

Miti Sanjana on building meaningful changes through awareness

Even after almost two decades as a lawyer, Barrister Miti Sanjana reminisces about a decade-old specific case involving a single mother fighting to keep her child to herself. She lawfully won that case, but what remained with her was not the verdict but the learning that law can change someone's life when enforced effectively.

She has not let go of that lesson to date. The founding partner of Legal Counsel and a Supreme Court advocate, also runs a column known as "Pathoker Proshno" on Prothom Alo, and is a familiar face on television, who explains the legal clauses in simpler terms.

However, Sanjana does not see her media and courtroom personalities as separate careers that conflict with each other. "Law requires precision, while media requires clarity," she explains.

And Sanjana has paid for it. Because when women speak publicly with conviction on property rights of women, leaving a toxic marriage, or turning their backs on an abusive home, the reception is rarely warm. She knows that and expects disagreement from the majority of the room, and has stopped seeking validation long ago.

Her loved ones, on the other hand, call her resilient, patient, and a tough cookie. She laughs at that a little and gladly agrees with the titles. Yet, she still doubts herself sometimes and gets up every time she falls.

"We often run after perfection, but perfection is just a subjective illusion," she remarks.

On the days that are a little too overwhelming, she steps away, resets, and spends quiet time with family. She profoundly enjoys books and movies that explore human dignity, fairness, and moral responsibility.

"Women should take off their superwoman cape once in a while and courageously accept their flaws," she adds.

Of all the areas she has worked in,

corporate law, telecom, and commercial disputes, family law is the one she keeps returning to. It deals directly with people's lives in their lowest moments with an immediate, yet deeply humane impact.

However, her greatest mentors were not in courtrooms or law schools. According to Sanjana, her father was a living example of the practice of feminism. He consistently supported her mother in both her personal and professional endeavours. Her mother, meanwhile, handled financial decisions, property, banking, income, and tax returns as seamlessly.

The legal gap starts at home, Sanjana points out. Families that naturally pull sons into conversations about property, finances, and inheritance think nothing of leaving daughters out. And by the time a woman needs to understand her legal and financial rights, she is already prone to deception.

The ignorance costs people money, custody, land, and, most importantly, delays justice. The biggest gap, she insists, is not in the law itself, but in enforcement and access.

Legal Counsel was born to reduce the gap.

"The biggest challenge was building trust while building structure," she recalls of those early years. "A law firm is not just about legal knowledge; it is about credibility, consistency, and teamwork. Starting from scratch meant creating all of that at once."

She pauses when asked what she would have done had the law not called. "I would still choose work that has purpose and impact," she says, "something that includes interaction with people, advocacy, or public service."

When the discussion moves to whether citizens of Bangladesh know their rights, she answers without missing a beat, "Not as much as it is required." She believes being ignorant about information regarding dowry, divorce, land ownership, and inheritance leaves people vulnerable.

And ignorance, she has learned, is something people use against you. Sanjana emphasises that lasting progress requires education, media, and mass awareness, because the rights you are not aware of are futile.

It is not a new argument. Yet, she continues to put it out there in court, in columns, and on air, because someone ultimately has to voice it.

By K T Humaira

Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel

Wardrobe: Benarasi by Tanwy Kabir

Jewellery: Canvas by Tanwy Kabir

Makeup: AnewMakeover by Shababa Rashid

Hair: Avi Rup

