

Soldiers, insurgents killed in gunfire in Borno

From Uthman Abubakar, Maiduguri

1 Suspected Boko Haram insurgents attacked Gajiganna town, Magumeri Local Government Area of Borno State, Saturday evening, resulting in "substantial" casualties on the part of the troops and the insurgents, according to sources.

2 The insurgents had reportedly attacked Gajiram, headquarters of Nganzai Local Government Area.

Sources alleged that the attacks "were intent on disrupting the elections" in those Northern Borno communities where thousands of displaced residents in Maiduguri and other citizens had hoped to vote.

"The insurgents had by 4pm of Saturday attempted attacking Magumeri town, but were repelled by a military formation there, acting on information", a leading official of the Borno State Hunters Association told *Daily Trust*.

"Unsuccessful at Magumeri,

1 the insurgents proceeded to Gajiganna, which they attacked by 7pm, engaging troops there in a fierce combat; I have received reports that about 7 soldiers and many of the insurgents were killed, but I have not confirmed figures yet," he said.

"Residents of the community fled in various directions; I cannot, therefore, give you tentative figures of casualties on their part," he said.

2 "The insurgents also attacked Gajiram shortly after two

vehicle-loads of eligible voters who had travelled there to cast their votes had passed on their backward journey to Maiduguri. All the attacks seemed to majority of the public intent on disrupting the elections," he said.

The spokesman of the 7 Division of the Nigerian Army, Maiduguri, Col. Ado Isa, confirmed the Gajiganna attack, but did not give casualty figures, saying, "the Army Headquarters will soon issue a statement on it."