

Accused coup plotters seize Manila hotel

by UPI

MANILA, Philippines -- A group of army officers accused in a coup plot in the Philippines took over a luxury Manila hotel Thursday after storming out of their trial. About 30 officers and a senator, on trial for an attempted 2003 coup against Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, holed up in the prestigious Peninsula hotel, local media reported. Live local television coverage of the standoff seen by CNN showed National Police blasting tear gas canisters into the hotel's ground floor, followed by an armored vehicle ramming the front of the building. After about four hours, the group surrendered, reports said. Philippine Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro told CNN there had been no significant injuries in the stand-off. The stand-off started after the military officers including newly elected opposition Sen. Antonio Trillanes and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim bolted from the courtroom for the hotel where they issued demands for Arroyo's resignation. In a nationally televised address, Arroyo said the men's trial would continue and "additional charges will be prepared to punish those who committed new crimes."

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