



WEATHER
FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S
TEMPERATURES

DHAKA
H 35.2 L 27.5

MYMENSINGH
H 33.5 L 27.5

CHITTAGONG
H 32.8 L 26.4

SYLHET
H 34.9 L 26.0

RAJSHAHI
H 34.8 L 27.2

RANGPUR
H 34.2 L 27.5

KHULNA
H 33.2 L 27.4

BARISAL
H 33.2 L 26.5

COX'S BAZAR
H 31.0 L 25.4

Light to moderate rain/thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at many places over Rangpur, Sylhet, Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong and at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Mymensingh till 6:00pm today, reports UNB quoting Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:17pm and rises tomorrow at 5:40am.

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR

Finding Harpy

The Harpy Eagle captures our imagination. One of the largest eagles in the world, its wingspan is more than six feet and it can weigh up to twenty pounds. Its talons are four inches long, as long as the grizzly bear's.

Eagles often verge on the mythical and Harpy Eagle certainly has its rightful place in that canon. It was described by none other than the great Swedish scientist Carl Linnaeus, who named it Vultur harpyja after the mythical beast from Greek mythology - half-human, half-beast - called Harpy.

In photographs the Harpy looks remarkable. Its pale-grey face looks like a mask. Out of the back of its head grow two feathered crests like horns. Its front is white, while its back is black and grey.

Before going to Brazil on a birding trip, I researched the Harpy and discovered that it can be found high up in the Amazon rainforest. However, it is exceedingly difficult to spot and photograph because of the great height. The easiest way to find a Harpy is to find its nest and observe that. My guide Gabriel, luckily, said he knew a Harpy nest near Manaus. Would we be able to see it? He said it was possible. So we set aside an afternoon to visit this forest.

But luck came my way earlier. That same morning, in another forest, we had climbed a tower that took us above the canopy of the rainforest. All morning we stood in the tower surveying the forest below and found many birds.

At one point, I was looking east, watching a pair of White-throated Toucans about a mile away, when Gabriel suddenly grabbed my shoulder. "Harpy! Harpy! Harpy!" he whispered with great excitement. Sure enough, on top of a tree about a quarter mile behind the Toucans



Harpy Eagle over rainforest.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

was a large black bird. Its two crests were clearly visible. It was too far for a good picture, but I took several photographs nonetheless. It flew away after two or three minutes.

This was a stroke of luck, but I still wanted to get a closer photograph. So in the afternoon we went looking for the Harpy nest. We walked inside the forest for perhaps two miles, crossing small streams and climbing over fallen trees. We knew we were getting close when we saw "Be Quiet!" warning signs about the Harpy nest ahead. The canopy was dense overhead and we had to move branches out of our way to make progress. We eventually came to a circle cordoned off by a red ribbon. Inside was the massive trunk of a tall tree. I looked up, and through openings in the dense foliage saw the trunk divide into several fat branches about

fifty feet high. At this junction was the nest, a messy jumble of sticks and twigs.

The view, however, was well-obscured by leaves of other trees. After peeking from several spots I got a line of sight to part of the nest. There was vague movement - probably chicks - not enough detail.

Just then, through another opening to the right, I saw the parent Harpy sitting on a branch. I immediately aimed my camera, but because of the intervening leaves, the autofocus failed. By the time I had switched to manual focus, it had flown!

A roller-coaster day of birding thus ended on a disappointing note. But I was very lucky to have seen that Harpy Eagle in the distance.

facebook.com/ikabirphotographs or follow ihtishamkabir on Instagram.

BNP rejects EC's decision to use EVMs in nat'l polls

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday turned down the Election Commission's (EC) decision to use electronic voting machines (EVM) in the upcoming national election, saying that such machines can easily be manipulated.

"The Election Commission, in which we have no confidence, will manipulate the EVMs. We reject their decision of introducing EVMs in the national election," said BNP senior leader Moudud Ahmed.

Speaking at a discussion, he also said BNP which "represents most people of the country" will not accept the use of EVMs in the polls.

Youth Forum, a pro-BNP platform, arranged the discussion at the Jatiya Press Club, demanding BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia's release from jail.

Earlier on Thursday, the EC at a

meeting decided to send a proposal to the government for amending the electoral law to pave the way for use of EVMs in the upcoming general election.

Moudud, a BNP standing committee member, alleged that the government is behind EC's decision.

"I think there's a big conspiracy behind the move to use the machines just three months ahead of the parliamentary polls. The government is directly involved with the plot," he said.

Referring to the Bangladesh Banks reserve heist, the BNP leader wondered how people can have confidence in the electronic voting system in a country where the central bank's reserve was plundered through hacking.

Moudud said many countries, including Germany, Italy and

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We are in favour of EVMs: Quader

BSS, Sylhet

Speaking about electronic voting machines (EVM), Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said, "We are in favour of using the system to hold the upcoming general election in a free, fair and credible manner."

At a press conference held at Sylhet Circuit House, Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, said that his party has nothing to do if BNP does not take part in the upcoming national polls.

"Taking part in election is BNP's right, as Bangladesh is a democratic country. The 'election train', however, will not stop for any party. The polls will be held as per the constitution," he said.

"BNP is trying to hold an election like the one in 2001... That type of election will not happen again in 2018 on Bangladesh's soil. The system of caretaker government won't come back again," Quader said regarding BNP's demands.

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New drug 'khat' seized in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A "New Psychoactive Substance" (NPS), or a kind of drug, was seized in Dhaka for the very first time yesterday.

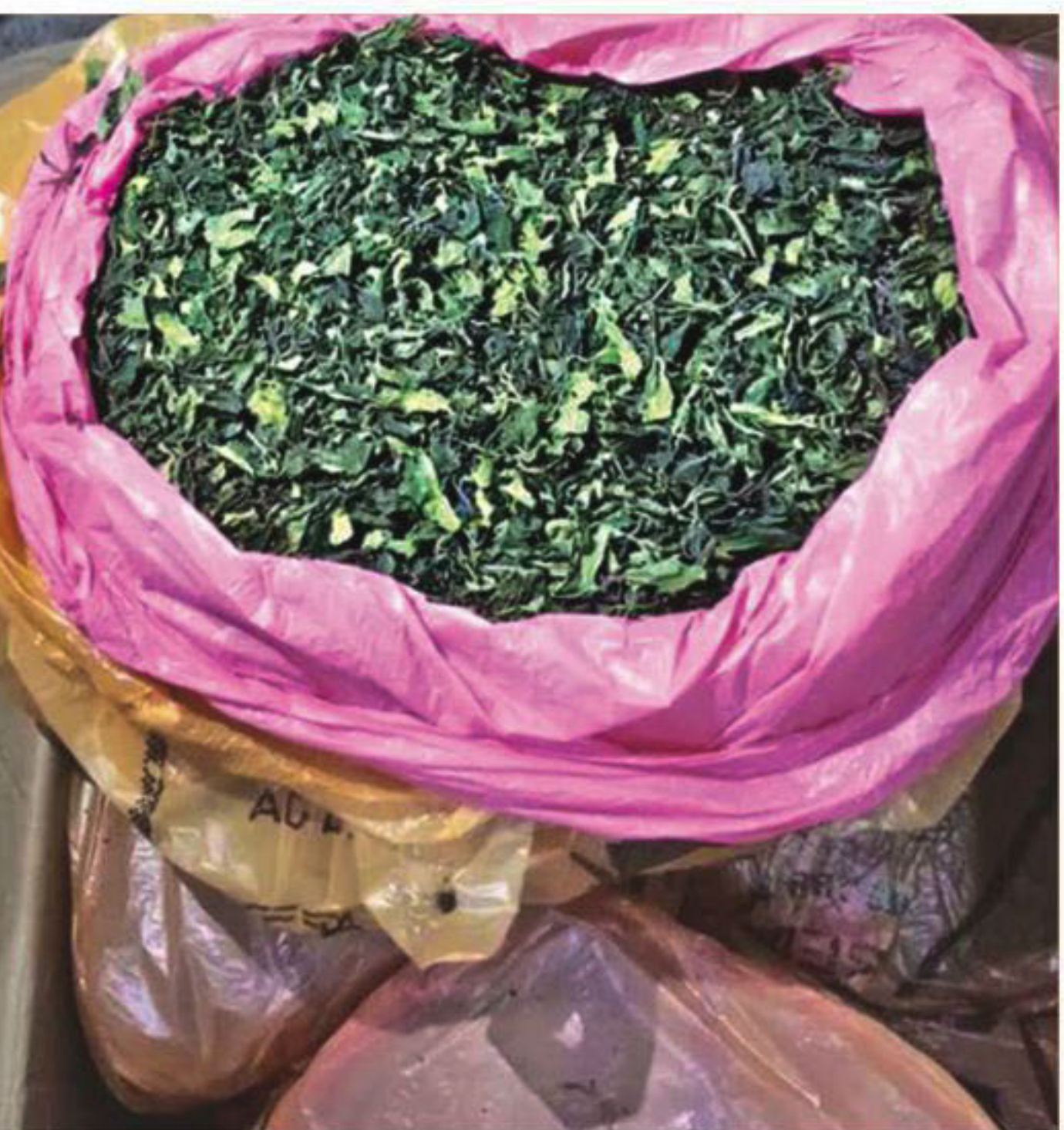
Two stashes totalling 850 kilogrammes each of the substance were brought in under the label of "green tea" a few days ago. The anti-narcotics department seized the first lot of about 466kgs from the Dhaka airport last afternoon, and arrested Md Nazim, 47, from there. Based on his information, another consignment was seized from a warehouse in Shantinagar last night. The consignments were brought under the name of Nawshin Enterprise.

Khorshed Alam, assistant director of Department of Narcotics Control (DNC), Dhaka Metro (North), confirmed the news to The Daily Star, adding that it came from Ethiopia.

The drug, named "khat", is legal in a few countries but is illegal in most others, he said.

A team of DNC headed by Additional Director Nazrul Islam of detective branch of DNC and supervised by DIG Masum Rabbani, director (operations) of DNC, made the hauls.

The arrestee told law enforcers that the drug was brought to the country to ship to the USA, and added that he has already smuggled around 300kgs through Bangladesh, Khorshed Alam told The Daily Star.



The seized substance that was brought in as "green tea" through the Dhaka airport.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Duping passport applicants

Three members of fraud gang arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"I, Rafique, a sub-inspector of special branch (SB) of police, am calling you from the SB office to let you know that the passport applications of your mother and wife are now with me."

Rafique, a fraud pretending to be an SI, said this to Md Mohsin Alam Mollah at 7pm on August 26 on the phone. Rafique also demanded Tk 3,000 for police verification needed for the passports.

It should be mentioned that

there is no additional fee for police verification.

Mohsin, who submitted the application forms to the passport office on August 20, sent Tk 1,550 to Rafique through bKash account within 10 minutes after their conversation.

The following day, Mohsin received another phone call from the actual SB office at Malibagh in Dhaka. SI Anwar of SB called Mohsin to go to his office to meet him for the verification.

Only after going to SB office, Mohsin realised that he had been

duped the previous day.

Mohsin informed the SB official about the imposter.

Like Mohsin, many who have been deceived by such frauds, also informed the SB officials.

Following repeated complaints, Police Bureau of Investigation launched a drive to arrest the frauds.

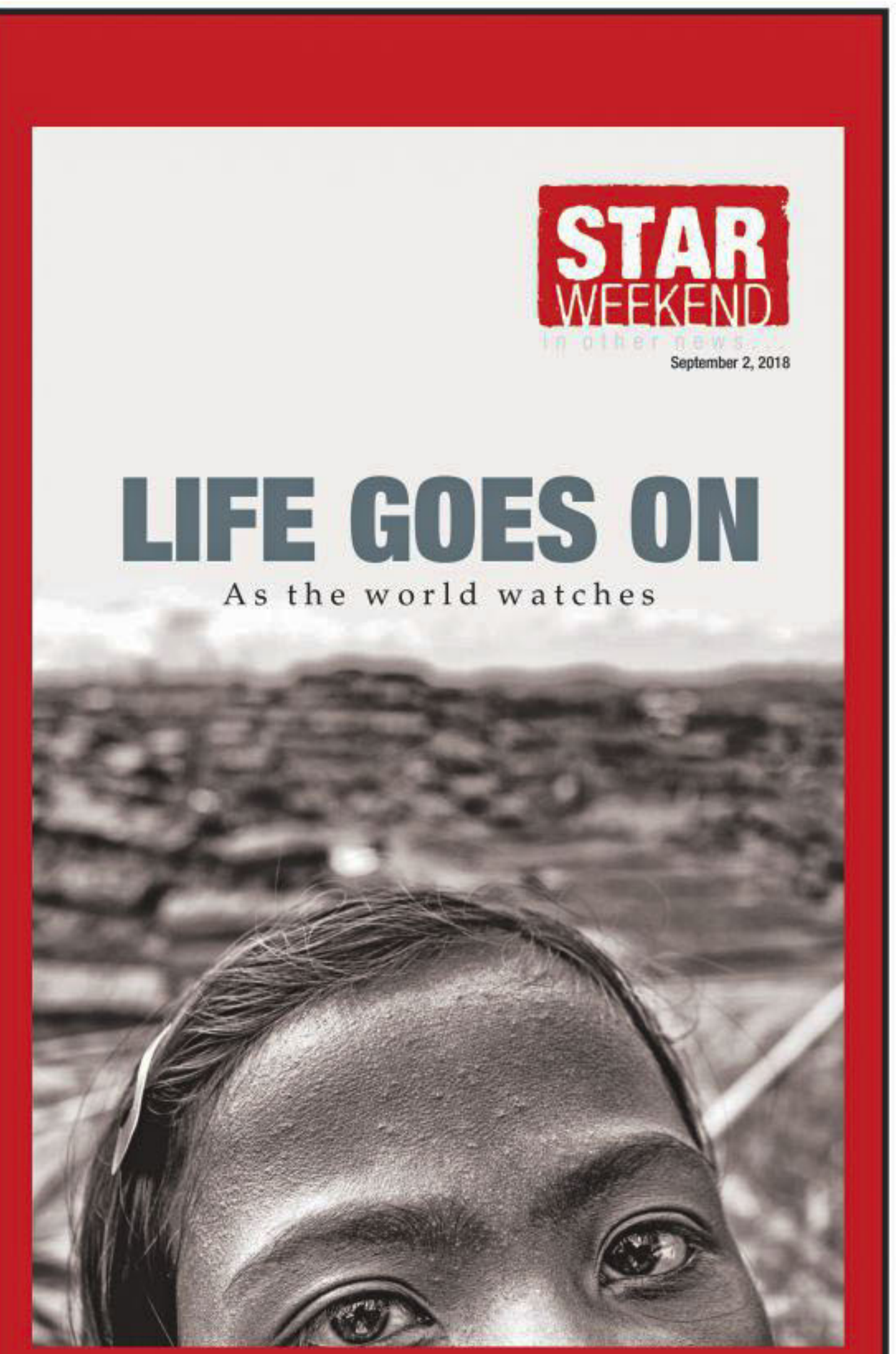
A team of PBI's Dhaka Metro unit arrested three members of the fraud gang with mobile phone sets and SIM cards from the passport office area at

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The Star Weekend will be coming out with a 64-page magazine tomorrow (September 2, 2018) dedicated to the Rohingya crisis. It has been one year since the mass exodus from the Rakhine state of Myanmar began. We delve into how the camps have expanded over the last one year and how the host community in Ukhia has reacted to this change.

Through in-depth reports we provide an insight into the state of trafficking and the rise of the aid-driven black markets in the Rohingya camps. We also talk to women who were raped by their attackers in Myanmar and are now having to break conservative norms in the camps in order to survive with their new born children.

Do not forget to grab your copy of the magazine.



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September 1, 2018

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