

# SHRADDHA WALKER MURDER CASE

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Shraddha Walker, a 27-year-old woman, was strangled and chopped brutally by her live-in partner, Aftab Poonawalla, and was thrown off into the Mehrauli jungle in the national capital, Delhi. He killed her on May 18, 2022, and the case came to public attention on November 11.

Aftab and Shraddha met each other on a dating app called Bumble; both of them are from Maharashtra, and after getting into a relationship, they shifted to Delhi in 2022. Shraddha's parents were against this relationship between Shraddha and Aftab since both of them belonged to different religions. Shraddha and Aftab had a toxic relationship from the start, and he used to physically abuse her. Shraddha wanted to leave Aftab but was not able to do so. On May 18th they shifted into the rented apartment in Mehrauli, and three days later, she was killed. Shraddha's friend noticed her missing due to the lack of contact and informed her father. Her father filed a missing person complaint on October 6th.

The police launched an inquiry into her live-in partner Aftab, and he claimed that Shraddha had left the house after an argument in May. He was still using Shraddha's Instagram handle even after her death, and he was also active on other dating apps. There is also a record of transferring money from Shraddha's account to Aftab's. On November 8th, following further investigation, Aftab allegedly broke down and confessed.



Fig1: The victim Shraddha Walker and the accused Aftab

Aftab revealed that he strangled her to death and then chopped her into 35 pieces and kept it in polyethylene bags. He bought a 300-litre fridge to store her body parts and disposed of them in the Mehrauli forest in several days. While analysing his transaction details, it was seen that he spent a lot of money to buy room fresheners and incense sticks to mask the stench of the rotting body. Aftab told the police that he was a trained chef and disposed of her liver and intestine by mincing them.



Fig2: Delhi Police takes Aftab Poonawalla to Mehrauli for investigation

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Until now, 10 to 13 bones have been recovered from the forest. The blood samples obtained from Aftab's kitchen have been sent to the forensic lab for examination and have been confirmed to belong to Shraddha. The DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) sample of Shraddha's father was taken for reference. Police are searching for CCTV (Closed-Circuit Television) footage in order to check whether Aftab received any help from outside and to corroborate his statements. Shraddha's phone, her skull, and the murder weapon are yet to be found. Forensic analysis of the bones found so far revealed that they belonged to Shraddha. The clothes worn by Shraddha and Aftab were thrown in the civil garbage and are yet to be found. The forensic science laboratory in Rohini submitted Aftab's narco-analysis test report where he confessed that it was a pre-planned murder. The autopsy report reveals that she was dismembered using a saw.

Even though the case is only 80% complete to date, justice should be served to Shraddha Walker. According to the reports, Aftab is lodged at Tihar jail number 4 and is kept in a separate cell for security reasons which will be monitored 24 hours through CCTV cameras.

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  - Fig 1: news and media. (n.d.). Mehrauli Murder: Aftab used Shraddha's Insta till June. <https://www.en.etemaaddaily.com/world/national/mehrauli-murder-aftab-used-shraddhas-insta-till-june:122675>
  - Fig 2: Delhi Police takes DNA samples of Shraddha's father to match traced bones. (n.d.). ANI News. Retrieved February 10, 2023, from <https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news/delhi-police-takes-dna-samples-of-shraddhas-father-to-match-traced-bones20221116182002/>