

Man is held by gardai in probe on violent deaths after spate of attacks

Michael Mulqueen

DETECTIVES in Limerick City expect to charge a man with the murder of a 24-year-old knifed to death yesterday morning.

A post mortem examination on the body of John O'Sullivan showed that he died after being stabbed at least ten times in a frenzied attack near his home in Moyross.

A second post mortem on the body of another man murdered during a separate incident in the city over the weekend showed that he died from head injuries. Senior gardai say that Anthony Casey (45) was attacked and beaten after socialising in pubs close to Limerick bus and railway station.

The victim of a third unrelated attack in the city, a 31-year-old Clonmel man, was taken off the critical list at the Intensive Care Unit of the Mid-West Regional Hospital in Limerick.

His condition is now described as stable although gardai confirmed he remained unconscious for most of yesterday.

Detectives at Mayorstone Garda Station investigating the murder of Mr O' Sullivan arrested a man in his early twenties shortly before lunchtime yesterday.

He is expected to be charged say garda sources.

Officers are investigating reports that Mr O' Sullivan may have been involved in an altercation prior to the fatal attack on a green close to his home in Creval Park, Moyross, just after 1am yesterday.

He was rushed to the Mid-West Regional Hospital but was pronounced dead at 2.07 am.

Garda sources said that Mr O' Sullivan, a single man, had a criminal past but it was of no relevance to the cause of the murder.

Gardai are appealing for anyone with information to contact them.

The murder weapon is believed to be a large knife, for which searches are expected to continue today.

Detectives at Roxboro Road Station investigating the unrelated murder of Anthony Casey have begun interviewing the first of hundreds of people who

were drinking in pubs close to the lane where he was found unconscious on Friday night.

Doctors at the Mid-West Regional Hospital switched off his life support machine on Sunday night.

Mr Casey, originally from Griffith Avenue, Ballinacurra Weston, Limerick had spent periods of his life homeless and in sheltered accommodation at Limerick's Bruree House and the Brother Russell Home on Mulgrave Street.

He had drifted to Dublin and the UK but had recently returned home.

The murder team has begun checking with guest houses and bed and breakfasts to establish where he stayed in the days leading up to the attack.

Senior officers said that he had no recent contact with his family and getting a recent photograph of him is proving difficult.

He had a history of carrying out minor crimes.

A passerby found him lying unconscious in a lane-way off Parnell Street, close to the bus and rail station on Friday evening.

The scene of the murder is also close to a taxi rank, used by hundreds of people each day.

There was no evidence of robbery and he was fully clothed.

Detectives received reports yesterday that he had spent the day drinking in local pubs.

The murder investigation team, under Inspector Gerry McNamara, is appealing for anyone with information to contact the incident room at 061 214349/0.

City gardai are also carrying out an investigation into an assault on a 31-year-old Clonmel man who was attacked close to Jury's Hotel on the Dock Road in Limerick.

The man was walking with friends after a night's socialising when he was attacked.

Gardai have ruled out any foul play in the case of a man found lying unconscious in the car park of Roxboro Shopping Centre.

The man, from nearby Glasgow Park had sustained a head injury.

He is recovering in hospital, say gardai.

'Stab city' officials play down assault

Michael Mulqueen

THREE recent attacks in Limerick did not mean the city was a violent or dangerous city to live in or visit, the city's deputy mayor and most senior garda officer last night.

"These three were isolated

incidents which happened over one weekend but in no way do they change the fact that Limerick is one of the best places in the country to live, work and visit," said Deputy Mayor, Maria Byrne.

The city's reputation was also stoutly defended by Chief Superintendent Gerry

Kelly who took over as Limerick's most senior garda officer last week.

"It's not just Limerick, it's society generally. I saw violent crime when I was chief in Dun Laoghaire and in Portlaoise," said Supt Kelly.

"In Ennis, where I was also, a man was dragged

down a lane in broad daylight on a Sunday afternoon and killed."

Limerick, which has for years struggled with the tag 'Stab City', ranks seventh in the league table for crime rates despite being the third largest city in the Irish republic.