

The graphic features the words "In Brief" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter "I" is contained within a grey arrow pointing to the left. The word "Brief" is positioned to the right of the arrow. The entire graphic is set against a white background with a thin grey border.

Khirai–A Flowery Village

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This is a tale about the daily life of a small village on the banks of Kansai and Khirai rivers. The name of the small village is Khirai. The village is now full of flower gardens. It is more reasonable to call floriculture rather than flower gardens where the flower growers take care of the flower plants from early morning. After a little while, the girls and women of the house come and start picking flowers. As soon as the afternoon sun shines a little,

the girls and women of the house take care of all the housework and help in sorting flowers. A few of them start making garlands. In the afternoon, all the flowers and flower garlands are sold by the elders of the house to the flower shopper at the nearby flower market. On the way back from the flower market, the male person might sing - I will be the last gardener of your flower garden. The name of this flowery village is Khirai.

The village named Khirai is beautiful like flowers. Khirai village is located in front of Kansai Bridge on the bank of Kangsabati River (also known as Kansai) in Panskura 1 Block of Purba Medinipur District. On the road from the National Highway to Khirai, one can see a variety of seasonal flowers across the fields on both sides of the narrow Kansai River.

Here, flowers grow from field after field. Khirai is actually the name of a river, and the village is named after that river. Everything here is as colorful and beautiful as a painting. There is the pure taste of Bengal, there is the real Bengal full of rivers-houses-fields-people. But in the midst of everything, what drives everyone back to Khirai again and again is the life of thousands of flowers in a collection of smiles. It is a local belief that Bengal's Valley of Flowers is Khirai.

In the last week of the month of September, saplings are planted across miles of fields on the right and left sides of the Kansai and Khirai rivers, which from mid-December to the first half of February are carpeted with colours and stories of flowers. There are marigolds, dalia, aster, chrysanthemums, and many other unnamed flowers. Field after field is covered with a carpet of flowers. Farmers are busy with nourishment of flower fields. Flowers are of course the main attraction, besides there are various birds, butterflies, grasshoppers, and insects. All in all, it can be said that during this time nature fills this Khirai valley with its form-juice-smell.

Flowers are cultivated mainly in the winter season. Flower dealers buy flowers from farmers at a low price. Field after field is full of flowers during winter from November to February. Farmers use pesticides like Neem oil, Ektara, Lansergold, Ulala, Pyromite, Intrepid, Massy, Lervin, Babistin, Cabritop, Amister, Dythenium 45 to prevent insect damage to flowers. Maintaining the health of flower plants is very important for flower production. For that

Chemical Fertilizers like Urea, Potash, Suphala (1 kg suphala= NPK 15:15:15), Phosphate, bone dust (calcium phosphate), and 10-26, 10-26-26, 0050, 1744, 1919 liquid Fertilizers are applied at par necessity. Apart from chemical fertilizers, organic fertilizers like cow dung, Neem cake are applied for the growth of the flower plants.

Some of the people's particularly the visitor's negligence towards this place is visible. Plucking flowers from trees, taking pictures on tree branches, picnicking in unsanctioned use of amplifier-plastic packet- excess food waste in generally beautiful areas, etc. are symbolic of human ruthlessness in the carpet of flowers. So, keeping them away will enable the place to maintain its character now and in the future. Cultivation of flowers is a source of income for the flower growers. The flowers should not be damaged in any way for tourists busy with the pleasure of seeing.

Farmers were not living by cultivating rice or vegetables in the paddy field. So, farmers started cultivating flowers as an alternative to rice or vegetables several years ago. Flower cultivation started by a few gradually spread from Khirai to the nearby villages like Dokanda, Champadali, etc. Gradually rose, Rajni gandha and other flowers are added to the seasonal flowers. Not only in the winter season but now in all other seasons almost all kinds of flowers are cultivated, especially those flowers which are in demand in the market. Now wholesale flower dealers come to every flower growing village every day. They buy flowers and send them to the Howrah flower market. Not only are the villages centered around Khirai village, but now, while passing through NH 16 nearby Khirai and other neighbouring villages, everyone can see the cultivation of flowers in many fields. At present, flower farming has changed the socio-economic status of almost all villages along with Khirai in Panskura1 Block of Purba Medinipur district.

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