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## Green Activists Opposes Coastal Highway

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### Why in News

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**Green Nobel Prize winner Prafulla Samantara** with other green activists has **opposed** the **415-km-long coastal highway** from Digha in **West Bengal** to Gopalpur in **south Odisha** proposed by the Central and State governments.

The proposed highway will pass through **Chilika lake, Bhitarkanika and related eco-sensitive areas.**

The project will **destroy more than 33% of the natural mangrove forests** in these areas and may lead to increased sea erosion.

### Green Nobel Prize

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- The **Goldman Environmental Prize** (also known as **Green Nobel Prize**) recognizes **individuals** for sustained and significant efforts **to protect and enhance the natural environment**, often at great personal risk.
- It is awarded **annually by Goldman Environmental Foundation since 1990.**
- It honours people from the world's six continental regions: **Africa, Asia, Europe, Islands & Island Nations, North America, and South & Central America.**
- The Goldman Prize views **"grassroots" leaders** as those involved in local efforts, where positive change is created through community or citizen participation in the issues that affect them.
- Goldman Prize recipients are usually people from isolated villages or inner cities who choose to take great personal risks to safeguard the environment.
- The **winners are announced** on **Earth Day** which is observed on **22<sup>nd</sup> April** every year.

- So far, **five Indians** have received the Goldman Environmental Prize. They are:
  - **Prafulla Samantara (2017):** Campaign against drilling and mining in Niyamgiri Hills, Odisha.
  - **Ramesh Agrawal (2014):** Protested coal mining in Chhattisgarh.
  - **Rashida Bee & Champa Devi Shukla (2004):** Union Carbide gas leak (Bhopal) related environmental justice.
  - **MC Mehta (1996):** Industrial pollution fouling the Ganges and eroding the Taj Mahal.
  - **Medha Patkar (1992):** Narmada Bachao Andolan.

**Source:TH**