

By Esther Onyegbula

The circumstances that led to the alleged murder of 46-year-old Dennis Owegbey Idemudia, who worked as a beach master at Liverpool Jetty, a subsidiary of Maritime Apapa, Lagos, might never be unraveled and neither would his two young children and widow ever find clues to how their breadwinner died going by the turn of events.

The father of two, and a native of Edo State, was last seen alive on Friday, December 31, 2021 after he closed from work at Liverpool Jetty.

As usual, after the close of work, he boarded a boat from Liverpool/Apapa terminal to Aradagu terminal.

Regrettably, he never returned home, as the unexpected happened while he was in transit between Apapa terminal and Iyana Iba jetty.

However, two days after the incident, the company where Dennis worked claimed he was involved in a boat accident while his remains were found floating on the seashore of Badagry waterside.

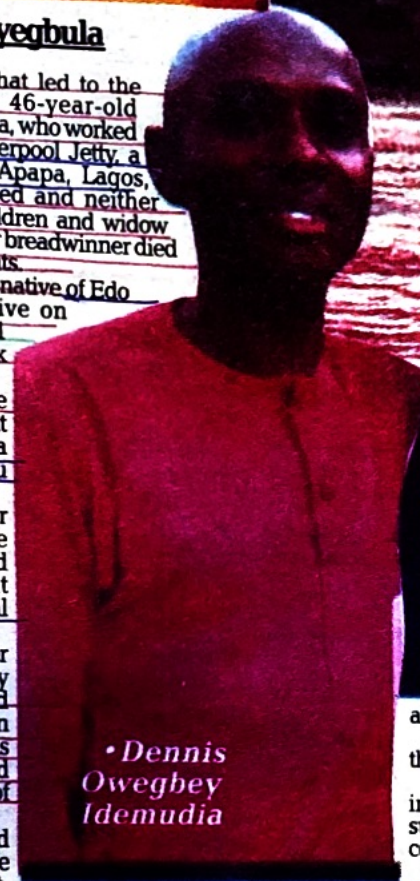
Sunday Vanguard learned that before the unfortunate incident, Dennis had two children from his first wife who died during childbirth. He remarried two months ago before he was murdered.

According to a friend of the deceased, David Arome, who spoke to Sunday Vanguard, "the last time we heard from Dennis alive was when he spoke to his wife on board a boat coming back from work".

Arome continued: "The wife raised the alarm and called me at about 10:00 pm when her husband didn't come back. That night, all efforts to reach him through his phone proved abortive as his lines were switched off."

"We didn't see him the next day (Saturday). It was on the third day that, unfortunately, we found his corpse at the Badagry water bank."

"When we asked the company where he worked, they said the boat he boarded had a collision with



• Dennis Owegbey Idemudia

## Floating corpse in Lagos

- Family raises the alarm over death of man, two months after marriage
- Wife accuses employers of negligence, firm denies

another boat.

"There was no police report about the incident."

"There were about 18 passengers in the boat. The entire issue is suspicious when we saw Dennis' corpse on the 2nd of January 2022."

"There were heavy cuts on his mouth and forehead. The marks on

his body showed he was beaten and strangled to death and then thrown into the sea to look like a boat accident."

"We are suspecting that his co-workers know something about what happened to him."

### Wife's account

The young wife of the deceased, Mercy Idemudia, also spoke: "On the day the incident happened, at about 8:00 pm, I called my husband on phone. He said he was inside the boat returning home. 'And from the background, I could hear the sound of sea waves while we spoke. 'After we spoke, I dropped the call and dozed off. When I woke up, I discovered that he wasn't back yet, it was past 10:00 pm."

"Immediately, I started calling him but his two

lines were switched off."

Obviously alarmed by her inability to reach her husband who would normally come back from work around 9:00 pm, Mercy explained: "I dialed his number over 20 times but it wasn't connecting."

"I began to panic and I raised the alarm. I reached out to some of my neighbours. I told them that my husband hadn't returned from work and his number was unavailable."

"That morning after my husband left for work, I took a short nap, I had a nightmare."

"In that dream, I saw blood everywhere, I saw two men coming out from a building, and they were laughing at me. 'When I woke up, I was afraid but I prayed I said when my husband comes back from work today I will tell him."

"All through that Friday, I could not eat, I lost appetite. I didn't know that something terrible was about to happen to me."

"The next morning, Saturday, I went to the jetty at Iyana-Iba waterside. I asked the people working there if there was any boat accident last night, they said no."

"I explained to them that I was searching for my husband and that he left for work on Friday and hadn't returned. They said there was no accident,

and if there was any, they will be aware."

### Corpse discovered at seaside

"At that time I couldn't reach any of his colleagues because the incident happened exactly two months after we got married."

"So, it was my husband's elder brother that called his place of work at Apapa. 'That was when they said that my husband was involved in a boat accident on Friday night."

"They said they rushed some victims to the hospital, but they didn't find my husband."

"I was worried sick by the entire incident."

"On Sunday, I received news that they found his corpse floating on the seashore of Badagry waterside."

"Looking at my husband's corpse, it was obvious it wasn't a boat accident. All his teeth were removed; everyone who saw his corpse said it was beyond a boat accident."

"Unfortunately, my husband's elder brother said he didn't have the resources to pursue the case or pay for an autopsy to be conducted."

### Fingers pointing

Lamenting, Mercy said the whole incident was suspicious and the company definitely knows something about my husband's murder "otherwise why would they refuse to tell us the other victims who were rushed to the hospital or which hospital they were taken to?"

When Sunday Vanguard reached out to Mr Ayeyemi Omosuyi, Vice Chairman, Liverpool Jetty, a subsidiary of Maritime Apapa, he said the incident that led to the death of Dennis was an accident. He, however, stated that neither him nor the Chairman was in any position to respond to the allegation of complicity in the alleged murder.

He later sent contacts of the District Chairman, Mr Paul Ngwan, who, he said, should react to the allegation.

When Sunday Vanguard eventually reached out to Ngwan, he stated: "The fact of the matter is that it was a boat mishap, he wasn't murdered and the police from Badagry Division were involved. They removed the corpse, they conducted the necessary investigation, the union where he belongs did all the necessary things to bury him, it was an open thing."

Explaining further, the District Chairman said: "Dennis was a casual worker, he wasn't a staff, and he was a beach master at Liverpool, the one in charge of putting people in boat."

"As of the time he boarded the boat, if we want to follow what he did, he was not supposed to enter the boat at that time."

"He was the one who loaded the boat very late as boarding of boats stops at 6 pm. Any boat found in the waterways after 6 pm can be arrested."