

Army's Bent Toed Gecko (*Cryptodactylus exercitus*)

February 22, 2022

In news- Recently, a team of herpetologists have recorded a new species of bent-toed gecko from a wooded part of the Umroi Military Station in Meghalaya.

About Army's Bent Toed Gecko-

- Its scientific name is *Cryptodactylus exercitus* and its English name is **Indian Army's bent-toed gecko** (*Exercitus* in Latin means army).
- The **name was given to honour the Army** for its services to the country.
- **The team also recorded another new bent-toed gecko, the *Cryptodactylus siahaensis* named after Mizoram's Siaha district** where it was found.
- Most of these lizard specialists and a few others had in a separate study recorded the *Cryptodactylus lungleiensis*, a new species of bent-toed gecko named after Mizoram's Lunglei town.
- The genus ***Cryptodactylus* is represented by about 320 species worldwide** and is the third most speciose vertebrate genus in the world.
- The **members of the genus range from South Asia to Melanesia with high diversity in South Asia.**
- India is now home to 40 species of the bent-toed gecko with the northeast accounting for 16 of them.

About Geckos-

- Geckos are small, mostly carnivorous reptiles and are found on all the continents except Antarctica.
- Belonging to the infraorder Gekkota, geckos are found in warm climates throughout the world.
- They range from 1.6 to 60 centimeters.

Other Gecko species of *Cyrtodactylus* family-

- So far researchers have found the Guwahati bent-toed gecko (*Cyrtodactylus guwahatiensis*, named after the city) near a small hillock in the urban sprawl of Guwahati city.
- The Kaziranga bent-toed gecko, the Jaintia bent-toed gecko and the Nagaland bent-toed gecko have been discovered from Assam's Kaziranga National Park, the Jaintia hills of Meghalaya and Khonoma village in Nagaland, respectively.
- The Abhayapuri bent-toed gecko is currently found only in the vicinity of Abhayapuri town in Assam's Bongaigaon district, and the Jampui bent-toed gecko, only in Tripura's Jampui Hills.
- All the new lizards belong to the genus *Cyrtodactylus* and are called bent-toed or bow-fingered geckos, named after their bent toes.