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Cannibal Surendra?

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NEW DELHI: From day one, there was this hushed talk in our newsroom — will this turn out to be a case of Noida's Hannibal? The apprehension of the worst kind of human depravity, as captured in 'The Silence of the Lambs', appears to be unfortunately coming true.

It must be revolting to the reader, but we have to share with them this vital information that we have authoritatively learnt — Moninder Singh Pandher's man servant, Surendra Koli, has confessed to his interrogators that he not only killed 17 persons, many of them children, but he also ate parts of their bodies.

This is probably the reason why torsos of the bodies have not been found. Surendra is learnt to have said that he ate the liver, ostensibly for body heat. He has said much more about the way he cut up the bodies — that he would decapitate them, then slit them down the middle to reach the organs.

On Thursday, the Noida district hospital chief medical superintendent Dr Vinod Kumar had remarked, after post-mortem, that the victims seemed to have been expertly cut with the precision of butchers. Surendra's reported confession would appear to bear him out.

Some of the details disclosed by Surendra to his interrogators are so gory that they have decided not to put them in the report until they are validated by the narco-analysis test and other evidences. Some doctors feel police should hunt for a "boning" knife.

While the police is being cautious, perhaps because of their experience of dealing with hardened criminals who, once they have broken down, tend to exaggerate their crimes, forensic experts feel that the circumstantial evidence suggest that Surendra's admissions of cannibalism cannot be wished away straightaway.

Interestingly, while the statement recorded by Noida Police quotes Surendra of accusing Moninder Singh Pandher of being an equal partner in the crime, sources in the interrogation team said that he had given his employer a clean chit during the interrogation.

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