

# *Far-right Israeli minister calls for complete destruction of Gaza after eight Israeli soldiers burned to death in Hamas ambush*

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Tel Aviv, June 16 (RHC)-- Israeli regime's hawkish finance minister has called for "the complete destruction of the enemy" in Gaza after eight soldiers were killed in a Hamas ambush, making it the deadliest attack on the Israeli army in Gaza since January.

Israel's far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich in a social media post on Saturday, asserted that Israel is engaged in a "war for our existence" and emphasized the necessity of continuing military operations. "The heavy price of the war obliges us to continue until the complete destruction of the enemy," he wrote, adding: "Our sons fell so we would win."

Itamar Ben Gvir, the so-called security minister and extremist coalition partner of Israel's prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, has also expressed his backing for the continued genocidal military operation. "We must continue fighting. To topple Hamas, return all our hostages and assure their families and all bereaved families that the death of their loved ones was not in vain," he posted on X.

Moreover, Netanyahu has repeatedly said Israel's war on Gaza will continue, despite what he called the "staggering cost" of the war.

Since early May, Israel has been carrying out what its military calls "limited operations" to kill Hamas fighters and dismantle infrastructure used by Hamas.

The Israeli forces identified Rafah as the "final stronghold" of Hamas, as it is the only remaining major city in Gaza that has not been destroyed since Israel invaded Gaza in October 7.

Eight Israeli soldiers were killed in a blast in the southern city of Rafah in Gaza, as they were driving in an armored personnel carrier after having taken part in an attack on the Tal al-Sultan neighborhood in the west of Rafah overnight.

Earlier in the day, al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of the Hamas resistance movement, said in a statement that its fighters had ambushed an armored vehicle in the area, killing and wounding a number of Israeli soldiers.

Also Israeli forces confirmed the deaths of two soldiers from the 179th Brigade in central Gaza after an improvised explosive device (IED) detonated, injuring two others, while another soldier from the Givati Brigade died from injuries sustained in fights in Rafah, bringing the death toll of Israeli soldiers killed on Saturday to 11.

With these latest casualties, the death toll of Israeli soldiers since the start of the war on Gaza on October 7 has risen to 661. This includes 307 soldiers killed since the beginning of the ground offensive in Gaza. Furthermore, 3,617 soldiers have been wounded, according to the army's published figures.

Israeli media occasionally defy military censorship reports casualties of the army, which contradicts the official statistics.

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