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Israeli Military fire on Palestinian and International journalists

Monday May 21, 2007 15:00 by John Smith - IMEMC News [news at imemc dot org](mailto:news@imemc.org) 

In an unprovoked attack, the Israeli Military fired on a number of Palestinian and International journalists in the village of Ertas, near the southern West Bank city of Bethlehem, on Monday afternoon.



Israeli troops attack farmers who attempted to replant trees uprooted by the Army on Sunday (Photo: IMEMC News)

In an unprovoked attack, the Israeli Military on Monday afternoon fired on a number of Palestinian and International journalists in the village of Ertas, near the southern West Bank city of Bethlehem.

Troops took prisoner three Palestinian farmers, two of which are accused of allegedly assaulting security officers accompanying the bulldozers. The two were identified as Adham Rabiya 22, and Ali Abu Sway 18. Eyewitnesses told IMEMC that there was no violence or assault committed by the two young men.

Awad Abu Sway, the owner of the land, was also taken prisoner by the Israeli army.

Crowds of local Palestinians, international peace activists and Israeli peace activists had gathered in the village on Sunday morning to non-violently protest against the bulldozing of land and uprooting of trees in the area. After a scuffle in which the Palestinian Minister of Information Dr. Mustafa Barghouthi and a number of farmers were attacked and four Israelis were arrested, the military operation went ahead as planned.

On Monday afternoon, journalists and protestors gathered to cover the attempts of local residents to move back onto the land. In the ensuing events and in an unprovoked attack, the Israeli military opened fire on a number of Palestinian and International journalists, including correspondents from IMEMC, Ma'an news agency and Reuters.

Claiming that they had been fired on first, a statement contradicted by eyewitnesses and journalists at the scene, the Israeli army threatened those present with arrest and detainment.

No one was reported injured in the attack and the protest remains ongoing.

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