# Eight Israeli Soldiers Killed in Deadly Explosion in Gaza



Eight Israeli soldiers were killed in southern Gaza during an overnight operation in Rafah's Tel Sultan neighborhood on Saturday. The explosion occurred around 5 AM while the soldiers were inside a Namer armored combat engineering vehicle, which was part of a convoy returning to rest after the offensive. This event marks one of the deadliest incidents for Israeli forces in the ongoing conflict with Hamas.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) reported that the convoy, involving the 401st Armored Brigade, had killed around 50 gunmen during the assault. Though the cause of the explosion is still under investigation, there were no immediate signs that the vehicle was stationary or under direct gunfire at the time. Captain Wassem Mahmoud, 23, was among the deceased.

This incident raises the death toll of IDF soldiers to 307 in ground operations against Hamas along the Gaza border since the conflict escalated. This follows a January attack where 21 Israeli soldiers were killed. The conflict, initiated by Hamas' attack on October 7, has resulted in over 37,000 Palestinian deaths and widespread displacement.

In Tel Aviv, protests continue, calling for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's resignation and the immediate return of hostages. The Israeli military offensive and airstrikes have severely impacted Gaza, leading to significant humanitarian challenges.