Popularizing Agriculture through Ploughing Matches held in South-East Punjab

The colonial state retain the characteristics of south-eastern tract, i.e. main emphasis was given to animal husbandry. However, the state has somehow changed the attitude and began to concentrate on agriculture in the view of collection of land revenue. Therefore, the ploughing matches were held to popular the cultivation.

The first match at Jhajjar: The Gurgaon District Board challenged any local body or department to a ploughing match to be held at any time during the stack season. According to the conditions any design of iron plough might be used; individual or team ploughing or a combination of both marking etc. to be settled in consultation with Director of Agriculture. The losing was to pay the winning side Rs. 250. The Rohtak District Board accepted the challenge and the match was held near Jhajjar on the 16th September 1925. Each team consisted of eight ploughs; all worked independently and were adjudged separately. At the conclusion the number of marks gained by the different competitors on each side were totaled and stood as follows:-

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<th>Gurgaon</th>
<th>Rohtak</th>
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<td>Marks</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>616</td>
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The ploughs used were all Rajas with the exception of two, one of these was "The Little Marvel," the other was a locally made implement. The team of Gurgaon District was declared winner in this match.

Two such competitions took place during the month of March, 1927: one at Palwal, which was the district championship Competition for the district Gurgaon, and the other at Sonepat which was the Divisional Championship Competition of the Ambala Division and Delhi province.

The First Competition at Palwal: This took place from 7th to 10th March. Competitors from all the tahsils of the districts turned up and the number of entries was as many as 151. Competitors were, however, reduced to 100, 55, and 24 respectively in subsequent heats and lastly, 10 were selected for the
Khem Singh of Palwal, Tehsil Rewari, was declared the Champion ploughman of the district and obtained 84.5 marks out of possible 100, and Ram Sarup of Karimpur tahsil Palwal, who stood second, obtained 81.5 marks. The champion ploughman was given the challenge Belt, the Brayne Vahali Medal, cash prize of Rs. 100, District Board of Championship, and a Gurgaon plough. A cash prize of Rs. 90 was given to Ram Sarup of Karimpur. The next eight competitors got cash prizes.

His Excellency, the Viceroy was very pleased at this achievement and congratulated the Gurgaon district. The second competition at Sonepat:- The Divisional Ploughing Competition was held from 23rd to 25th March, 1927. Fifty Competitors turned up from Rohtak, Gurgaon, Karnal, Hissar, Ambala, and Delhi Districts. The writer and Mr. W.C. Read of the Government Cattle Farm, Hissar, were the judges with the Director of Agriculture, as umpire. The results were: Gurbachan Singh of Dabwali of Hissar District and Ram Sarup of Karimpur, District Gurgaon, tied for the Divisional Championship, each having obtained 85 marks out of possible 100.

Bhag Singh of Majra, Ambala district, and Risal Singh of Sonepat, tied for the third place other prize winners in order to merit were: -

Naurata Singh of Minpur.
Ram Mehar of Karimpur.
Jotan of Jahajgarh.
Devi Ram of Beduki.
Harnand of Garuli.
Rawati of Banchari.

The ploughing was of a very high order and the district Boards showed keen interest.

The champion district was Gurgaon, five of its competitors having won prizes and gained a total of 400 marks. Ambala district stood second with two prizewinners, and a total of 169 marks; Rohtak district came third, and Hissar fourth.
Both these functions have created among people a great deal of interest in the agricultural development of the Hariana tract.