

Port Harcourt serial killer: I cried after each killing

Emmanuel Masha
PORT HARCOURT

The serial killer behind the death of ladies in hotel rooms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Gracious David West, has disclosed that he cried after each act of murder he commits, explaining that after being overwhelmed by the urge to kill, he would come back to his senses after snuffing life out of the victims.

The 39-years-old West, who was paraded yesterday at the headquarters of the Rivers State Police Command, by the state's Commissioner of Police, Mr. Mustapha Dandaura,

also disclosed that he started killing in Ikeja, Lagos State and killed a total of seven ladies.

He said that he killed alone without any clear motive, and that he killed five persons in Port Harcourt; one in Ikeja and another in Owerri, the Imo State capital.

The native of Buguma in Asari Toru Local Government Area of Rivers State noted that he was always armed with a knife, but killed his victims by strangulating them after which he took their ATM cards, phones, cash and jewellery for survival.

The suspect broke down in tears during the confession, noting that

he tried to seek spiritual deliverance from different churches, but failed to stop his criminal tendencies.

West added that before he killed his female victims he made them disclose their account balance and ATM pins.

He also revealed that he sold the victims' phones to buyers at the Waterlines Junction along Port Harcourt/Abba Expressway and near the MTN office by Oil Mill Market in Port Harcourt.

He said: "I don't know what always came over me to kill. After I had killed, I would feel remorse and then I would cry. But after that, the irresistible urge to kill would come over me again. I killed alone. The first woman I killed in one of the hotels at Ikeja had about N85,000 in her account.

"Before I strangulated them after love making, I would use knife to cut the hotel bed sheets into a semblance

of a twine or rope which I used to bind their hands and feet. I used the knife also to threaten them. The kitchen knife was sold to me by an Aboki.

"I threatened that if my victims raised the alarm I would kill them with the knife. Out of fear, they would keep quiet while I raised the volume of the television set in the hotel room to dwarf any noise. I never killed with the knife.

"After strangulating them, I would steal their ATM cards, empty their accounts from any nearby ATM machine and move on. It is not all the girls I slept with that I killed.

"I killed only whenever the irresistible urge to kill overwhelmed me. I don't have a house. My mother died through poisoning from her mate and I am homeless. I sleep in hotels."

He said he was a member of the Degbam Cult group and was one of the ex-militants rehabilitated by

the Omega Power Ministry (OPM), which got him a job at the Federal University of Science and Technology (FUTO), Owerri, but he ended up stealing the properties of students.

The CP said the suspect did not carry out the killings alone, and that three suspects are in Police custody and are being investigated in connection with these killings.

He promised to parade the suspects when investigations are concluded, stressing that with the joint operations with the Army and other security agencies, the killings in Ogoniland are dropping, while "I have stabilised East-West Road, the Elele-Owerri road."

He stated further: "The suspect is definitely not alone in these killings, though he has made useful confessions but the Command will go beyond his confessions to ensure that a conclusive end is achieved that serves the interest of justice."

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Emmanuel Onani
ABUJA

"However, it was mourning and a monumental set back to the erst-