

6. Sanitation Trap- Governance

66% sanitation workers in Central govt from SC, ST, OBC groups- DoPT report

The Department of Personnel and Training's (DoPT) Annual Report 2024-25 provides a comprehensive look at the social composition of India's 32.52 lakh central government employees. While it showcases progress in certain categories, it fundamentally reveals a persistent "sanitation trap" and a tapering effect in senior leadership roles.

Caste Concentration and Occupational Segregation

The report highlights a stark correlation between caste and specific "lower-tier" manual roles, particularly in sanitation.

The Sanitation Trap- Over 66% (and in some subsets up to 76%) of Group C safai karmacharis (sanitation workers) belong to SC, ST, and OBC communities.

- SC Workers- 36.75% of all sanitation workers.
- ST Workers- 8.18%.
- OBC Workers- 21.15%.

Implication- This concentration suggests that historical caste-based occupational hierarchies remain deeply entrenched within the modern state machinery, despite decades of reservation.

Representation Across Service Groups

There is a visible **"tapering effect"**- as the seniority of the post increases, the representation of marginalized groups decreases.

Service Group	SC Representation (Quota- 15%)	ST Representation (Quota- 7.5%)	OBC Representation (Quota- 27%)
Group A (Senior)	14.20%	6.54%	19.14%
Group B (Middle)	16.20%	7.63%	21.95%
Group C (Excl. Sanitation)	16.75%	8.94%	27.29%
Overall Workforce	16.84%	8.70%	26.32%

Key Finding- While overall numbers for SC and ST seem to meet the national quota, they are significantly under-represented in Group A (decision-making) roles.

Critical Gaps and Trends (2018-19 vs. 2024-25)

The report is the first full dataset released since 2018-19, following a period of partial reporting that covered only about 60% of the workforce.

SC Stagnation/Decline- SC representation in the total workforce has marginally declined from 17.49% (2018-19) to 16.84% (2024-25).

OBC Growth- OBCs saw the most significant gains, jumping from 21.57% to 26.32%, nearly reaching the 27% mandate.

The EWS Data Gap- Despite the 10% quota for the Economically Weaker Section (EWS), the 2024-25 report provides no data on their representation, hindering any assessment of the policy's impact.

Reporting Delays- Ministries cited delayed data submissions as the reason for only partial figures being available between 2019 and 2023.

Way Forward- Moving Beyond Numerical Quotas

The data suggests that "entry" into government service is not enough; "mobility" within the service is the next frontier.

Upward Mobility & Training- * Implement Mission Karmayogi to provide competency-based training for reserved category employees. Establish structured mentoring and coaching for internal promotional exams to break the "glass ceiling" in Group A.

Occupational Diversification- * Break the sanitation link by transitioning Group C workers into technical or administrative posts via Skill India and PMKVY. Prioritize the mechanization of sanitation work to de-stigmatize the role and reduce manual concentration.

Institutional Accountability- * Mandatory EWS Reporting- Annual publication of EWS-wise data is essential for transparency.

Special Recruitment Drives- Conduct targeted campaigns to fill "backlog vacancies" in senior cadres.

Digitized Dashboards- Use e-Office reforms to create real-time, public-facing HR dashboards showing department-wise diversity statistics.

