

26 January 2024

# Justice for Jay Abatan: the campaign continues

Events are being held to mark the 25th anniversary of the racist murder of Jay Abatan.

Jay Abatan, a 42-year-old father of two was murdered in a racist attack in Brighton 25 years ago this month. He and his brother Michael were attacked by a group of white men on 24th January 1999 and Jay died in hospital five days later, having sustained severe head injuries.

Two men were arrested and charged with manslaughter. However, by the time of the trial the charges were reduced to affray and actual bodily harm to Michael. On the instructions of the trial judge the jury was not told that Jay had died of his injuries. The two men were cleared by the jury.

To this day no one has been brought to justice for Jay's murder and the Justice for Jay campaign has now launched a [Crowdfunder to raise funds to pursue a legal challenge](#).

In [2001 an article in The Observer](#) detailed numerous serious failures identified by Essex Police in their review of the investigation of Jay's murder by Sussex Police. These include:

- The failure of the senior investigating officer to involve himself with the case, which may explain why officers at the scene failed to record any details or comments from witnesses.
- The failure of the investigating team to ask the hospital for updates on Jay's condition and to interview hospital staff to ascertain if Jay had spoken to them about the attack.
- The delay in asking the Home Office pathologist to examine Jay's body.

Sussex Police subsequently apologised.

Both Jay and Michael had previously been civil servants and were members of the PTC, a predecessor union of PCS. PCS has supported the Justice for Jay Campaign

and Michael has spoken at PCS events including our national conference.

To mark the 25th anniversary of Jay's murder two events will be held:

- A vigil outside Brighton police station at 2pm on Sunday 28 January. The police station is located at John Street, BN2 0LA.
- On Monday 29 January there will be an anniversary event in the Houses of Parliament from 6-8pm. The venue is the Wilson Room in Portcullis House. Speakers will include Michael Abatan, Sir Peter Bottomley MP, John McDonnell MP and Zita Holbourne - chair of BARAC UK and former national vice-president of PCS.