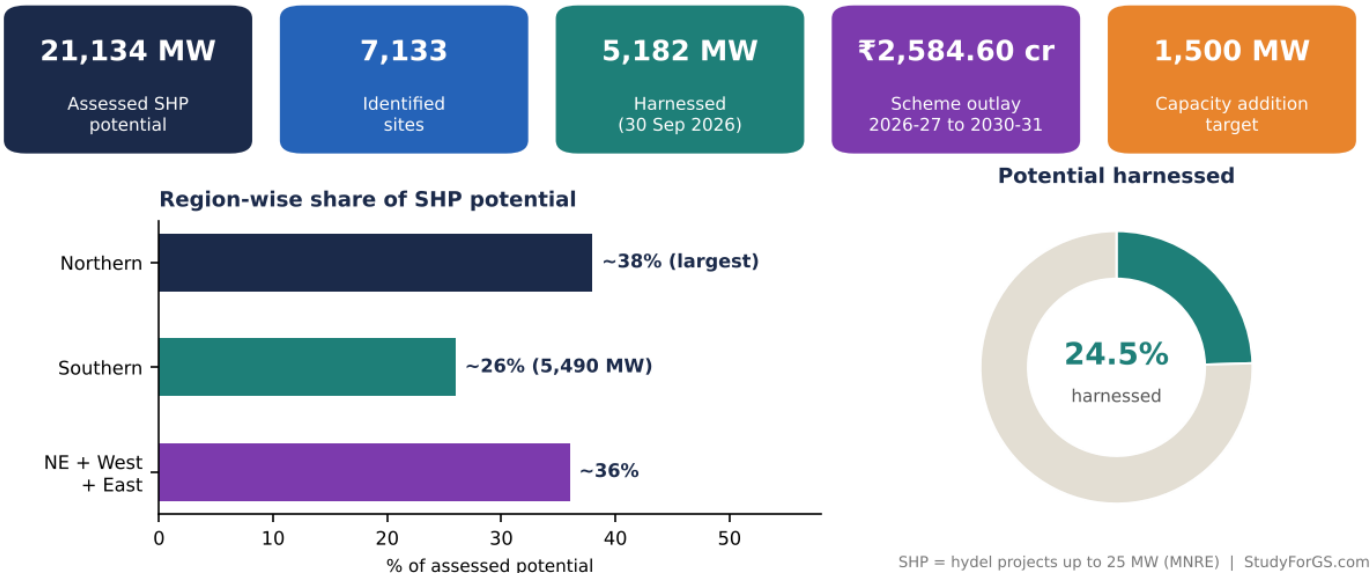


4. GRSE delivers anti-submarine shallow water craft 'Ashank' to Navy

DEFENCE COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS3

Syllabus Linkage	GS3 – Security: indigenisation of defence technology. Prelims: ship classes, shipyards, naval commands.
Context	Kolkata-based **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE)** delivered **Ashank**, an **Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC)**, to the Indian Navy on **23 November 2026**, **18 days** after delivering **Amini** (**5 November**).
Key Facts	■ Accepted by **Rear Admiral Gautam Marwaha**, Chief Staff Officer (Technical), **HQ Eastern Naval Command**. ■ About **88% indigenous content**; armed with a **30 mm Naval Surface Gun** made by GRSE. ■ Ashank is GRSE's **sixth ASW-SWC** (Amini was the fifth) and the **120th warship** built by GRSE. ■ Navy ordered **16 ASW-SWCs**: **8 Arnala-class (GRSE)** + **8 Mahe-class (Cochin Shipyard)**; lead ship **Arnala** was delivered on **8 May 2025**.
Way Fwd	Timely delivery of the remaining craft and integration of indigenous sonars to close the coastal anti-submarine gap in the Indian Ocean littoral.
Concept	**ASW-SWC** – shallow-draught ships for **coastal anti-submarine operations**, low-intensity maritime operations and **mine-laying**; they replace the **Abhay-class corvettes**. **Eastern Naval Command HQ: Visakhapatnam**. GRSE is a **Defence PSU under the Ministry of Defence**.

Fig. (Item 2) — Small Hydro Power at a glance



SECTION B | Economy Data Point of the Day

56.3

HSBC Flash India Composite PMI – November 2026
Up from **56.2** in October; **manufacturing 56.0** – a **nine-month high** (from 54.7), while services growth eased. A reading **above 50** signals expansion.

SECTION C | GS-II: Governance, Polity & International Relations

Map (Item 5) — India in News & India–Nepal outcomes



5. India–Nepal: ₹15,000-crore package during PM Balendra Shah's visit

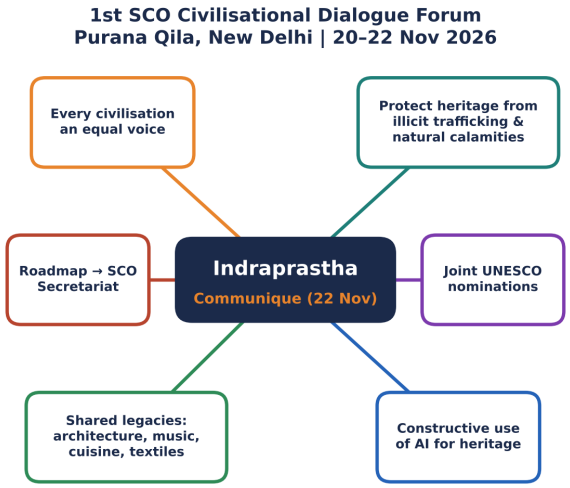
IR COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	GS2 – India and its neighbourhood; bilateral agreements. Prelims: border points, ports, hydro projects, treaties.
Context	Nepal PM **Balendra Shah**, on his **first bilateral visit** to India since taking office, held talks with PM **Narendra Modi** on **23 November 2026**; the two sides adopted the Joint Vision '**Viksit Bharat and Samunnat Nepal: Re-imagining the Partnership**'.
Key Facts	■ India announced **₹15,000 crore**: **₹3,500 crore grants** for post-disaster reconstruction and infrastructure + **₹11,500 crore Line of Credit** for energy. ■ **8 agreements** exchanged: forensic sciences, police training, civil-service capacity building, traditional medicine, satellite communication, urban development, healthcare, livestock and fisheries. ■ **Sarayu-Kamala Express (Ayodhya–Janakpur)** flagged off; **Dharchula–Darchula** bridge inaugurated; foundation stones for the **669 MW Lower Arun** project and **ICP Banbasa**; **Motihari–Amlekhgunj pipeline Phase II** dedicated. ■ Transit trade via **Deendayal Port (Kandla, Gujarat)**, and **Paradip (Odisha)** once infrastructure is ready; an **offshore IIT campus** in Nepal announced. ■ Both sides agreed to **review the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship** and other agreements by mutual consent.
Way Fwd	Time-bound execution of projects, transparent disbursal of the credit line, and quiet diplomacy on **Kalapani–Lipulekh–Limpiyadhura** so that boundary sensitivities do not derail development ties.
Concept	**1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship** – open border and national treatment for each other's citizens. **Neighbourhood First** policy. The **Kali (Mahakali) river** forms the western India–Nepal boundary under the **Treaty of Sugauli (1815-16)**. Nepal borders **5 Indian states**: Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Sikkim.

6. SCO Civilisational Dialogue Forum ends with 'Indraprastha Communique'

IR COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

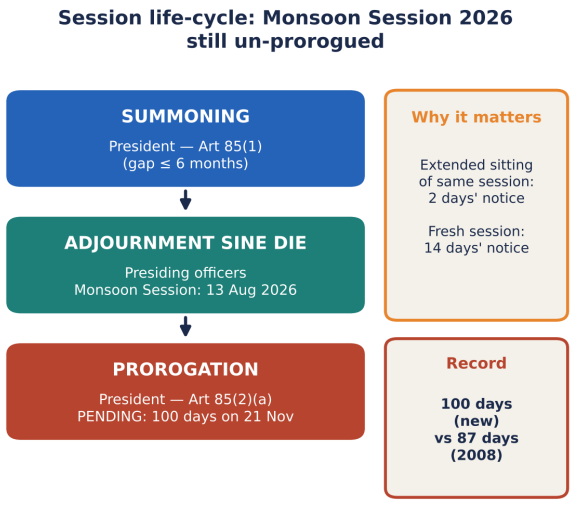
Syllabus Linkage	GS2 – Regional groupings (SCO); GS1 – Indian culture and heritage. Prelims: **SCO** facts, **Purana Qila**.
Context	The **first SCO Civilisational Dialogue Forum** (**20–22 November 2026**), inaugurated by PM Modi at **Purana Qila, New Delhi**, concluded on **22 November** with the **Indraprastha Communique**, read out by Culture Secretary **Vivek Aggarwal**.
Key Facts	■ Hosted by the **Ministry of Culture** and **MEA**; **IGNCA** was the knowledge partner. ■ Communique: **every civilisation an equal voice**; protect heritage from **illicit trafficking** and **natural calamities**; **joint UNESCO nominations**; **constructive use of AI**. ■ Heritage defined broadly – monuments, **manuscripts**, literature, art, living traditions and knowledge systems; roadmap to be shared with the **SCO Permanent Secretariat**. ■ Forum stems from India's proposal at the **2025 SCO Summit in Tianjin (China)**, later welcomed in the **Bishkek Declaration**. ■ Exhibitions: '**ASTITVA**' (Delhi's history, **1200 BCE–1200 CE**) and an **18th-century illustrated Mahabharata scroll**.
Way Fwd	Institutionalise the forum with a regular cycle, a shared digital manuscript repository and joint heritage-protection protocols to give the SCO a people-centric track beyond security.
Concept	**SCO** – founded **15 June 2001, Shanghai**; **10 members** (India and Pakistan joined in **2017**, Iran **2023**, Belarus **2024**); Secretariat in **Beijing**, **RATS** in **Tashkent**; official languages **Russian and Chinese**. **Purana Qila** is traditionally linked with the Mahabharata-era city of **Indraprastha**.



7. Monsoon Session stays un-prorogued for a record 100 days

POLITY COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	GS2 – Parliament: sessions and conduct of business. Prelims: **Article 85**, **sine die** vs **prorogation**.
Context	Both Houses were **adjourned sine die on 13 August 2026**, but as of **21 November** (the **100th day**) they had **not been prorogued**, breaking the earlier record of **87 days (2008)**.
Key Facts	■ An un-prorogued session lets the government recall the Houses for an **extended sitting on 2 days' notice**; a **fresh session** needs **14 days'** notice. ■ Linked to a proposed **Constitution amendment** to raise Lok Sabha strength from **543 to up to 850** via delimitation, enabling **33% women's reservation** before the **2029** elections. ■ The Constitution sets **no time limit** for prorogation after a sine die adjournment.
Way Fwd	Adopt a fixed parliamentary calendar and clear conventions on prorogation to balance executive flexibility with legislative predictability.
Concept	**Article 85(1)**: President summons each House; gap between two sessions **not more than 6 months**. **Article 85(2)**: President may **prorogue** the Houses and **dissolve** the Lok Sabha. **Adjournment sine die** is by the **presiding officer**. Prorogation ends a session, but pending bills **do not lapse**. **Article 174** gives the same powers to **Governors**.



8. SC: 'How can we restrain political parties from raising their agenda?'

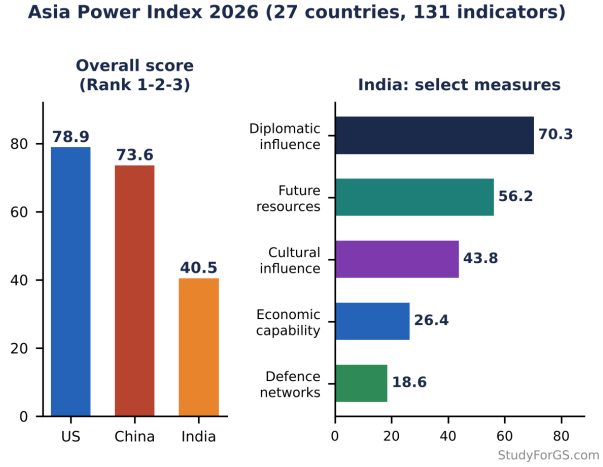
POLITY COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	GS2 – Judiciary; contempt of court; Fundamental Rights (**Article 19**). Prelims: **Article 129**, **Contempt of Courts Act, 1971**.
Context	On **23 November 2026**, a Supreme Court bench of Justices **Vikram Nath** and **Aparesh Kumar Singh**, hearing a plea against politicians' remarks on the judiciary, asked how the court could restrain parties from raising their agenda and suggested the concern be taken to **Parliament**.
Key Facts	■ Petitioners argued that such remarks, including on social media, **obstruct the administration of justice**; respondents included the Centre and the **Election Commission**. ■ As a related **contempt** matter is pending before another bench, the plea was placed before the **Chief Justice of India** for directions. ■ On **18 November**, a bench headed by Justice **Dipankar Datta** issued notice on an **SCBA** plea for contempt action over remarks against **CJI Surya Kant**.
Way Fwd	Balance free speech under **Article 19(1)(a)** with institutional dignity: use contempt powers sparingly and prefer ethical codes and legislative solutions for public figures.
Concept	**Article 129** – Supreme Court is a **court of record** with power to punish for its contempt (**Article 215** for High Courts). **Contempt of Courts Act, 1971** – **civil** and **criminal** contempt; **truth as a defence** added in **2006**. **Article 19(2)** lists **contempt of court** as a reasonable restriction.

9. Asia Power Index 2026: India retains third rank

REPORT COMMON: Prelims + Mains GS2

Syllabus Linkage	GS2 – International relations; India's global standing. Prelims: **reports and indices**.
Context	The **Lowy Institute's Asia Power Index 2026**, reported on **23 November 2026**, ranks India the **third most powerful** country in Asia, behind the **US** and **China**.
Key Facts	■ India's score **40.5** (up **0.5**); **US 78.9**, **China 73.6** (US–China gap **5.3 points**). ■ Covers **27 countries/territories** on **131 indicators** across **8 measures** of power. ■ India's strongest measure: **Diplomatic influence 70.3**; biggest gain in **Cultural influence (+2.3, to 43.8)**; **Economic capability fell 0.7 to 26.4**. ■ India's gap with China is the **smallest since the index began in 2018**; PM Modi ranked the **2nd most effective regional leader**, after Xi Jinping.
Way Fwd	Convert diplomatic weight into economic capability through manufacturing depth, deeper regional trade integration and stronger defence partnerships.
Concept	**Lowy Institute** – independent think tank based in **Sydney, Australia**; Asia Power Index launched in **2018**. Its **8 measures**: economic capability, military capability, resilience, future resources, economic relationships, defence networks, diplomatic influence, cultural influence.



SECTION D | Prelims Rapid-Fire

1. World Chess Championship 2026: **D. Gukesh** (defending champion) vs **Javokhir Sindarov** (Uzbekistan) in **Geneva** – **14 classical games** from **24 Nov**; prize fund **US$ 2.5 million**.	**2.** COP31 President: **Murat Kurum** (Türkiye); President of Negotiations: **Chris Bowen** (Australia); **COP32**: **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (2027)**.
3. The **Dharchula–Darchula** bridge spans the **Mahakali (Kali)** river on the India–Nepal border in **Uttarakhand**.	**4.** ASW-SWC order: **16** craft – **8 Arnala-class (GRSE)** + **8 Mahe-class (Cochin Shipyard)**.
5. Small Hydro Power = projects up to **25 MW** (MNRE); the **Northern region** has the largest potential (about **38%**).	**6.** Flash PMI (Nov 2026): **manufacturing 56.0** – a **nine-month high**; composite **56.3**.

SECTION E | Practice Corner

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding sessions of Parliament:
1. The President prorogues the Houses of Parliament under Article 85.
2. Adjournment sine die is done by the presiding officer of the House.
3. The Constitution prescribes a maximum period within which a House must be prorogued after its adjournment sine die.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) — Prorogation is by the **President** under **Article 85(2)(a)**, and adjournment sine die is by the **presiding officer**. The Constitution sets **no time limit** for prorogation after sine die – which is why the Monsoon Session could stay un-prorogued for **100 days**.

Q2. With reference to Small Hydro Power (SHP) in India, consider the following statements:
1. Hydel projects of up to 25 MW capacity are classified as SHP and are handled by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
2. The Southern region has the largest assessed SHP potential.
3. Less than one-third of the assessed SHP potential has been harnessed so far.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 3 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) — SHP covers projects **up to 25 MW** under **MNRE** (statement 1 correct). The **Northern region (about 38% of potential)** – not the Southern (5,490 MW) – has the largest potential (statement 2 wrong). Only **5,182 MW of 21,134 MW (≈25%)** is harnessed (statement 3 correct).

Mains Practice (GS3): The collapse of the COP31 climate talks at Antalya reflects a deepening trust deficit between developed and developing countries. Examine in the light of the principle of CBDR-RC and suggest a way forward for India ahead of COP32. (15 marks, 250 words)

Hint: Intro: COP31 ended on **22 Nov 2026** with no consensus. Body: adaptation-finance gap (**US$ 28.2–31.7 bn** vs about **US$ 305 bn/yr** needed), fossil-fuel language, NCQG delivery, LMDC stand on **equity** and **CBDR-RC**; India's own action (**170+ GW solar**). Way forward: finance roadmap, technology transfer, Global South coalitions, credible domestic targets for **COP32**.

ONE-LINE REVISION: COP31 → no deal (COP32: Addis Ababa) | Nepal → **₹15,000 cr** + Sarayu-Kamala Express | SCO → **Indraprastha Communique** | Parliament → **100 days** un-prorogued (Art 85) | Asia Power Index → India **3rd (40.5)**

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