

Prewar Japanese Sugar Mill Factory

Liyo' Songsong Village

The Nanyo Kohatsu Kabushiki Kaisha (NKKK), also known as the South Seas Development Company, became the dominant economic force and largest corporation in the Marianas when it arrived in 1921. Its executive director, who later became board chairman, Haruji Matsue, considered the Marianas the ideal location to establish the sugar industry, especially after previous Japanese commercial enterprises had failed in their attempts to grow and process sugarcane. The NKKK faced significant challenges during its initial years, almost leading to the cessation of operations. However, circumstances began to improve in 1926. By the early 1930s, Matsue expanded the company's land holdings to Tinian and its operations to Rota. On Rota, there was one mill, and approximately 38% of the farmlands were dedicated to sugarcane cultivation. This mill is reported to have produced around 100 tons annually. Unfortunately, constant naval bombardment of Rota during the war caused extensive destruction to the mill structure.