

Kewda oil

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In news— Families in the coastal pockets of Odisha's Ganjam district have been eking out a living by preparing aromatic kewda oil for years, and a recent growth in demand has put a smile on their faces.

What is kewda oil?

- **Ganjam kewda (*Pandanus fascicularis*) oil is steam-distilled from the flower of the aromatic screwpine plant and used as an aromatic in the food industry and other sectors.**
- Kewda Oil is **registered under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999** by the Government of India.
- For around 200,000 people living in 220 villages of the district, it is the main source of income.
- Kewda oil makers sell to Kannauj, Agra, Kanpur, New Delhi, Mumbai and other places at around **Rs 5 lakh a litre.**

About Kewda flower-

- **Kewda orkevra or kewra fragrance is mainly extracted from the male flowers.**
- The **flower grows on small trees and shrubs.** The plant can be cultivated as well as can be seen growing in the wild in the coastal area.
- The tree or shrub can reach over 18 feet. The **plant has aerial roots as well**, these are formed especially when it is growing in the wild and need Oxygen. It has thorns as well.
- A **fully developed kewda tree would produce spikes consisting of 30-40 flowers**, each weighing about 6 inches.

- The **male and female flowers are produced on different plants**. The **male flowers are called Ketaki Viphala** and **female flowers are called Swarna Ketaki** in Sanskrit.
- The plant flowers three times a year, in summer, monsoon and winter.
- July-September or monsoon season is the best time for the flowers to bloom, with 60 percent flowers growing in the season.
- The flower is harvested from around 5,000 hectares in the district. Its oil is produced in Ganjam, Chatrapur, Chikiti and Rangeilunda blocks of the district.
- An oil maker needs 30,000 flowers to extract a litre of kewda oil.