

Farmers/herdsmen clash, auto crash claim 12 lives in Benue

By Peter Duru

4 **MAKURDI**—A one-year-old baby and six others have been reportedly killed in a motor accident along Otukpo-Enugu Road in Benue State.

5 This is just as five persons were feared dead in a fresh clashes between Benue farmers and suspected herdsmen in Turan, Kwande Local Government Area of the state.

The Otukpo Unit Commander of Federal Road Safety Corps, FRSC, Mr. Abdullahi Umar, confirmed to *Vanguard* that seven persons, including a year-old baby, were killed in an auto-crash in Otukpo.

Umar said the accident,

which occurred yesterday evening, involved a truck loaded with goods and an Enugu-bound Volkswagen Golf car carrying seven.

He said: "It was a fatal accident that occurred after a Mercedes 911 truck that was loaded with yam and corn fell over a Volkswagen Golf car, killing all the seven passengers in the car including a one-year-old baby and the mother.

"Our finding is that the driver of the truck lost control of the vehicle and somehow fell on the small car that was heading towards Enugu. Unfortunately all the passengers died on the spot."

When asked if the victims of the mishap were students

of Benue State Polytechnic, Ugbokolo, as being rumoured in the state, Umar said: "I cannot confirm that the victims were students because nobody has come forward to identify the corpses."

On the fresh outbreak of clashes between farmers and herdsmen, *Vanguard* gathered from an eyewitness that herdsmen had besieged Inundugh village in Yaav council ward, late Tuesday night shooting sporadically and setting houses and huts ablaze.

When contacted, the Benue State Police Public Relations Officer, Moses Yamu, who confirmed the attack, explained that the police recorded two deaths in the crisis, adding that the command had deployed its men to the area to restore peace.