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Emergency declared in parts of Nigeria

REUTERS

Maiduguri, Nigeria, 1 January

Heavily armed troops and tanks patrolled the streets of Maiduguri in northeast Nigeria Sunday, witnesses said, after the president declared a state of emergency in parts of the north affected by an Islamist insurgency.

President

Goodluck

Jonathan imposed the state of emergency on the northeast, the conflict-prone central city of Jos, and part of Niger state near Abuja Saturday, and closed the borders with Cameroon, Chad and Niger in the northeast.

Nearly a week after the radical sect Boko Haram set off a series of bombs across Nigeria on Christmas Day, including

one at a church that killed at least 37 people and wounded 57, Jonathan told state television his aim was to restore security in troubled parts of the north.

A Reuters reporter in Maiduguri, a remote city in the northeast and the center of the Boko Haram insurgency, saw several tanks patrolling the city and groups of a dozen or more soldiers at a time out on foot

patrol.

"We woke up this morning only to see armed soldiers all over the place and some tanks patrolling. We fear what may happen next," said Maiduguri resident Buba Guduf.

Jonathan said he had told his chief of defense staff to take other "appropriate" measures, including setting up a special counter-terrorism force.