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## Family abandons Lagos killer cop in death

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BY OUR REPORTER ON JANUARY 17, 2016

NATIONAL

■ Corpse still in morgue

BY SIJIBOMI OYEDEPO-FATAYO

What appears to be a case of rejection of a person in death, relatives of Sergeant Stephen James, the

NATIONAL POLITICS BUSINESS SPORTS EDITORIAL ENTERTAINMENT FEATURES OPINION COLUMNS

State last Boxing Day, have not turned up to claim the body of the officer at the morgue. Neither have they shown up at the headquarters of the Lagos State Police Command.

As at the time he committed the atrocious act, Sergeant James was attached to Mopol 22 Squadron under the leadership of SP Suleiman Y. Toyin. James killed 34-year-old Oyesunle twin-brothers and another man, Adesanya Adegoke, popularly known as Jeje, on December 26, 2015 close to a hotel in Ketu, Lagos.

Following the extra-judicial killing of the three men and his subsequent instant suicide, he was posthumously tried and dismissed from the police force.

Three weeks after his death in the incident, no family member has come forward to claim his body or even acknowledged knowing him. In the attempt to trace his family, *Sunday Sun* learnt that the wife of Stephen James is a member of the police force and is currently serving under the Ogun State Command.

It was further gathered that the late James listed his son as the next-of-kin, but left no address as to how his wife could be traced. The Commander of the Mopol Unit 22, to which James was attached until his demise, Suleiman Y. Toyin, refused to comment on the matter. Rather he directed the *Sunday Sun* reporter to the Public Relations Officer of the Lagos State Police Command, SP Deola Badmus, being the official spokesperson of the command.

When *Sunday Sun* reporter contacted Badmus to shed light on the whereabouts of James' family, she said

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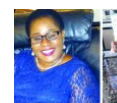
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that the family members absconded from the Alapere Barracks where they lived immediately the news filtered in that he had killed three civilians. Badmus said: "Investigations are still ongoing concerning that case. As soon as we know the family's whereabouts, you will be contacted."

She explained that James was always on the go being a mobile police officer, and may therefore not have a house in Lagos, though he had been in the Lagos Command for six years. She said that most of the officers who come into Lagos State stay at the Squadron's recreational centre or in the halls where space is provided for as many officers as possible.

She also confirmed that the late policeman had been posthumously dismissed from the police force and thereby forfeited his benefits in accordance with police regulations, because of his criminal act.

Immediately after the incident happened, the Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Fatai Owooseni, had said, "We would try him even in death and dismiss him for his actions," while he sympathized with the affected families and also apologized for the irrational action of the policeman.

Prior to committing the infamy that led to his suicide, James was on routine posting to the branch of First Bank at Alapere, Ketu, Lagos, on the fateful day, but was found at Paulson Plaza Hotel.

There are different accounts of what transpired thereafter. The first account was that one of the twin brothers visited the hotel to book a room for his girlfriend, who was expected to arrive in the country. Meanwhile, James who was at the hotel and had been drinking fired off shots that killed the twin brothers and another man, before killing himself. Another account was that Jeje was celebrating his birthday at the hotel and the twin brothers were in attendance.

James was at the time stationed at the hotel to provide security, but instead he had James was at the time harassed people to buy drinks for him. When Taiwo, Kehinde and Jeje came out of the hotel, James who was already tipsy still asked them to buy him beer. They refused and in anger he simply shot them.

The third account stated that the three victims and James got into an argument over analysis of a football match, and in the resulting altercation he shot the three men and killed himself. The last account claimed that James was a teetotaler, who neither smoked cigarettes nor drank alcohol. According to this account, he left his duty post illegally and went to the hotel to watch the match, and had an argument with the three friends, who were alleged to have attempted to disarm him. In anger, he shot them and then killed himself.

In response to the revelation that the wife of James, who herself, was said to be a policewoman attached to the Ogun State Police Command, *Sunday Sun* made efforts to contact the Public Relations Officer of the command, Muiyiwa Adejobi, on the phone, to ascertain the veracity of the information and possibly establish a link with her through him. After about 24 hours, he returned the calls made to him but confirm the information that the wife of James is a policewoman attached to the command.

At the time they were killed, Taiwo was a naval officer while his twin brother was an accounts officer at the Conoil mega station. On his part, the late 35-year-old Adesanya, was a trader and native of Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State. He was buried on Sunday at a cemetery in Ikorodu while the corpses of the twin brothers, Taiwo and Kehinde Oyesunle were taken from Ikorodu General Hospital Morgue to the Nigerian Navy Reference Hospital, Ojo, by naval personnel.

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