



# MITHILA'S New Life

*Maintaining a successful career in acting while being a mother and an active voice for women empowerment may sound like a tall order for many, but for Mithila it's a lifestyle. Having recently completed her Master's Degree and earning a Vice Chancellor's Gold Medal from BRAC University, she is the epitome of talent and hard work. In this exclusive interview with Star Showbiz, Rafiath Rashid Mithila talks about her recent life choices, perceptions of women in the society and her goals for the future.*

**Your latest decision about your life has been the talk of the town for many days now. How would you reflect on this incident?**

We have taken every step to ensure that everyone knows the decision was mutual. It's a very personal choice for sure, and only we know what kind of situation we have been through to force us to make this decision. If you ask me to reflect back on this, I have to say that I went through a very difficult part of my life and it was an extremely difficult decision for me to make. Thus I have to reminisce a lot of struggles I have been through which I honestly do not want to do. At this point I just want to move on with my life.

**What kind of negative after-effects have you faced after publicizing your decision?**

There was a huge backlash, especially in the social media. Nowadays you can stay anonymous and say whatever you want online. No one bothers thinking about the consequences their words can leave behind, and this is why I think we are becoming very insensitive as people. There were many people who left irrational and insensitive comments. Despite that, there were a lot of people who were behind our decision, understood it, and supported it.

**How did you approach this backlash?**

I am someone who doesn't let negativity come near me. I am a positive person and I want to spread positivity. The negative comments did hurt me at first, but after a point I put a mental block around myself. I know those things won't bring any positivity to my life. My family and friends will always be behind me, but not those negative people.

**In your opinion, do you think the audience believes the online news or do they read the news just for the sake of reading them?**

With the rise of social platforms like Facebook

and information sources like Google, there is definitely a confused segment of population who do not know what to believe in. I myself see comments and reactions posted in my own official Facebook fan-page and I feel that people are misguided by them. But there are also people who are educated and can make a sound judgment.

**How did you gain the mental strength required to overcome these**

**obstacles?**

I received the mental strength I needed from my parents. Gaining that took me a lot of time. We lived separately for 2 years and I took all the time I needed to make myself emotionally stronger. At first I was weak, I used to cry a lot and I was vulnerable. My parents and colleagues supported me that time. My daughter has been a huge support for me too.

**You're working in so many medi-**

**ums and balancing family and education life together. How do you manage everything? Share your tips.** I don't do everything; I only do the things I like. Thanks to my parents I learned acting, dancing and singing at a young age. My main profession is being a program manager at BRAC University. When I get the spare time I involve myself in acting because I like doing it. What I have been doing a lot recently is working with women and children rights.

**Speaking of women rights, don't you think it's high time for women to exercise their equality in wages? As an actor yourself, do you ask for equal wages too?**

Definitely. The directors and producers I work with know very well that I am well aware of my rights. I do ask them to pay female artists the same as male artists. I also claim that asking for equal wages is a rational thing to do.

**Do you consider yourself a feminist? How would you define feminism?**

Yes, I do. Feminism is essentially belief in equal rights. Feminists are people who do not support discrimination, crime, rape or violence. The term itself does not mean working for women only. But of course since this is a patriarchal world, there is more work to be done for improving the status of women in society. In this society, women are not taught how to be strong from childhood. We are only taught to be educated, and then get married. But thankfully, my mother has always told me to dream bigger. She taught me to stand up on my own two feet. The barriers a girl has to overcome since childhood; be it at education, at husband's home after marriage, or at workplace, each stage of life is like war. I think I have fought that war since childhood.

**Even in film industry you will find**

**almost all the directors or scriptwriters being men. Considering that, do you have any intention to direct?**

I think women aren't able to step up to the position of directing/script writing because women are already struggling to overcome various obstacles to become actresses. Convincing the family in itself is a huge hassle. Working behind the scenes is a bigger commitment. Furthermore, we don't emphasize on films enough. We barely have film-related workshops and people don't even know the viability of a film-related career. Especially for women, having this as a career choice is difficult to imagine. We have to consider how women-friendly the work environment is. But overall, people need to know that there is career in film, and families need to support such choices too.

**Is there anything else you want to say to your fans?**

I will say that all I am extremely thankful to all my fans who enjoy my work. But just as they have expectations of me, I have expectations of them. I expect them to not act inhumane and insensitive, or at least try not to hurt or ridicule others. Let's all contribute to something positive.

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Interviewed by  
Rafi Hossain

