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New Species of Urban Lizard

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- A new species of lizard, the urban bent-toed gecko (**Cyrtodactylus urbanus**) was discovered in Guwahati, Assam.
- The bent-toed gecko was earlier thought to be the same as the **Khasi Hills lizard**.
All bent-toed geckos in Northeast India were thought to be a single species, the **Cyrtodactylus khasiensis** found primarily in the **Khasi Hills of Meghalaya**.
- Although the urban bent-toed gecko falls within the khasiensis group, it differs from other members of this group in **mitochondrial sequence data** and aspects of **morphology** (Branch of biology that deals with form and structure of plants and

animals).



- **Markedly Different:** The new species of lizard is also markedly different in molecular structure, blotch and colour from the **Cyrtodactylus guwahatiensis**, or the Guwahati bent-toed gecko, that was discovered two years ago.
- **Urbanization** is a major **threat** to the survival of geckos.
- Guwahati is home to numerous important species. The city provides an edge for urban biodiversity to thrive because it encompasses 18 hills, 8 reserve forests, 2 wildlife sanctuaries and a **Ramsar Site (Deepor Beel)** besides the Brahmaputra river.

Gecko

- **Geckos are** (suborder Gekkota), any of more than 1,000 species of lizards making up 6 families of the suborder Gekkota.
- Geckos are mostly small, usually nocturnal reptiles with soft skin.

Source: TH