

MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH (1780-1839)

- A nine-foot-tall bronze equestrian statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the **founder** of the **Sikh Empire**, was **vandalised** in **Lahore Fort**.
- He seized **Lahore** in **1799** after he was **invited** to **rule** the city by its Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh elite.
- Lahore, once among the **biggest** and most **developed** of the cities of **Punjab**, was in a **shambles** at the **time**.
- Ranjit Singh brought **peace** and **security** to **Lahore** and **revived** its **economic** and **cultural** glory.
- He proclaimed himself **maharaja** of the **Punjab** in **1801**, and proceeded to rule with **religious tolerance** for communities other than Sikhs.
- He carried out **repairs** to the **Lahore fort**- which was **built** by **Emperor Akbar** at the site of an older mud-brick structure and was subsequently **beautified** and **expanded** by **ShahJahan** and **Aurangzeb**- and built a **wall** around it, and used a part of the fort as his **residential quarters**.
- As the **founder** of a **mighty empire** that **sprawled** over a large part of **northwestern** India, the Maharaja is identified by many with the **identity** of **Punjab**.



CHAKMA AND HAJONG

- The Ministry of Development of the NE Region (**DoNER**) has directed the **Arunachal Pradesh** government to **include** this **communities** in the **COVID-19 relief programme**.
- The **Chakmas** and **Hajongs** are **ethnic** people. **Chakmas** are **predominantly Buddhists**; **Hajongs** are **Hindus**.
- They were **inhabitants** of the **Chittagong Hill Tracts** of erstwhile **East Pakistan** (now Bangladesh) who migrated to India due to-
 - **Submergence** of their land by the **Kaptai dam** on the **Karnaphuli River** in the 1960s.
 - **Religious** persecution they faced in East Pakistan as they were **non-Muslims**.

AMAGARH FORT, JAIPUR

- It is at the **centre** of a **conflict** between the **tribal Meena community** and **local Hindu groups**.
- Members of the Meena community say the Amagarh Fort was **built** by a **Meenaruler** predating **Rajput** rule in Jaipur, and has been their holy site for centuries.

