

**Baladmari Char no. 1,
Goalpara, Assam**

Field-notes from the Brahmaputra

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As monsoons urge on the raging waters of the mad river, lands of the river-banks fall unceasingly to the relentless. The high, concrete walls on banks of the urban areas hold a fight. The wall defies the water. The villages witness the wrath as lands and wells and fields are engulfed to the unsated watery hunger.

“We have to build a wall too.”

“Yes, we do.”

“Like the ones in the city. They protect the shops and the cycles, the poles and the dogs.”

“We will make a wall too.”

“Yes, we do.”

The idea to create a wall presented itself directly out of the circumstantial influences in the site. The surrounding shapes of the land added to the inspiration, reflecting themselves in the form and material of the intervention.

The absurdity of a grass wall used to stop a relentless force of nature expands upon the complex relationship of the community with the river, and their risky existence along its banks. The work contextualizes the irony of the river appearing as a threat to riverine communities, and at the same time, facilitating these literal straws of grass, upon which the villagers of Baladmari Char 1 hang on to during days of peril.

The site for wall-making becomes a point of gathering and exchange through dialogue, and extends itself as a symbolic statement in the context of the social and cultural history of Baladmari.

Undoubtedly, most of the wall is washed away within few hours. A section which remains is morphed into a temporal exhibition space of photographs made around the site during the process of wall-making. The re-activation of the space is intended to generate an impression of the action that outlasts its temporary being.