

News

April 12, 2026 by [Chidera John](#)

Hoodlums attack, burn Imo monarch, kills five others



•Police on manhunt for fleeing assailants

Armed bandits have killed the traditional ruler of Ochia Autonomous Community in **Imo State**, HRH Eze Barrister Paulinus Ekwueme (Ochia I of Ochia Kingdom), burning him to ashes alongside five others.

The monarch was attacked on Friday at about 4:30 p.m. by assailants along Asa Awara Road in Ohaji/Egbema Local Government Area while he was in transit with five other yet-to-be-identified victims.

It was gathered that the hoodlums set the royal father and the other victims ablaze, burning them beyond recognition.

As of the time of filing this report, no motive had been established for the gruesome killing.

However, the state police command has deployed tactical units with available operational assets, in synergy with other security agencies, to hunt down those responsible for the attack.

Reacting to the incident, the State Commissioner of Police, CP Garba Bosso, said the deployment followed a distress report received from the Ohaji Division on April 10, 2026, at about 4:30 p.m., indicating that armed assailants had attacked the traditional ruler along Asa Awara Road.

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“Regrettably, the attack led to the death of the monarch, HRH Eze Barrister Paulinus Ekwueme (Ochia I of Ochia Kingdom), alongside five other yet-to-be-identified victims.

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“Upon receipt of the report, the command immediately mobilised and dispatched tactical teams to the scene at Assa, where operatives recovered the burnt corpses of the deceased.

“The remains have been evacuated and deposited at the Federal University Teaching Hospital (FUTH), Owerri, for preservation and autopsy,” he said.

According to him, the command has commenced a comprehensive investigation into the incident, while intensive operations are ongoing to apprehend the fleeing suspects and recover any weapons in their possession.

“Adequate security measures have also been put in place to forestall any future occurrence of such a tragic incident in the area and its environs,” he added.

He further disclosed that his management team had embarked on an on-the-spot assessment and confidence-building visit to the Ochia community to reassure residents of the command’s resolve to restore calm and enhance sustained security presence in the affected area.

While extending condolences to the family of the late monarch and other victims, the CP assured residents that the command remains fully committed to maintaining peace and security in the state.

“In no distant time, the perpetrators will be arrested and made to face the full wrath of the law,” he assured.

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