

18 Feared Killed in Soldiers, Boko Haram Clash

About 18 persons were at the weekend, feared killed, when soldiers and members of the outlawed Islamist sect, Boko Haram, clashed in the North-eastern part of the Nigeria, a military source and officials said.

It was gathered that about 50 gunmen in cars and commercial motorbikes had stormed the town, forcing hundreds of residents to flee into hiding in nearby farms.

The sect, which wants to impose Islamic law in the North, and other spin-off Islamist groups have become the biggest threat to stability in the country.

A military source, which pleaded for anonymity, alleged that suspected members of the Boko Haram sect killed 11 people in an attack on Damboa town in Borno State on Thursday, shooting at soldiers, burning shops

and killing civilians in the process.

However, the Police Public Relations Office (PPRO), Mr. Fwaje Atajiri, told journalists in Gombe, that seven members of the sect were killed in a two-hour gun fight early Friday.

President Goodluck Jonathan had declared a state of emergency in mid-May, where an offensive was launched against the group in its stronghold in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States.

The insurgency was initially weakened but remains active, and there had been an uptick in violence in the past month.

Boko Haram's main targets are security forces or government officials. It has also carried out several attacks on Christian and Muslim worshippers, as well as schools and markets.