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Title : Family, friends shocked by death

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Shock and disbelief were writ large on the faces of family and friends of Harish N, 32, a 2009 batch IPS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre who allegedly committed suicide in Tamil Nadu, as they gathered at his residence in Manjunath Nagar, west Bengaluru, on Thursday .

Harish's wedding to daughter of a police officer had been arranged for March 18 and 19. On Friday , a lagna pathrike pooje had been fixed (where wedding invites were blessed before they're distributed). Friends can't believe he committed suicide, while family members can't understand why he took the extreme step. Harish, incidentally , stayed with DK Ravi, an IAS officer from Karnataka, when they prepared for civil services examination. Ravi allegedly committed suicide last year.

“Soon after news of Ravi's suicide broke out, he called me to ask me what exactly had happened and what the local channels were saying. For a week, he'd call me every day, asking me for updates. He was upset about Ravi's death. It's impossible to believe Harish would choose the same path,” said Harish's friend childhood Hari Prasad. Harish was the eldest Id of Nagaraj, a former child of Nagaraj, a former executive engineer of the PWD, and Shivamma. He had two younger sisters, Asha and Poornima.

Everyone at Harish's Bengaluru home wanted to know how he died. His maternal uncle Nagesh remembered how proud the family was when Harish cleared the UPSC exams in 2008. “He was always a bright child and my favourite nephew,” he said. The family was a little disappointed when Harish was posted to Tamil Nadu and not Karnataka, he added. Khaki was his calling “Maga (son in Bengalurese), if I take up a job, it'll be only as an IPS officer,” Harish would often tell his friends.

And his academic record would see him to that dream job. He bagged the 513rd rank in CET, the entrance exam to join professional courses in Karnataka. After graduating in electronic and telecommunication engineering from R V College of Engineering in 2006, Harish got an offer from an IT major for a salary of Rs 1 lakh per month. But he declined the offer.

After he cleared his KAS exams, he was posted as assistant commissioner in the health department. This too, he declined, recalled Narendra Babu, who had known Harish for over 25 years.

Harish was determination personified. “He had books piled up in his room When he cleared the exams and they cleared his room the family actually hired a mini tempo to shift all the books,” Narendra said.

“When we were young we'd ask ourselves how he managed to top the class even though he was not one bury himself in books,” said Hari Prasad, adding, “We always asked him when he'd study considering we went out, watched movies, played cricket.”

Cricket was Harish's passion, he added. A rightarm fast bowler, Harish idolized Javagal Srinath. On campus, Harish was a different person. Prof. Jagannath, who was head of the electronics and communications department, RVCE remembers Harish because of the time he spent in the library . “He was studious, a quiet boy who didn't get into trouble. You would find him in the library college hours on some days and when there were no classes. For a few years after college, he used to visit the library and spend time there,” he said.

“He was a shy person but friendly too. Listening to him during discussions and debates were eye-openers. He was well-read and made his point clearly and convincingly,” MN Anucheth, now superintendent of police, Chitradurga, said.



SHELL-SHOCKED: Relatives of Harish (inset) at his Bengaluru residence on Thursday are unable to understand why he resorted to the extreme step of taking his life