

# Gunmen shoot another monarch dead inside Ebonyi palace

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| By Edward Nnachi

Gunmen on Wednesday night assassinated a traditional ruler in Ishinkwo community, Onicha Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, in what residents described as a brazen attack carried out in the monarch's private residence.

*PUNCH Metro* learnt on Thursday that the victim, identified as HRH Eze Jehoshaphat Ikegwu, was reportedly shot at close range after the assailants gained access to his palace under the cover of darkness.

A community source, who requested anonymity due to the sensitivity of the incident, said the attackers fired through a window before forcing their way into the building, where they fatally shot the monarch in his bedroom in the presence of his wife.

Residents said the incident caused panic in the area and expressed fears over the deteriorating security situation in the community.



“They came in the night and operated without resistance. It is shocking and terrifying,” a resident who pleaded anonymity said.

The Chairman of Onicha Local Government Area, Prince Ikechukwu Ogbofia, confirmed the killing to PUNCH Metro and condemned the attack in strong terms, describing it as barbaric and unacceptable.

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He revealed that security agencies had been mobilised to investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident and bring the perpetrators to justice.

“We are deeply saddened by this tragic loss. The government is working closely with security agencies to ensure those responsible are apprehended. We urge members of the community to remain calm and cooperate with law enforcement,” he said.

The state Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Joshua Ukandu, also confirmed the incident. “The Command has received information surrounding the incident, and investigation has already commenced,” he said.

PUNCH Metro reports that the latest killing brings to five the number of traditional rulers murdered in Ebonyi State in recent times, underscoring growing concerns over targeted attacks on community leaders.

The incident came barely a month after a traditional ruler was abducted and gruesomely murdered in Ndufu-Alike community, Ikwo Local Government Area.

The monarch, Eze Francis Igwe, was reportedly kidnapped, later murdered, and his body set ablaze by his abductors.