

# Mob set mentally ill man ablaze for killing nine

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Chigozie Orusa

## . We've launched a manhunt for killers – Police

*Deji Lambo*

The Imo State Police Command says it has launched a manhunt for members of the mob, who set ablaze a mentally ill man, Chigozie Orusa, who allegedly hacked two people to death and injured six others in the Oru-East Local Government Area of the state.

*PUNCH Metro* gathered that Orusa, who was a trader, had developed a mental illness and some good Samaritans, who saw him misbehaving, took him to his parents' house, where he was being treated.

According to a source, Orusa's condition improved while receiving treatment at home, but all of a sudden, he suffered a relapse and started threatening to attack people.

“Everyone thought that his condition had improved until he started shouting that he wanted to kill somebody. Everyone around him had to run, but he took a machete, attacked and killed some people,” the source said.

*PUNCH Metro* learnt that Orusa attacked residents of both Nempi and Akatta communities.

However, an online commentator wrote on *Instablog9ja* that Orusa’s family abandoned him by refusing to get medical help.

According to the post, Orusa’s condition worsened and he allegedly attacked and killed nine people, including his grandfather and the grandfather’s third wife as well as five of his cousins and two neighbours.

Youths, who were angered by the incident, were alleged to have descended on Orusa and burned him alive.

The post read in part, *“A mentally ill boy, identified as Chigozie Orusa, has been subjected to jungle justice after killing nine people in Nempi, Imo State.*

*“Orusa suddenly developed mental illness and was returned to his family for adequate attention. However, his family members didn’t get him any medical help despite his worsening condition.*

*“In the early hours of December 8, 2019, Orusa went wild and machete nine people to death.*

*“He was later overpowered by the youth of the community and set ablaze.”*

A picture attached to the post showed residents gathering around Orusa, who was sitting on the floor, handcuffed and stripped naked.

Another picture showed him in a Barcelona Football Club jersey.

Nigerians, while reacting to the online post, condemned Orusa’s family for abandoning him despite his condition, and also criticised the youth for applying jungle justice on him.

An Instagram user, Choice Olowu, through her handle, *@dear\_choice*, wrote that the tragedy would have been averted if Orusa's family had kept him in a rehabilitation centre.

Olowu wrote, *"Wow! If they had kept him in a mental asylum or something, this wouldn't have happened. Ignorance kills, rest in peace to the dead."*

Another Instagram user, Abdulkareem Olawale, condemned the youth for killing him.

*"Why would they set him ablaze when he's already mentally derailed and when there are correctional centres?"* he wrote through *@unified\_wale*.

However, while reacting to the incident, the state Police Public Relations Officer, Orlando Ikeoku, said Orusa killed two persons and injured six others before the angry mob killed him and set his corpse ablaze.

He stated that the command had launched a manhunt for the killer mob.

Ikeoku said, "I just confirmed that two persons were killed and not nine. Six persons were also injured and have been treated. The injured victims are now fine.

"What happened was that the boy was mentally ill and was brought back home for treatment. After treatment, everybody believed that he was fine, unfortunately, his illness relapsed. So, on that day, he picked up a machete and started shouting that he would kill somebody. Those who knew him to be mentally unstable ran away, while others thought he was joking.

"He later went into town and met an old security guard, who had just closed from night duty in the Nempí community, and killed him. He later went to the Akatta community, attacked and injured some people, and killed a little girl in the process. Afterwards, he ran away to hide somewhere and the youth, who had been looking for him, fished him out, killed him and burnt his corpse.

"We have commenced an investigation into the matter and launched a manhunt to fish out those who perpetrated the act."

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MENTALLY ILL MAN

MOB ATTACK MENTALLY ILL

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