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TWO NEW TAXA OF *CURCUMA* LINN. (ZINGIBERACEAE) FROM CANNANORE DISTRICT, KERALA, INDIA

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DURING a recent plant exploration tour in the early spring to the Cannanore District of Kerala State in South India, two interesting taxa of the genus *Curcuma* Linn. were found growing along road-sides and in fallow fields. The plants were critically studied with available literature and compared with all the herbarium specimens available in MH and CAL and were found to be quite distinct from all the other species of the genus reported from India. The plants were found to be allied to the Ceylon species, *Curcuma albiflora* Thw. However, on comparing with the specimens at Kew Herbarium, the present plants differed in many details. These represent two hitherto undescribed taxa and are described here as a new species and a new variety.

Curcuma kannanorensis R. Ansari, V. J. Nair and N. C. Nair sp. nov.

Curcuma albiflora Thw. affinis, sed differt foliis pusillioribus, apicibus foliorum acuminatis et apiculatis; petiolis laminis curtioribus; spicis curtioribus, floribus magnioribus.

Holotypus: *Ansari* 67822 (CAL); India, Kerala, Cannanore Dt., Karimbam, 175 m, 23-6-1980. Isotypi in MH.

Allied to *Curcuma albiflora* Thw., but differs in the smaller size of leaves with acuminate and apiculate apex; the petiole always shorter than lamina, the shorter spike and the larger size of flowers.

Tuberous herbs. Tubers 2 to 7, bearing at the ends of thick fibrous roots, 1.5-4 cm long, 0.5-1.5 cm thick,

oblong-ellipsoid, white inside. Basal sheaths lanceolate or oblanceolate, obtuse. Leaves 2-7 in a tuft; lamina 5-13 cm long, 2-6 cm broad, ovate-elliptic, oblique at base, acuminate and apiculate; petiole shorter than lamina, 3-9 cm long, ca. 2 mm in diam., sheathed at the base. Inflorescence arising from the tuft of leaves; peduncle 2.5-6 cm long; spike 3-5 cm long, 1-2.5 cm in diam., without any distinct coma. Bracts all fertile or 1-2 sterile towards the tip, ca. 2.7 × 1.5 cm, lanceolate, obtuse, recurved at apex, adnate at base, green, 10-nerved. Bracteoles similar, ca. 1.1 × 0.6 cm, lanceolate. Flowers longer than bracts, ca. 4.5 cm long, 1.5-2 cm in diam., white. Calyx tube ca. 1.5 cm long; lobes subequal, ovate-triangular, mucronate puberulous outside. Corolla tube longer than bract, ca. 3 cm long, funnel shaped, pubescent and pinkish tinged outside; lobes subequal, ca. 1.5 × 0.7 cm; dorsal lobe triangular-ovate, acuminate, hairy at the tip, white with a pinkish tinge. Staminodes ca. 2.5 × 1.2 cm, oblong-long cuneate, obliquely truncate at apex, glabrous, white, minutely gland dotted. Lip ca. 1.2 × 1.2 cm, obovate, white with a yellow spot at the middle, deeply 2-lobed at apex; the sinus reaching more than half the length of lip; lobes oblong-cuneate. Filaments petaloid, ca. 7 × 4 mm, oblong; anthers 6 × 3 mm, oblong, spurred at base. Ovary oblong-obovoid, puberulous; stylodes linear; stigma capitate, ciliate.

Holotype: *Ansari* 67822 (CAL); INDIA, Kerala, Cannanore Dt., Karimbam, 175 m, 23.6.1980. Isotypes in MH.

The specific epithet refers to Cannanore District, the place from where the new species was collected.

C. kannanorensis var. *lutea* R. Ansari, V. J. Nair and N. C. Nair var. nov.

Differt a varietate typica in floribus luteis, lobis corollae latioribus (ca. 1.5 × 1.3 cm); staminodiis oblanceolatis; labiis magnioribus (ca. 2 × 2 cm); labio sinum supra medium habenti et lobis rotundatis.

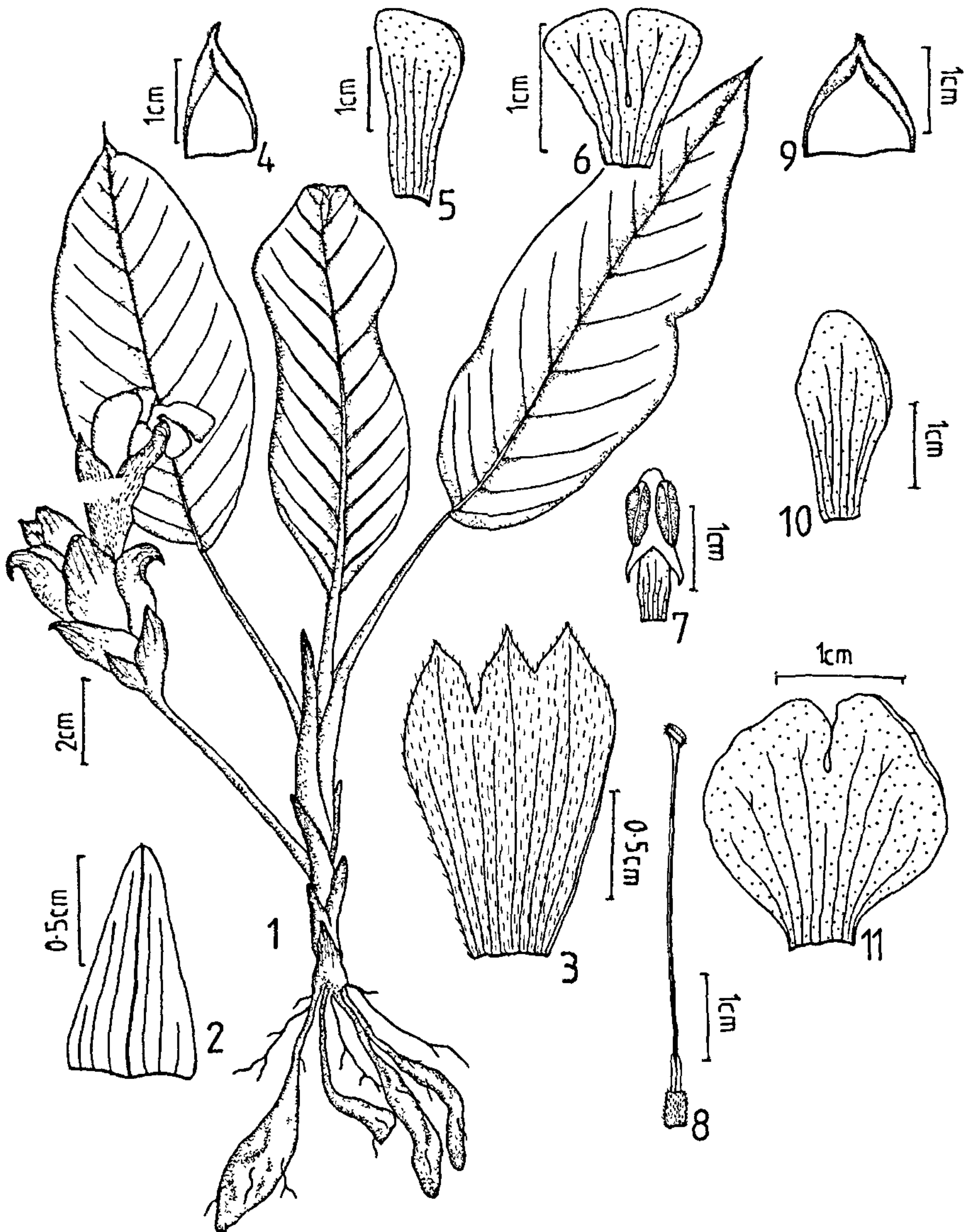
Holotypus: *Ansari* 64999 (CAL); India, Kerala, Cannanore Dt., Kalliasseri, 125 m, 22-6-1980. Isotypi in MH.

Differs from the typical variety in the yellow colour of the flowers, the broader corolla lobes (ca. 1.5 × 1.3 cm); the oblanceolate staminodes; the larger size of the lips (ca. 2 × 2 cm) with the sinus less than half the length of the lip and the lobes rounded.

Holotype: *Ansari* 64999 (CAL), India, Kerala, Cannanore Dt., Kalliasseri, 125 m, 22-6-1980. Isotypes in MH.

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Figures 1- 8, *Curcuma kannanorensis* R. Ansari, V. J. Nair & N. C. Nair 1. Habit; 2. Bracteole; 3. Calyx tube split; 4. Dorsal corolla lobe; 5. Staminode; 6. Lip; 7. Stamen; 8. Pistil. 9-11, *C. kannanorensis* var. *lutea* R. Ansari, V. J. Nair & N. C. Nair 9. Dorsal corolla lobe; 10. Staminode; 11. Lip.