

#POST CELEBRATIONS

What To Do With Used And Leftover Flowers?

Diwali flowers and garlands brighten up our homes, but they often dry out and are tossed out the next day. But do you know that the flowers can be repurposed to better uses, the next day?



Diwali is incomplete without flowers, especially the yellow and orange marigold flowers. These are used in decorations, rangolis while flowers, like rose petals, are used in prayer rituals.

While flowers stay fresh on Diwali day, the petals start to wither the next day, which is when most people start discarding them. But did you know that you can repurpose them in many ways? With a bit of creativity, you can turn these seemingly dead flowers into beautiful and practical items for the home. You can make incense sticks, perfume, and even fertiliser from them,



which will be beneficial throughout the year. Here are simple yet creative ways to recycle Diwali flowers.



Best Ways to Recycle Used Flowers After Diwali

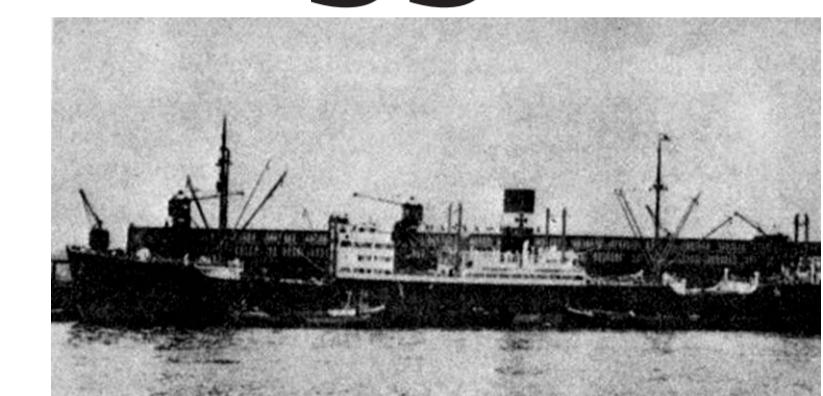
- Make Incense Sticks:** Dry and grind the used flowers, and then add sandalwood powder and camphor to the mix. Shape them into incense sticks that will fill your home with a refreshing and positive aroma.
- Perfumed:** For a delightful, homemade fragrance, use scented flowers like rose or jasmine. Boil the petals in water and extract their essence. Pour it into a bottle to use as a natural perfume that will bring fresh vibes into your space.
- Make Potpourri:** Combine dried flowers, with cinnamon, cloves, and orange peels, create homemade potpourri. Place it in a corner of your home to enjoy a gentle fragrance that will linger throughout the space.
- Make Compost:** Dry and grind the flowers to create a natural fertiliser that promotes healthy plant growth. This easy-to-make compost is an excellent way to nourish your plants.
- Create Natural Colours:** Extract colours from the flowers for use on fabric or paper. Marigold provides a yellow shade, roses give pink colour, and hibiscus produces a red tint.

Mormugao Harbour: Credit: Trinidad/Wikimedia Commons.

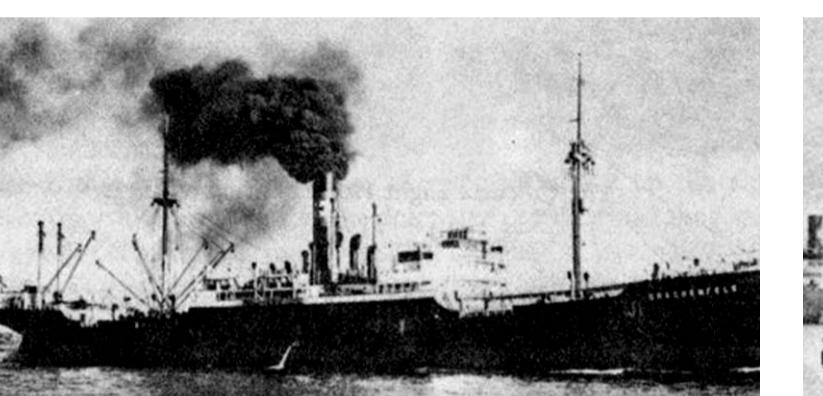


The prime German surveillance target of the British was a man named Robert Koch, who, along with his wife, was suspected of being the main Nazi spy in Goa. "They are being watched, but our agents are unable to discover that they are engaged in wireless transmitting activities," the Bombay intelligence officer wrote. "Being Germans, they must have been naturally jubilant over the fall of Greece but I have no information that they illuminated their house." The captains of the Ehrenfels, Braunfels and Drachenfels were regular visitors to the Kochs' Panjim home. Over the next few months, British intelligence officers stepped up their watch on Koch, who they suspected was using a radio set to transmit news to the Germans. "Certain expensive radios of German and Japanese make can be used for transmission," an anonymous express note, sent to the Intelligence Bureau in 1941, said. "This particular radio set is seen to leave Koch's sanctum pretty frequently. It is said for repairs. This set, which is in constant use, cannot be needing repairs so often." The note added that a man with a 'lavish lifestyle' like Koch could easily buy a new set, instead of annoying himself with constant repairs. "The only conclusion is that Koch is probably acting under advice from Berlin and having transformers or the coils changed each time, to transmit on a different wavelength," the note said. "He is no doubt transmitting on a short wavelength, probably very much below 7 M so that his transmission cannot be picked up except by a set, specially prepared for this purpose, for most radio sets would not pick up on less than 7 M or so."

How a British Spy Operation dragged Goa into Second World War



Ehrenfels.



Drachenfels.



Braunfels.

Ajay Kamalakaran

In the beginning of the Second World War 1939, three German ships found themselves in the Indian Ocean, far from Allied-controlled waters and unfortunately close to the enemy's stomping ground.

The crews must have been nervous. This was a time when both sides in the war; the Allies and the Axis, were attacking merchant vessels that were soft targets. The German ships had to find a safe place and the one, they settled on, was Goa.

Goa was then a colony of neutral Portugal and its residents greeted the German freighters, the Ehrenfels, Braunfels and Drachenfels, and their crews with a mixture of curiosity and congeniality. To the British, though, they were a major security threat, a possible means for the Nazi regime to spread German propaganda in Goa.

"I am informed by a Goa (British subject), who lately spent a month in Goa, that there are about 300 members of the crew of the three German steamers lying in Mormugao," said a source report, submitted to the Special Branch of the Bombay Police, dated June 19, 1940. "These crews are under no restriction of movement and can go around the whole country, partly using motorboats,

partly by foot, with which they go around the backwaters. They make friends with the younger generation. Every Sunday, they arrange football matches at various places and they make best use of all these occasions to spread Nazi propaganda."

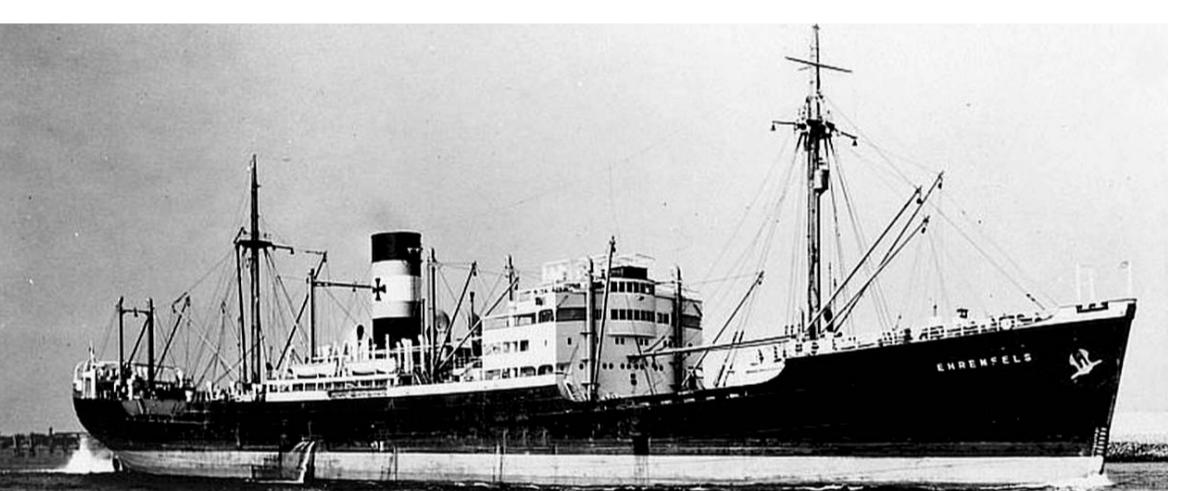
The report added that the sailors had radio reception apparatus and arranged for broadcast of German news in Goa.

"Goanese and Portuguese officers and officials are rather worried about government impasse," it said. "The influence of the Germans is said to be so strong that it has led to dissension and trouble in Goanese families. The elder generation knows only too well that the peace of Portugal and its colonial possessions is a Pax Britannica, the younger generation, on the other hand, sees the salvation in Nazism." Adding to British fears was the fact that the frontier between British and Portuguese territories was virtually unguarded. They pondered over the prospect of the German sailors crossing over to British India and blowing up railway tracks. "The fact that most of these Germans are young, trained men, living under a stress of boredom, should be borne in mind as a strong possible incentive for such exploits," the source report said.

The Special Branch shared this report with Intelligence Bureau officers, who felt that the allegations were greatly exaggerated.

They, however, decided to send

#HISTORY REMEMBERED



Das Frachtmotorschiff Ehrenfels, 1936 | Staatsarchiv Bremen/Wikimedia Commons.

experienced intelligence officers to Goa to see what the German sailors were actually up to.

Watchful Eye

An officer from Bombay travelled to Goa in June 1940, just days after the source report was submitted to the Intelligence Bureau. When he found no cause for alarm, at first. To start with, there were only 90 German sailors, not 300. Secondly, they were just bored men, trying their best to find some sort of entertainment.

"Parties of five or more German sailors off the three ships, refuelling in Mormugao harbour, frequently visit Margao and Vasco da Gama, where they move in the streets and frequent cheap drinking saloons," the officer from Bombay wrote, adding that the Germans play football with the locals and watch matches with them. Stripped of a means of living, some of the sailors desperate looked for ways to sustain themselves. "Other errands on which members of the crew and the petty officers of the Braunfels, with the help of their captain and the convenience of the Portuguese Customs, seem to be engaged, are

smuggling into Goa handbags and small parcels of Bayer's preparations," the officer wrote. "Customs authorities, and on one occasion, the Commandant of the Margao Police, have been seen in the company of the personnel from the Braunfels suspected to be in the possession of Bayer's drugs."

The officers visited divisions in the Goan society over the Second World War. Most members of the older generation supported the British, but among the young, many were pro-German.

"Like the youths sections of the Goan intelligentsia, including certain European Portuguese officers, have Nazi sympathies," the officer said.

There was a potential risk that these divisions between Axis and Allies supporters may snowball into larger social problems. "Such partisanship, I am told, results, on occasions, in open quarrels," the officer cautioned.

Media Matters

British officials were in regular touch with the Portuguese authorities in Goa to ensure that they remained neutral during the war. "The Governor-General told

me, at the outbreak of the war, that if the Germans in his territory became truculent, he would intern the crew and impound the ships," the officer wrote. "I have no information that he has reacted from this attitude."

The fact that the intelligence officer showed that he was possibly a very high ranking official in the government.

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generally favoured Britain.

In Panjim, I spoke to the editor of the *O Herald*, who showed me that all the news that they have is derived from British broadcasts and German broadcasts in English, from *The Times of India*, *The Bombay Chronicle*,

the agent wrote. "Longer articles are sometimes taken from 2 months old Portuguese (*Lisboa*) papers. The only information received by the *O Herald* from the British side are yellow sheets from the Chief Officer of Information, which have very little to do with the war, and mostly

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