

Christopher Nwabueze Ezea

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Christopher Nwabueze Ezea (15 August 1940 - 14 October 1999) was the 16th **Eze Edem** (**King** of **Edem Kingdom**) in the **Eastern Region** of **Nigeria** from 1977 until his death. He was the son of the late **Chief Ezea Ugwuoke**.

Christopher was born in Ozi-Edem to one of the younger wives (**Lolo Anyi**) of his father.

He married **Roseline Ifeanyichukwu Iworah** in November 1978. She was given the title of ***Nne muru oha*** (***mother of the people***). Although he came from a polygamus family (his father had 9 wives and nearly 30 children) and the fact that he was a King which by **African** standards meant he could have more than one wife, he choose to stay married to only her.

Early life

Public Service Ads by Google Christopher attended Ozi-Edem Primary School and later proceeded to Bishop Shanahan College, **Orlu** where he graduated with **Cambridge** qualifications.

After school, he moved to Ibadan and alongside late **Senator Chuba Okadigbo** (former **President of the Nigerian Senate**) became an active member of the **political party, National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons** later **National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC)**. There, he was personally mentored by the late Sir **Michael Okpara** (former Premier of Eastern Nigeria) and the great **Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe** (first **President of Nigeria**). He later moved back to **Enugu** and took up a permanent position as a personal aide to Sir Michael Okpara.

Following the military **coup d'état** of **29 July 1966** and subsequent outbreak of the **Nigerian Civil War** on **6 July 1967**, he joined the **Biafran Army** as a lieutenant fighting under the command of German mercenary Rolf Steiner.

When the war ended in **1970**, he went into private business becoming a major government contractor in the Nigeria coal industry and owning one of the top 20 construction companies in Eastern Nigeria.

Reign

Early in 1977, he was invited to a meeting to resolve the thorny issue of where to site the **Aho Edem** main market. This problem had constantly threatened to break up the three zones (**Ozi-Edem, Akpa-Edem and Edem-Ani**) of Edem. He subsequently proposed a solution that settled a problem that had lingered for nearly 100 years.

Later that year when a new King had to be elected, Christopher's ability to resolve that dispute plus numerous other things made him a strong favourite. He was subsequently elected by the **Oha Edem** (Edem Elders Council) to ascend the **throne** of his **forefathers**.

His **coronation** took place later in 1977. From then on he became ***His Majesty, Igwe Christopher Nwabueze Ezea, Eze Edem, Agaba-Idu II*** (*meaning The Lion*). On the 26th of November 1977, he was officially handed the **Staff of office** by the **Military Governor** of the then **Anambra State, Col. John Kpera**. His entourage to and from the ceremony was reputed to be in the thousands and stretched for over 2 kilometers.

Christopher was highly respected because of his relaxed nature, generosity and avoidance of pomp (except when necessary). These qualities endeared him to the people, making him the most popular King in the history of the ancient Kingdom.

In the 1979 general elections during Nigeria's second republic, alongside Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, he was very instrumental to the emergence of Senator **Jim Nwobodo** as the Executive **Governor** of old Anambra State. His political influence amongst other things resulted in him being a member of the powerful Council of Chiefs (old Anambra State and later Enugu State) all through his time on the throne. During his reign, for the first time a proper and modern **constitution** was written for the Kingdom. This also led to the formation of the Edem Development Union when the new constitution took effect in 1990.

Children

- **H.R.H. Crown Prince** Christopher Nwabueze II (b. 14 March 1979, titled **Ozo, Agaba-Idu Edem III**)
- H.R.H. Prince Peter Ikechukwu (b. 19 February 1981)
- H.R.H. Prince Frank Chukwuemeka (b. 6 January 1983)

Crown Prince Christopher married Miss Stella Mary Lawal, daughter of **Sir Samuel Lawal** on the 9th of October 2004. She then became **Crown Princess** Stella of Edem. On 25 August 2006, she gave birth to the couples first child, **Princess** Adaeze. Presently, she's the only grand-child of Igwe Christopher.

Generally, the entire family is known for keeping a very low profile.

Death

Igwe Christopher died in the early hours of 14 October 1999 at the age of 59. Cause of death was declared as [cardiac arrest](#). According to Edem tradition, his death was kept a secret until it was officially announced by the Oha Edem on 2 November 1999 and a 30 days mourning period began. He was buried on 3 December 1999, commencing the start of a series of post burial ceremonies for the following twenty-eight (28) days. He had ruled for a total of 23 years.

His eldest son Crown Prince Christopher who was 20 years old at the time refused to succeed the throne and also refused to assume the role of the Regent. As a result of this, Edem Kingdom has no King till date. He still remains [Heir Apparent](#) to the throne.

In year 2000, Igwe C.N. Ezea Memorial Schools (nursery, primary, secondary and adult education) were built in Ozi-Edem in his memory. Several roads were also named after him amongst them the major *Edem Road* which was changed to *Igwe C.N. Ezea Road* by the then [Chairman \(Mayor\)](#) of [Nsukka](#) Local Government, Dr. Dan Shere.

Legacy

During his reign, Edem was known to have experienced peace as never seen before. He influenced the elections and appointments of several indigenes of Edem into key [government](#) positions and major [multinational corporations](#).

A strong believer in education, he sponsored numerous indigenes of Edem and also non-indigenes in various academic levels.

Till date, he's reputed to have made Edem people very proud and to have brought great prosperity to the Kingdom. He was a devout [catholic](#) and contributed immensely to the [church](#).

Interests

He was known to be an avowed lover of jazz music and also loved hunting.

Royal Styles

[Reference style](#) - [His Majesty](#) **Spoken style** - Eze Edem **Alternative style** - Agaba-Idu

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