



BAMBOO BEAUTIES

SHAMSU Mia, 48, has made an annual journey to Sylhet's Gowainghat upazila from Tangail, to engage in a once popular craft for the past 10 years. Working bamboo into wonder weaves and turning those into wicker baskets and wicker vases, among other things, Shamsu Mia is one of the last in few his profession. Once bamboo baskets were a fixture of the so-called "Gram Bangla", a romanticised moniker for life in the village. Nowadays, however, these bamboo beauties are hard to find. Plastic and aluminium have begun to encroach on the bamboo's territory. But Shamsu Mia, and his team of 12, continue to toil away, preserving a rich heritage of the many villages of Bangladesh. As consumer attention turns towards local handicrafts, Shamsu Mia's art may get a shot in the arm. But whether it does or not, it is clear he will return next year as well, doing what he knows and loves.

Photo: SHEIKH NASIR

