

## SPOTLIGHT

# I am a WOMAN, not a SINNER

Traveling in Dhaka using public transport has been an ever daunting experience for me as a woman. I have faced harassment in different levels, and continually struggle to find space and access to transportation. The overall public bus transportation system is built in such a way that it makes it difficult for women to travel.

**I**n this personal reflection, I will discuss my experiences of traveling in Dhaka city for the past few months and give suggestions for making traveling less taxing for women. My opinions and suggestions are completely personal, and do not generalise embody the behaviour of all men.

As bus conductors take on more people than the available number of seats, people have to stand on the aisle in between the seats. This condition puts women in danger of getting physically harassed. Some men take advantage of standing less than an inch from a woman and touch her inappropriately. It has

you annoying for causing commotion - because your voice against many will be a way forward.

The government of Bangladesh allows designated seating for nine women in a bus. However, these days more women are commuting within Dhaka, and often times, there are more than nine women in a bus. It is very important for the government to take notice of this change, and make arrangements so that there are more seats available for women. This would ensure that women are given personal space and would not get harassed.



happened to me more than once.

I spoke out loudly and many men and women reprimanded the man for his action, but it did not erase my pain, anger and agony. However, even though my feelings of disgust did not go away, I am sure my action of speaking up has encouraged more women to break silence. As a woman, always speak up against harassment, even if people find

The authority should also fine bus drivers and conductors for taking on more people than the available space as it forces people to huddle against each other, creating an environment prone to physical harassment of women. There should be a strict rule to not take on more people than the available number of seats in a bus.