



ISP Stakeholder Tracker 2026

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# Fourth-Generation Officers Rising to the *Tatmadaw's* Top Ranks

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## Fourth-Generation Officers Rising to the *Tatmadaw's* Top Ranks

### Period

January 2026

### Stakeholders

Leadership of the Myanmar Armed Forces

### Issues/activity

Junta leader Senior General Min Aung Hlaing has retired three lieutenant generals from the Defence Services Academy (DSA) Batch 32, replacing them with officers from the *Tatmadaw's* “fourth generation.”

### Status/trends

Just months prior to the election, six third-generation lieutenant generals were pushed into retirement, and commanders of the Bureau of Special Operations (BSO) were reshuffled. Three more top-level lieutenant generals have since been removed. The pattern points to the continued sidelining of generals senior to General Kyaw Swar Lin (DSA-35), who is widely tipped to succeed the junta leader as commander-in-chief. Most Chiefs and BSO commanders who lead the General staff, Adjutant General, and Quartermaster General (G, A, and Q) operations,

as well as Regional Military Commanders, are now all fourth-generation officers. A few exceptions left are the Judge Advocate General, the Quartermaster General, the Chief of Staff (Air Force), and the Chief of Engineer (Navy). A fourth-generation transition, orchestrated by the junta leader, is clearly taking shape within the *Tatmadaw's* senior ranks.

### Implications

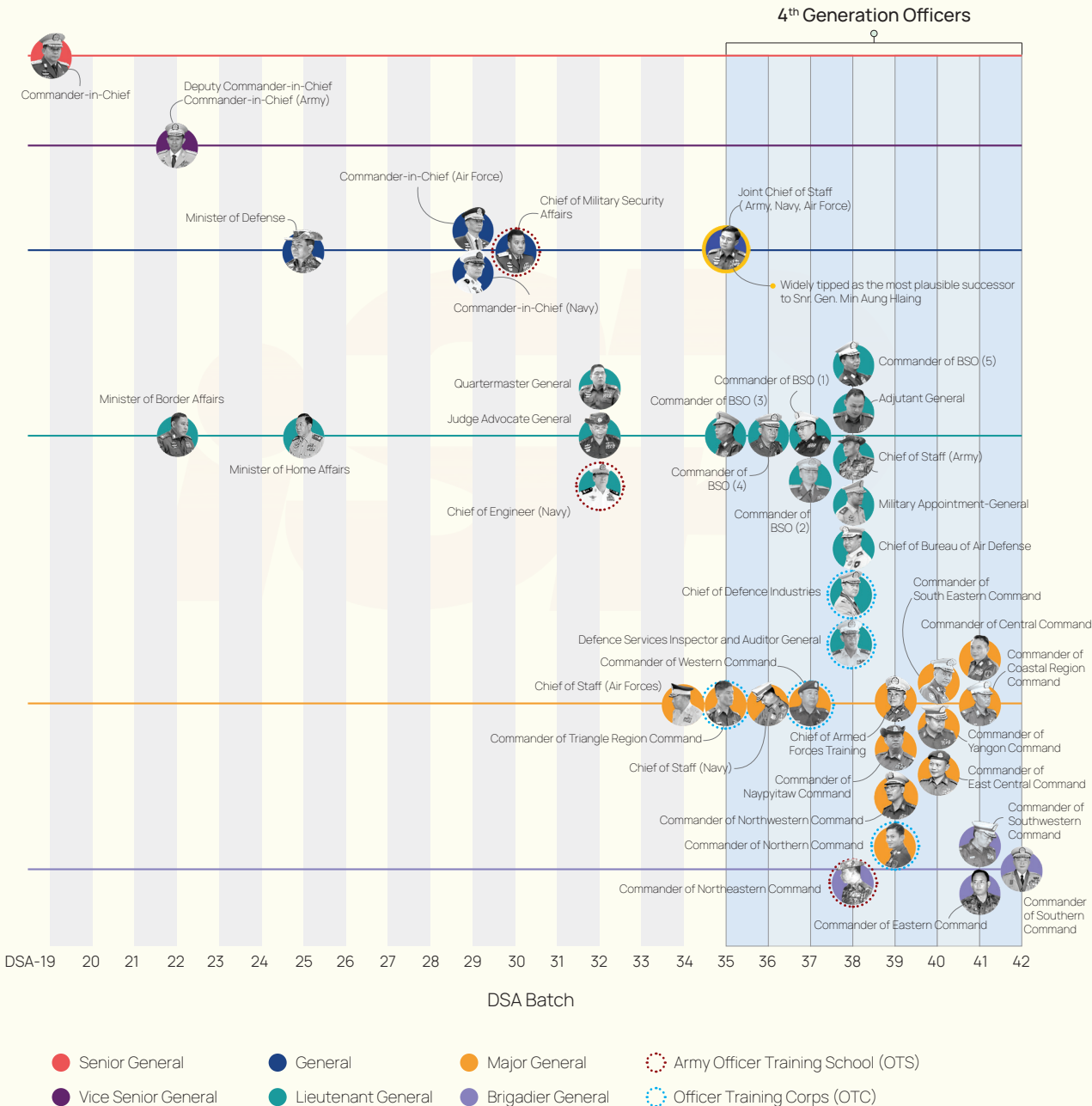
The junta leader is micromanaging the *Tatmadaw's* generational transition in line with his own preferences, elevating loyal protégés from within his patronage network. This is likely to further consolidate his influence over the armed forces. As significantly younger officers—both in age and DSA intake—replace senior posts, the shift will have consequences for nationwide military operations and the overall composition of the armed forces.

### Relevance

As assessed in **State of Myanmar: *ISP-Myanmar's Annual Strategic Review and Foresight (2025-2026)***, the junta leader is likely to continue shaping—and controlling—the leadership transition by whatever means he can for as long as his power endures. The post-election shift towards the regime's fourth generation is therefore a key trend to watch in 2026. ■

## Fourth Generation Officers Claim 28 Key Leadership Positions

Of the roughly 40 officers overseeing the *Tatmadaw's* most critical positions, such as the General Staff, Adjutant General, and Quartermaster General (G, A, and Q) functions, **no fewer than 28** are now fourth-generation officers. All commanders of the Bureau of Special Operations (BSOs)—as well as all regional commanders directing nationwide military operations—are also drawn from the fourth generation.



Data as of January 21, 2026, is part of research conducted by ISP-Myanmar's Conflict, Peace and Security Studies. It may vary from other sources due to differences in methodology and data availability. Military personnel who are not DSA Graduates are assigned an equivalent DSA batch based on their commissioning year.