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<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/24/train-passengers-stand-up-against-racial-abuse-muslim-woman-newcastle-metro>

Train passengers stand up against racial abuse of Muslim woman

A Muslim woman has thanked the public for standing up to a man who racially abused her and her sister on a packed Newcastle train.

Ruhi Rahman, 23, said she was threatened when the abuser told other passengers she could bomb the train, as she sat with her sister.

Other passengers on the on the Tyne and Wear Metro carriage, including football fans in replica shirts, were “angels” Rahman said, and told the man to get off the train.

The incident on Saturday afternoon between Newcastle and Whitley Bay, which is under investigation, ended with passengers clapping as the man got off at the next station.

Rahman, from Newcastle, wrote on her Facebook page about the episode and how a stranger had approached the sisters, telling them: “Get out of this seat now. This is my country.”

She said the man hurled anti-Muslim abuse at them, and said: “You’re bombing different countries and don’t deserve to be here or in this country.”

She said: “Before I even got a chance to react to his comments the women beside me supported me and helped. After a while most of the people on the Metro came over and spoke up for us and were being so supportive,” Rahman said, adding: “Also they even told the man to get off the Metro.”

She said it was “so sweet” to see how her fellow passengers on the Metro had supported her. “It really shows me how this world is full of such sweet people, and some dogs too,” Rahman said.

She said a woman beside her had started to cry “because she was so disgusted with his comments and she said no one should go through this” adding that “everyone also gave me a hug”. “It made me smile and appreciate how lovely they all were,” Rahman said.

She added: “I hope more people can not be so narrow-minded and realise how Islam should not be blamed for an individual’s act because Islam stands for peace not terrorism.”

In a separate post, she said the response from people had turned a negative “into something so positive”. She said: “I was so overwhelmed and still am with all your support.” She added: “Geordies are truly the best!”

Sharon Kelly, managing director of DB Regio Tyne and Wear, which operates the Metro on behalf of Nexus, said: “We urge anyone with information about this incident to contact the police. The safety of our passengers is paramount. Incidents of this nature are rare on Metro and they will not be tolerated.

“A police investigation is now under way and we will work with them to help trace the culprit. This will include reviewing any available CCTV footage.”

Insp Ian King, from Northumbria police’s Metro unit, said: “We have received a report of an alleged racist incident happening on a Metro train at around 4.45pm on Saturday. Northumbria police take a hard stance against any form of attack on any minority group or individual and officers will be investigating this report.”