
ETHNIC ARMED GROUPS IN MYANMAR CLAIM CAPTURE OF REGIONAL MILITARY HEADQUARTERS AND GEM MINING CENTER

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26.07.2024

AP News (25 July 2024)

Grant Peck

Ethnic armed groups claimed on Thursday to have captured two strategically important towns in northeastern Myanmar: Lashio, which houses the major regional military headquarters, and Mogok, the center of the countrys lucrative gem-mining industry.

Their fall would be the biggest in a series of setbacks suffered by Myanmars military government this year, and raises questions about whether the ruling military council could be forced to give up trying to hold contested territory in order to consolidate a defense of the central heartland.

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