

## SHANTIKANA (House of Peace)

Mohammed Selim, 50 years old

Md Selim made his creative retreat plastering the interior walls of his shelter and moulding reliefs of colourful flower designs. He named it *Shanti* (peace) *kana* (house) because for him is a place to search for inspiration and spiritual meaning. It is here where he practices his art, plays mandolin and sings with his fellow musicians.

He is originally from Nappura, a small village in the Maungdaw district of Myanmar. He is married and has four children. *'My children are not my only legacy, I want my music to be my legacy too!'* —says Md Selim. He fell in love with music at the age of 6 while attending a wedding, and by the time he was 12 he was playing at weddings and local festivals. He never charged any money for playing his music, instead he received many gifts and several love proposals. He arrived in Bangladesh aged 18 accompanied with his parents in 1987, and although he had many jobs since—construction worker, fisherman, even rickshaw puller! —music has always played an important role on his life. He says music helped ease his work; whether when pulling a rickshaw, or in a boat at night deep into the sea, music has always been his best companion. *'Music is knowledge'*—says Md Selim, *'It keeps a man pure and honest. It's like food for your heart. If you love your music, music will love you back.'*

In October 2017, he planted the seedling of a Banyan tree in the corner of his shelter. He hopes one day it will grow into a majestic tree. A tree of memories where his soul will rest forever in peace, and where birds will come to nest and carry his songs across the wind for future generations to hear.



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SHANTIKANA

SALI



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