

Soldiers repel Boko Haram from Gubio

From Hamza Idris, Maiduguri

Boko Haram militants invaded Gubio town in Borno State between Saturday night and early yesterday but were repelled by Nigerian troops after heavy fighting, *Daily Trust* gathered yesterday.

Sources said the militants burnt more than half of Gubio, a historic city in northern Borno.

Residential houses, the local government secretariat and some

facilities housing security forces were torched by the attackers, Kalouma Yusuf, a resident of the town said.

Sources said the insurgents were well armed and drove to Gubio around 8pm in a convoy.

"Our men engaged the terrorists in an all-night fight... I cannot tell you the level of casualty but the encounter was fierce," a source said.

Another source said the number of the attackers kept swelling, forcing the troops in the area to temporarily retreat.

"The offensive by our men continued towards midnight after a reinforcement from Maiduguri and we finally dealt with them, we killed many of them and the rest fled," he said.

A senior official from Gubio said the attack was a setback.

"We would not be wrong if we say the latest attack on Gubio was surprising because the belief was that the terrorists had been driven completely out of northern Borno," he said.

"Though the town had been deserted

for long, some people are still living there and thousands of others who are taking refuge in Maiduguri had completed plans to leave."

Gubio was attacked by the terrorists in November 2014 at the height of the Boko Haram crisis but could not take control of the town. They made similar attempts this year after taking over large swathes of territories but failed. A predominantly farming community, Gubio has a population of 152,778 people, according to the 2006 census.

Jos chief Imam, Sheikh