

9 Soldiers Killed, Several Missing In Ambush



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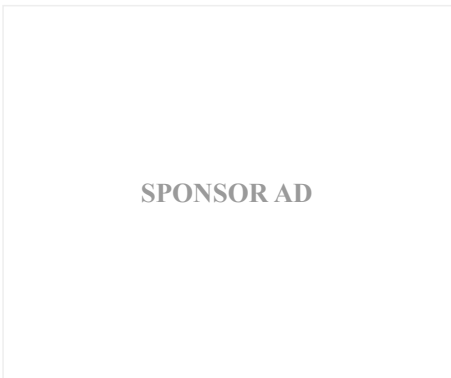
Wed, 28 Jan 2026 6:34:16 WAT



At least nine Nigerian soldiers were killed and over a dozen are missing after IS-aligned jihadists ambushed a military patrol in northeast Borno state, military and militia sources told AFP Tuesday.

Fighters from Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) on Friday used explosives and guns to attack a column of more than 30 troops on foot patrol outside the town of Damask near the border with Niger, the sources said.

“We lost nine soldiers in an ambush by ISWAP terrorists and many others are still missing,” a military officer said.



The soldiers, who were 25 kilometres (15 miles) from their base, dispersed in all directions following sustained gunfire from the jihadists, said the officer who asked not to be identified.

“The terrorists detonated an explosive device they had planted on the road in advance, increasing the casualties and confusion among the soldiers,” he said.

Eight soldiers managed to return to base while the rest remain missing, including their commander with the rank of a major, the officer said.

“A man who identified himself as an ISWAP terrorist keeps answering the call to the commander’s mobile phone, suggesting he is in the hands of the terrorists,” he added.

Ya-Mulam Kadai, a spokesman for government-funded anti-jihadist militia assisting the military in Damask, gave the same casualty toll.

The nine bodies of the slain soldiers were recovered by a military search team deployed at the scene of the attack, he said.

The military did not respond to AFP’s request for comment. (AFP)