

King Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV of Uganda's Tooro Kingdom, who became monarch at the age of 3 and was recognized as the world's youngest reigning king, has died at 34.

Tooro Kingdom Prime Minister Calvin Armstrong Rwomiire Akiiki announced the death late Thursday, saying the king died at about 10 p.m. Uganda time.

"It is with profound sadness and a heavy heart that I announce the passing of His Majesty the Omukama of Tooro, King Oyo Nyimba Kabamba Iguru Rukidi IV," Rwomiire said in a statement posted on X.

The kingdom did not immediately give a cause of death or say where the king died. Media reports said Oyo had been suffering from cancer and receiving treatment in the United States, but the kingdom had not confirmed those reports.

The announcement followed an earlier statement from the kingdom saying Oyo was in critical condition and urging the public to pray for him while warning against speculation and unverified information about his health.

His death came as a shock to many Ugandans who were not aware that the king had been receiving treatment abroad.

"This is very difficult to comprehend," Uganda's Deputy Parliament Speaker Thomas Tayebwa said.

Oyo was born on April 16, 1992, and became Omukama of Tooro on Sept. 12, 1995, after the death of his father, King Patrick David Matthew Kaboyo Olimi III.

Because he was only 3, Oyo's mother, Queen Best Kemigisa, members of the royal family and regents helped manage the affairs of the kingdom during his childhood.



He assumed full royal duties after turning 18 in 2010.

His installation as a child attracted international attention and earned him recognition from Guinness World Records as the world's youngest reigning monarch. His coronation included traditional Tooro rituals and formally gave him the title of Omukama.

Oyo remained a prominent figure in Uganda as he grew older, although he generally kept a low public profile. He was unmarried at the time of his death.

Tooro Kingdom said the institution would continue under a new monarch, announcing that Oyo had left behind a prince who is expected to succeed him.

“The continuity of the Crown is assured,” Rwomiire said, adding that the identity of the heir would be formally announced at the appropriate time in accordance with the traditions and customs of the kingdom.

Tooro is one of Uganda’s traditional kingdoms and is based in the western part of the country, with its seat in Fort Portal. The kingdom has no political authority under Uganda’s constitutional system, but the monarch plays a cultural role as a custodian of the traditions and identity of the Batooro people.

Uganda’s traditional kingdoms were abolished after independence but were restored in 1993 under President Yoweri Museveni.

Oyo’s reign lasted more than 30 years, beginning when he was a child and continuing through his adulthood. His unusual accession made him an internationally known boy king, while in later years he became a more private figure.

The Tooro Kingdom said further details about the funeral and mourning arrangements would be announced later.