

The Madhuben plate inscription and the Sonpat inscription are also helpful to know the chronology of Harsha. The Banskhera inscription contains the signature of Harsha.

The accounts of Hiuen Tsang and the inscriptions of Pulakesin II provide the details of this campaign.

Harsha, with an ambition to extend his kingdom south of the Narmada River, marched against the Chalukya ruler. **But, the Aihole inscription of Pulakesin II mentions the defeat of Harsha by Pulakesin, who, after this achievement, assumed the title Paramesvara. Hiuen Tsang's accounts also confirm the victory of Pulakesin.**

39. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The founder of the Sunga dynasty was Pushyamitra Sunga, who was the commander-in-chief under the Mauryas. He assassinated the last Mauryan ruler and usurped the throne. The most important challenge to the Sunga rule was to protect north India against the invasions of the Bactrian Greeks from the north-west. The Greeks advanced up to Pataliputra and occupied it for some time. However, Pushyamitra succeeded in regaining the lost who invaded north India.

Pushyamitra was a staunch follower of Brahmanism. He performed two Asvamedha sacrifices. Buddhist sources refer him as a persecutor of Buddhism. But there is enough evidence to show that Pushyamitra patronised Buddhist art.

41. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Liberation of women –

- The Digambaras believe that women cannot achieve Nirvana or liberation directly. They first have to reborn as a man for this.

During his reign, the Buddhist monuments at Bharhut and Sanchi were renovated and further improved.

Note: Pushyamitra Sunga fought a campaign against Kharavela of Kalinga, who invaded north India.

40. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

According to some scholars, Asoka's conversion to Buddhism was gradual and not immediate. About 261 B.C., Asoka became a Sakya Upasaka (lay disciple) and two and a half years later, a Bikshu (monk). Then he gave up hunting, visited Bodh-Gaya and organized missions. He appointed special officers, called the Dharma Mahamatras, to speed up the progress of Dhamma.

In 241 B.C., he visited the birth-place of Buddha, the Lumbini Garden, near Kapilavastu. He also visited other holy places of Buddhism, like Sarnath, Sravasti and Kusinagara. He sent a mission to Sri Lanka under his son Mahendra and daughter Sangamitra who planted there the branch of the original Bodhi tree.

Asoka convened the Third Buddhist Council at Pataliputra in 240 B.C., in order to strengthen the Sangha. It was presided over by Moggaliputta Tissa.

Extent of Asoka's empire: Asoka's inscriptions mention the southern-most kingdoms – the Cholas, the Pandyas, the Satyaputras and the Keralaputras – as border-states.

Therefore, these states remained outside the Mauryan Empire.

According to Rajatarangini, Kashmir was a part of the Mauryan Empire. Nepal was also within the Mauryan Empire.