

Badhon's *Candid*

PHOTO: RAF

An actor, a model, a dentist, Azmeri Haque Badhon is a lady with many talents. Badhon won the 2nd runner up title in the prestigious 'Lux Channel i Superstar 2006', and is well known for her work in drama serials such as 'Choita Pagla', 'Shuvo Bibaho', 'Chandful Omaboshsha', 'Rong' and 'Hijibiji Nothing'. In an exclusive interview with Star Showbiz, Badhon opens up about her professional success and her personal struggles.

How have you been doing?

Alhamdulillah, pretty well.

Are you a regular Star Showbiz reader?

Yes! I love the content of Showbiz.

Showbiz portrays celebrities in a way, never seen before.

Pageantry has paved your way to this industry. How helpful was it for your career as an actor?

To most people, these shows are merely a platform for young girls to flaunt their beauty. Little do they know, that there's so much more to these events. For me, *Lux Channel i Superstar 2006* was like a revolution, I was reborn through this platform. I was a girl-next-door, with similar kind of obstacles that every simple girl of my age had to face. *Lux Channel i Superstar 2006* came into my life like a blessing and opened my path towards this industry. It ignited the confidence in me and thus, despite facing numerous refusals and disagreements from my parents and relatives, I tried carving my career in this industry with confidence. Not everyone who comes through such shows prevails in the industry.

Why is that so?

How can everyone persist the same way when the level of competence and dedication differ greatly? It depends on the individuals, some try really hard while others become too complacent to put even the basic effort.

Why did you suddenly decide to get married?

I decided to get married when I was at the peak of my career. Social pressure was a factor. I, belonging from a normal and conservative family, was always surrounded by questions for working in the media and subsequent queries regarding my marriage and my future. All these things pushed me to a point where I was convinced that it was the right time to settle down. I even planned my baby within two months of my marriage, just to ensure a normal life before appearing on screen again. But little did things go as per my plan. I blindly trusted a person and leaving all my success behind, started a new journey of life with him. He not only backstabbed me but also crushed my dreams and my trust. But I don't blame him entirely for this. It was my fault too when I, despite being a modern and independent woman, married a person 22 years older than me without taking into account our potential incompatibility. I should have thought it through.

It was a love-marriage, right?

Yes! Back then both of us were planning to settle down and that sort of played the cupid in our relationship. Both of us were available and we decided that it might be a good idea to tie the knot!

Marriage affected your career greatly.

Any regrets?

It was surely detrimental for my career but I have no regrets. I would probably be one of the leading ladies of the industry by now if I had not left things behind to get married. But now I am an inspiration for many. My struggle has given a ray of hope to all the mothers who have been bearing tortures and maintaining distance from their children, just for the sake of the society. If this marriage would have not

taken place I could never have become familiar with the stronger side of myself.

Did you try to work things out with your husband?

Initially I did. Not for me but for my daughter. But my husband was a swindler who tried to deceive me at almost every point of my life. And eventually, he could not put up with me any longer with all the treachery. So, he filed for a divorce. The concept of divorce was not very normal to me even then. The thought of its consequence on my daughter's future used to terrify me. I never wanted the "broken family" tag for her. But with every passing day, I grew stronger. I could sense my inner strength telling me not to endure something wrong just because the social norms want us to. And hence, I stood up, rediscovered myself. Today, besides having my daughter all to myself, I am leading a happy and healthy life both mentally and physically. And I want to thank all those who have wronged me for letting me know myself better.

How was it for your daughter when you eventually got separated?

She, of course, was shaken. But we tried to keep things as normal as possible in front of her. I used to let her go to her Dad's house and they would meet frequently. We even used to go on vacations together. Things were still pretty normal, until he suddenly got married, without informing us! It was when my ex-husband and his new wife tried to snatch away my daughter from me, that I lost all my patience. They captivated her at their home, took away her passport and tried to instigate her against me and my career. When asked for explanation they said that they're going to fly her off to Canada because apparently education here is not up to the mark. I got her admitted into

one of the most prestigious schools of the country, all by myself, without any of support from him, but still they were giving such irrational excuses, just to take my daughter away from me.

Do you plan to settle down soon?

Sooner or later, whenever I meet the right person. And by the right person I mean, a strong individual, a person not blinded by my fame and stardom. The one who is ready to accept us the way we are without any irrational condition.

You recently stepped away from Dohon? Do you have different plans for the future?

No. I regret not being able to be a part of such a great movie, but the reason is completely personal. My daughter is very young and she is traumatized right now by all the recent incidents in our life. Now she needs a lot of my time, a bigger portion of my affection. I came back on screen when my daughter and I had no financial support for survival. Back then, I used to grab any role offered to me – be a leading one or not. This way I somehow survived the crisis, but got into depression. Many people think that I have joined the gym for the sake of my career, but it was actually the therapy my counselor had advised to get me out of the depression. This has not only made me fitter both mentally and physically but has also boosted my confidence. I now plan to do better roles in movies and dramas. And I want spend quality time with my daughter.

It was really nice talking to you, Badhon. All the best for your new endeavors.

It was nice talking to you. My best wishes for *Star Showbiz*.

By Sushmita Sruti Choudhury