

COMPANY TOWN

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Abstract— A company town is a very old concept. Its history dates back to late 19th century. The first company town was built in America. Many industrial townships are built on this concept. In this research paper the Pullman company Town is the international case study & Nagda Company Town is the national case study.

Index Terms— Company Town, Industrial Township, Nagda Company Town, Pullman Company Town

I. INTRODUCTION

“A company town is a settlement built and operated by a single business enterprise”

(Source: The company town by John S. Garner New York OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS 1992)

And

“A company town is a place where, at least initially, practically all stores and buildings are owned by the one joint-stock company that has a geographically-linked business need and so provides employment and infrastructure (housing, stores, transportation, sewage and water) to support the effort.”

(Source: http://cdn.worldheritage.org/articles/Company_town)

The term company town is of recent origin. It was coined in America in the late nineteenth century and applied first to mining camps and smelters in Appalachia and the Monongahela Valley.

Most company towns appeared between 1830 and 1930 during the early industrial age, an age that Lewis Mumford called the "paleotechnic era. Technology was primitive and the operations performed in these settlements can be characterized as primary and labour-intensive. The towns flourished in countries that embraced capitalism and open-market trading and belonged to industrialists whose early businesses contributed to the "takeoff" phase of the Industrial Revolution.

Some of the company towns were pre planned but many are not pre planned at all. They rather grow as their company matures or profits in the upcoming recent times. In a company town, virtually everything associated with the settlement, including the houses, store and school was subordinate to the business enterprise.

Most towns were quite small, with populations rarely exceeding a few thousand. The workers who lived in company towns, who conformed to the circumstances imposed on them, created subcultures of their own. Social order derived from labour routine, isolation, and company-imposed rules or policies.

Importance of company town

1. The company town has its own economic importance.
2. All the workers and employees rely on the company town only if the company is located in remote areas or very far from the main city area.
3. Company town reduces the transportation cost of the workers as their home are at a walking distance from their work place.
4. Company towns are built by the company owners for the welfare of its employees.

List of company towns in India

1. Kumarapatnam, Karnataka, developed by Grasim Industries, Aditya Birla Group.
2. Nagda, Madhya Pradesh, developed by Grasim Industries, Aditya Birla Group.
3. Kansbahal, Orissa, developed by Larsen & Toubro Ltd.
4. Kailasapuram, Tiruchirapalli, Tamil Nadu developed by Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited.
5. Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, developed by Tata Group.

II. PULLMAN COMPANY TOWN

In the late 1880's George Pullman, the owner of a company that manufactured specialized railroad cars began the construction of a company town named Pullman, located between Chicago and the Indiana border.

Pullman, Illinois, founded in 1880, is by far the best known company town, and its story remains the most infamous.



Figure 1 Pullman company town

(Source: <http://publications.newberry.org/pullman>)

History on timescale

- **1879**
George M. Pullman purchases 4,000 acres of land south of Chicago - only 600 acres were used for building the factories and the first American model industrial town of Pullman, Illinois.
- **1880**
Construction of the factory shops and the town of Pullman begins.
- **1881**
First resident moves into the town on January 1, 1881.
- **1882**
Population of Pullman is at 3,500.
- **1885**
The population of the town swells to almost 9,000.
- **1889**
Hyde Park Township (which includes Pullman) is annexed into the City of Chicago through popular election. The majority of Pullman residents voted against annexation. The Pullman Land Association continues management and maintenance of town properties.
- **1892**
Original Market Hall building is destroyed by fire. New Market Hall building and surrounding Market Square residential buildings are designed by Solon Beman and erected the same year.
- **1893**
World's Fair Columbian Exposition takes place in Chicago; Pullman is a major tourist attraction. Nationwide economic depression affects Pullman, resulting in wages being reduced. Pullman Land Association manages over 1,740 units in Pullman.
- **1894**
Pullman Strike occurs after Pullman refuses to meet with committee of workers to discuss grievances. Eugene Debs's American Railway Union becomes involved by boycotting Pullman cars, refusing to move them on the rails. With rail service interrupted and the U.S. mail disrupted, the situation escalated to a national level as Federal troops were brought in to end the strike.
- **1896**
The town of Pullman is recognized as "The World's Most Perfect Town" at the International Hygienic and Pharmaceutical Exposition, held in Prague. The Town of Pullman is fifteen years old.
- **1897**
George M. Pullman dies. Robert Todd Lincoln succeeds him as president of the Pullman Company.
- **1898**
Illinois Supreme Court orders the Pullman Company to sell all property not used for industry, including the residential properties that comprised the town. Population of Pullman is at 8,000.
- **1907**
All Pullman residential properties were sold and have been privately owned ever since.

- **1925**
The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters was organized by Asa Philip Randolph as the first all-African-American union in the country.
- **1960**
Pullman is threatened with demolition as the Roseland Chamber of Commerce recommends clearing the area from 111th to 115th Streets for an industrial park. A neighbourhood WWII Civil Defence Organization was reactivated to fight the demolition.
Out of this the Pullman Civic Organization was formed.
- **1969**
South Pullman receives State of Illinois landmark status. District includes all original housing from 111th to 115th Street, including factory buildings north of 111th Street to 109th Place along Cottage Grove Avenue.
- **1971**
Entire Pullman district, from 103rd to 115th Streets, receives National Historic Landmark District designation.
- **1972**
South Pullman is designated as one of the first City of Chicago landmark districts.
- **1973**
Historic Pullman Foundation is formed to further the preservation efforts of the District.
- **1975**
The Historic Pullman Foundation purchases the Hotel Florence and begins extensive restoration and viewing by the public.
- **1991**
State of Illinois purchases Hotel Florence and Pullman Factory buildings, establishing the Pullman State Historic Site.
- **1993**
North Pullman receives City of Chicago landmark status, combining both north and south into a single city historic district.
- **1998**
Fire significantly damages the factory site, destroying the majority of the Clock Tower structure. A 1910 factory building on the site was subsequently demolished due to the extensive damage sustained in the fire.

III. NAGDA COMPANY TOWN

Nagda is a city in Ujjain district in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. It is an industrial town in the Malwa region of western Madhya Pradesh and is situated on the bank of Chambal River.

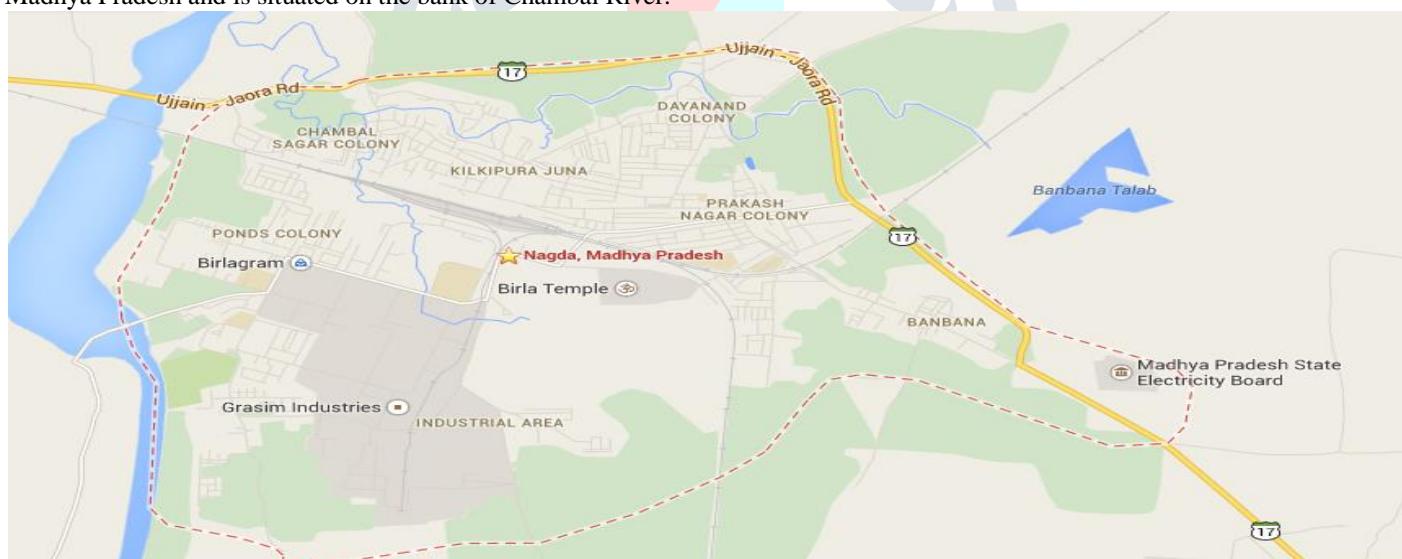


Figure 2 Nagda Company Town

(Source: Google map)

The name of the town was actually nag-dah which means cremation/burning (dah) of snakes (nag). The ancient city was developed by king Janmejay. Janmejay was a Hindu King of Pandava Dynasty. Nagda was mentioned in the literature of Kalidasa. Presently, Nagda is a major industrial town having manufacturing unit of Viscose fibre, thermal power plant and a chemical plant, it is a major ISO granted railway junction on the Delhi–Mumbai railway line. It is exactly 694 km from both Delhi and Mumbai.

Prior to being an industrial town, Nagda was a small village. It is located near river Chambal and availability of acres of land wooed in Mr. Ghanshyam Das Birla to set up a major facility. Today Nagda boasts of being one of the largest Viscose Staple Fiber Manufacturer in Asia.

Nagda is the highest tax paying town of Ujjain division. Nagda is a fast developing town of Malwa region and also having its geopolitical importance in the map of world. There is a big lake in the North end of the city.

Features of Nagda Company Town

1. Security
2. Housing
3. Transportation
4. Guest House
5. Airport
6. Birla Temple
7. Hospital
8. Dam
9. Co operative Society
10. Sports club
11. Schools
12. Gardens
13. Solid Waste Management
14. Thermal Power Plant
15. Subsidy for Vehicles
16. Recreational Activities

1. Security: The township has an outstanding security features like security guards on the gates, CCTV surveillance.
2. Housing: The houses in the township are good quality houses & well planned houses.
3. Transportation: The Township is linked with the major roads & bus facilities are also provided for the residents & visitors.
4. Guest House: various types of guest houses are built within the township to accommodate the various classes of people.
5. Airport: The Township has its own airport within the premises.
6. Birla Temple: The temple is the worshipping place for everyone and many people visit Nagda for the Birla Temple.
7. Hospital: The hospital is well equipped with latest machineries and well qualified doctors. The employees get special discounts on the medical treatments.
8. Dam: The dam provides the water for the industrial production and also for the household purposes.
9. Co operative Society: This society provides financial support to the employees at a very low rate of interest.
10. Sports Club: The sports club is very well developed & many outdoor and indoor games can be played in this club.
11. Schools: The Aditya Birla school is there in the township for the children of the employees.
12. Gardens: Many gardens are there in the township which increases the green space & children can play freely in gardens.
13. Solid Waste Management: The township posses its own solid waste management plant which disposes off all the waste from industrial production as well as the household waste from the residents of the township.
14. Thermal Power Plant: Nagda Township has its own thermal power plant which produces a large amount of electricity that is used in the industrial production and the excess electricity is sold to the government.
15. Subsidy for Vehicles: A large amount of subsidy is given on the vehicles (two wheelers) to the employees.
16. Recreational Activities: Various recreational activities are carried out in the township. A drama team is called twice a year to entertain the people of township, shopping malls & Multiplexes are constructed for the people.

IV. CONCLUSION

- This concept can be successfully applied for India.
- The company town has benefitted both (company & its employees).
- This concept can help to reduce the travel time of the employees.
- Many large companies/ industries can built the company town/township for their employees even in the remote areas far area from CBD or an existing city.

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