

## The Confluence

River Brahmaputra and River Teesta are two major transboundary rivers of South Asia which meet at Bangladesh in a place called Chilmari. Both of these rivers originate in the Mighty Himalaya and meander through the mountains of India to meet at Chilmari which lies in the northern part of Bangladesh bordering India. Chilmari has many river islands (chars). When huge dams and Barrage open gates in the upstream rivers of India especially during the monsoon, places like Chilmari are the first to witness flash floods and soil erosion. Many communities living in this area are landless and experience extreme poverty and displacement.

Seen in the picture is a confluence of River Teesta with River Brahmaputra at the backdrop with a boat containing many such displaced communities of Chilmari. At the foreground, '*belli phool*' also known as Jasmine flower was plucked freshly by the river bank to offer to the confluence. A large Indian banyan leaf was commonly found. Jasmine flowers were offered along with the Indian banyan leaf. These two entities of the river confluence symbolise the presence of similar ecosystems along these transboundary rivers. The flower and the leaf celebrate the interconnectedness of the riverine biodiversity.