

## ***Mycetia mukerjiana* Deb & Dutta (Rubiaceae): new distributional record for Nagaland, India**

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### **Abstract**

*Mycetia mukerjiana* Deb & Dutta (Rubiaceae) is a rare species which has been collected from Changki forest area under Mokokchung district of Nagaland. The detailed taxonomic description has been supported by the distributional range, photographs of habit and habitat of the plant and ecological details. The present report forms the new record for the Indian state of Nagaland as well as extension of the range of distribution of *Mycetia mukerjiana* beyond Assam and Mizoram to Nagaland.

**Key words:** *Mycetia mukerjiana*, Rubiaceae, New record, Nagaland

### **INTRODUCTION**

*Mycetia* Reinwardt (Rubiaceae) is a small genus of only 25 species, distributed from India to South China, Vietnam and West Malaysia (Mabberley 1997). However, Deb (1986) revised the distributional status of *Mycetia* in Indian subcontinent and recorded only 9 species. Those are viz., *Mycetia acuminata* (Wight) O. Kuntze (Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka), *M. javanica* (Blume) Reinwardt ex Korthals (South Nicobar) *Mycetia listeri* Deb (Arunachal Pradesh), *M. longifolia* (Wallich) O. Kuntze (Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur & Mizoram), *M. mukerjiana* Deb & Dutta (Assam, Mizoram), *M. nepalensis* H. Hara (Kumaon to Arunachal Pradesh), *M. radiflora* (C.B. Clarke) Airy Shaw (Nagaland & Arunachal Pradesh), *M. rodergi* Deb & Mondal (Myanmar), *M. stipulata* O. Kuntze subsp. *stipulata* (Sikkim, Manipur & Arunachal Pradesh) and *M. stipulata* subsp. *macrostachya* (Hooker f.) Deb (Arunachal Pradesh). Out of these 9 species, two are endemic to N.E. India, viz., *M. listeri* Deb (Arunachal Pradesh) and *M. mukerjiana* Deb & Dutta (Assam & Mizoram).

During recent botanical exploration in the Changki forest Division under Mokokchung district of Nagaland (26° 25' N to 39° 24' N latitude and 90° 03.76' E to 90° 29' 07.02' E longitude), a species of *Mycetia* Reinwardt, has been collected at an elevation of 863 meters. After a thorough survey of literature and matching at ASSAM Herbarium the plant has been identified as *Mycetia mukerjiana* Deb & Dutta of Rubiaceae. A perusal of literature reveals that this taxon is reported previously from few locations of NE India like Lakhimpur and Makum hills of the state of Assam and Lungleh and Dampa Tiger Reserve of Mamit district of Mizoram state ( Deb 1986). The species is quite rare and becomes a new report for the state of Nagaland, India. A taxonomic description along with phenology and distribution of the same has been provided in the present communication.



PLATE - I. *Mycetia mukerjiana* Deb & Dutta (Rubiaceae): A. A flowering plant; B. Inflorescence

*Mycetia mukerjiana* Deb & Dutta, Indian Forester 91: 272. 1965; J. Econ. Tax. Bot. 10 (1): 40. 1987; Bull. Bot. Surv. India 28 (1-4): 123. 1986; Sinha & Odyuo, Phytotaxonomy 10: 14. 2010.

Small shrub or undershrub, up to 60 cm high; stems terete, glabrous, glossy with spongy bark, sometimes glandular pubescent. Leaves opposite; lamina elliptic to ovate-lanceolate, 10 – 27.5 x 2.5 – 9 cm, acuminate, attenuate at base, membranous, glabrous; lateral nerves 15 – 20 pairs; petioles 2 – 3 cm long; stipules interpetiolar, oblong-obtuse, 8 – 10 x 7 – 8 mm. Inflorescence on leafless nodes, lower down the branch, pedunculate, congested dichasial cymes. Flowers 1 – 1.8 cm long, bracteate. Calyx 5-lobed, persistent, Corolla 5-lobed bright yellow, fleshy, tube longer than lobes, hairy outside. Stamens 5, anthers situated at the throat or at the base of the corolla, dorsifixed. Berries hemispheric, 2-chambered, white, pulpy; seeds many, minute, and angular.

**Ecology:** Grows mostly in Tropical semi-evergreen forest, very scattered in occurrence and rare in distribution.

**Distribution:** India (Assam, Mizoram & Nagaland); Endemic

**Flowers & Fruits:** June – July.

**Exsiccatae:** Nagaland: Changki forest area, Mokokchung district: *Santanu Dey* 121999 (ASSAM).

#### Conservation aspects:

The investigated locality at Changki the forest comprises of semi evergreen to moist deciduous forests which is considered as one of the best habitat for this species. However, due to lack of awareness and unplanned developmental programmes, encroachment results in the loss of this species from its natural habitat.

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