

A GUIDE TO BEING A TYPICAL BANGLADESHI TRAVELLER

RASHEED KHAN

Do you want to learn how to travel right? Be polite on your journeys abroad? Go somewhere new, live in the moment and immerse yourself in all the new sights?

Yep, me neither. Which is why, with this general guide, I'll be teaching you how to be a Bangladeshi traveller. As I, myself, have most of my travelling experiences through flying, this guide will especially talk about flights.

STAGE 1: PACKING

Begin with this step. Know that it is a must to pack more clothes than you will require. It doesn't matter if you're travelling for only 3 or 4 days. Males must take at least 5 shirts, 4 T-shirts,



6 pairs of pants, 2 suits (in case you meet the Queen of England at a bus-stop in India) and, if you're feeling very daring, a *lungi*. If you want to go above and beyond that, ship your wardrobe or *almira* over to your destination.

Take homemade *torkari* with you no matter what. Yes, you might get food on your journey, especially when you're on a flight, but what if it's poisoned? Or there's no food? Or, worse yet, what if the food sucks? Take all these things into consideration and stay prepared. Be very careful though: food and water can't be brought on a flight. They clearly want you to starve or have their obviously poisoned food.

STAGE 2: GOING ON BOARD

It is time to begin your travels. Call up all your contacts (who don't care) and let them know that you are leaving so they can secretly think "Oh thank God". This is a subtle way of showing how much money you can blow and people will either be in awe, or hate you. After successfully completing this step, you move on to the airport. This step is especially important as you will have to hand over some of your luggage at the check-in. Most travellers take at least two or

three suitcases: one or two big ones which they will hand over and a small carryon. Bangladeshis are very well aware of this rule, which is exactly why you must hand over your small suitcase and take the larger suitcase as a carryon, since it's probably overweight.

Now that you have occupied one entire overhead compartment with your suitcase, you sit down and proceed to loudly communicate with a relative 3 rows away. If you are alone, bring out your phone; if the flight attendant comes at you politely asking you to switch off your phone for take-off, you feign deafness and continue to talk on the phone with another relative. As you're on a plane, there won't be much to do. Go over to your *bhabi's* seat to gossip about how short the stewardess' skirt is or catcall the stewardess in Bangla as she's obviously asking for it.

Bangladeshis love to be on time, so the moment the plane lands, ignore the pilot's instructions and quickly pull down your suitcase and try and get out of the plane, even though all the doors are closed. Try breaking through the windows if you can.

STAGE 3: TRAVELLING

Begin this particular step with tons of Facebook check-ins; remember, you're travelling for the likes it'll get you, not the experiences. Take selfies with everything. You're eating food? Selfie. You're in the bathroom? Selfie. There's a creepy guy mugging someone in a dark alleyway with no one to see? *Definitely* take a selfie; that one's going to get you at least 200 likes from your friends (if you have any). You could also take a full suitcase of souvenirs back home to show off to relatives. If you're not a souvenir person, you could always just buy tons of very necessary things for your aunt's cousin's daughter's niece's boyfriend's husband's wife. They'll appreciate it so much that to keep it in mint condition, they'll never bother using it. Remember though: anything you buy, bargain for it. Even if it's free.

Despite having hoarded the complimentary food you may have gotten while travelling, once you reach your destination, it is crucial to ignore the delicious local cuisine and just go to a Bangladeshi restaurant, and ask for discounts since you're a Bangladeshi. To further your abhorrence of the place, judge all the locals (even if they haven't asked yet if you're Indian) and complain about the most trivial things, like how the hotel bed is too soft, or how a girl is going sleeveless and how *shada manush* are the reason the world is a terrible place now even though back in old times people were killing each other every single day. However, it's perfectly fine if you complain about having no hand shower in the bathroom: that is actually a legitimate issue.

Now, at this point, perhaps you might be thinking, "How can I keep track of all this? Being a typical Bangladeshi traveller is so complicated!" If so, I offer you an alternative step, your *deus ex machina*.

Just sleep at the hotel and don't travel.

Rasheed Khan is a hug monster making good music but terrible puns and jokes where he's probably the only one laughing. Ask him how to pronounce his name at @ aarcvard@gmail.com

