

Suspected herders kill seven in Edo

SUSPECTED cattle herders yesterday killed seven persons in a cluster of communities in Edo State.

The communities are Ugboke, Oshodi, Okokodo, Ariyan and Yoruba Camp in Ovia Northeast Local Government Area.

A resident of the area, Mrs. Janet Ighodaro told our reporter on the phone that the herdsmen launched the attacks from Yoruba Camp, which they made their base.

Ighodaro said she fled the area to join her family in Benin, the state capital, adding that the assailants shot rapidly during the attack.

She said four of the victims were returning from their farms when they were gunned down.

"The gruesome attacks and killings by the herdsmen were immediately reported to the police, but security presence in the area is zero," Ighodaro said.

"Some policemen who arrived in the area after our report only stopped at Okokhua community, insisting not to go

Edo won't give land for grazing, says Obaseki

THE Edo State government has said it will not provide any land for cattle grazing in the state.

The state made its position clear in a statement by Secretary to the State Government Osarodion Ogie, asserting that the Godwin Obaseki administration will not cede land to herdsmen for cattle grazing.

Ogie said that the government's position on the matter was clear and had not changed.

He said: "Our attention has been drawn to misleading and false media reports (not in *The Nation*) claiming that the Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, has agreed to provide grazing land for herders in the state.

"Our position on the matter of grazing land is clear and has not shifted, which is that there is no free land for grazing in Edo State.

"Grazing is an economic activity just like poultry and piggery or any other agricultural enterprise. The Edo State government will not cede any land in the state for grazing."

From Bisi Olaniyi, Benin

further, but rather instructed people in the affected communities to bring the bodies of the victims to Okokhua."

Residents of the area urged security agencies to urgently come to their rescue.

Police spokesman Chidi Nwabuzor confirmed the killings.

He said, "Edo State Police Command is aware of the in-

cident that happened within the jurisdiction of Ekhiadolor Divisional Police Command. The DPO and his operatives visited the crime scene and evacuated the bodies. Moves are on to ensure that the place is calm and everything returns to normalcy. Police are carrying out their investigation to arrest the criminal herdsmen who perpetuated the dastardly acts."