

Kitazawa Flotation Plant

The Kitazawa Flotation Plant was one of the most advanced structures built to process gold ore during its time, and is a monument to the history of modern mining on Sado. By the middle of the nineteenth century, output using traditional mining methods was low and the mines went into decline. The Meiji government (launched in 1868) introduced foreign mining techniques and technology from the year 1869 onward. The Kitazawa plant, completed in 1938 and operational until 1952, was important for its role in introducing modern technology. The flotation plant significantly reduced the need for manual labor and was able to process 50,000 tons of ore per month. Its buildings still stand on both sides of the Nigori River, but are now ruins slowly being engulfed in greenery. The spacious lawn in front of the main factory is now a virtual open-air museum that commemorates the technology of the last chapter of Sado's mining history.