

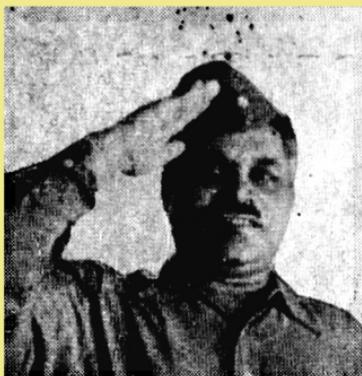
SENAPATI BHONSLE'S National Discipline Scheme

SCRAPPED?



Late Jawaharlal Nehru with Senapati Bhonsle.

— Dr. D. G. NAIK,
M. A., Phd



SENAPATI
BHONSLE



N. D. S. Balsena

N. D. S. A Progressive and Dynamic Scheme.



"The National Discipline Scheme Training Institute gives a picture of Emotional and National Unity in the country. It is necessary that the entire country should remain disciplined at all times. National Discipline Scheme is a progressive and Dynamic scheme. The training under the scheme should spread all over the country."

Prime Minister,
Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri

President Dr. Radhakrishnan always appreciated the useful role of the N. D. S. in the training of youth and hoped for the expansion of the Scheme in the years to come.



Dr. Radhakrishnan



Senapati Bhonsle set a noble tradition in the country by giving it the National Discipline Scheme and laying down his life for it. It would be difficult to find a parallel to the ingratitude on our part if we were to throw away the Scheme which is a fitting memorial to the late Senapati.

G. F. Ajgaonkar
Biographer of Senapati Bhonsle

SENAPATI BHONSLE'S NATIONAL DISCIPLINE SCHEME SCRAPPED ?

In the issue of the Times of India dated 11th Jan. 1965, there was a news item about Maj.-Gen. Virendra Singh, Director Gen. of N.C.C. who, while waxing eloquent to newsmen, on the grand achievement of the N. C. C. cursorily said that the N. D. S. would be discontinued from April, 1965. This news of the discontinuation of the National Discipline Scheme, if true, is indeed a matter of very serious implications although the newspaper where it appeared failed to take any special cognizance of it. If the National Discipline Scheme is to be discarded, as it appears from the Maj -General's speech, from April next, it must have been now in the process of dying. It is rather surprising that there should have been so far no public reference to the proposed scrapping of this great national scheme except the above passing remark of the Maj.-General.

Senapati Bhonsle's National Discipline Scheme has its ramifications throughout the country and if it is to be dropped suddenly the whole country would get perturbed and rendered uneasy. The people may feel concerned and get alarmed by the disagreeable news. For, till Yesterday they were in great bliss and happiness about The National Discipline Scheme. The Government, the Opposition, and the public baders at large, all agreed about the efficacy of The National Discipline Scheme in bringing about emotional integration of the people and in meeting the challenge of indiscipline in our country. The late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru gave the scheme his unqualified and whole-hearted support. The Scheme was visualised and launched by no less a person than Senapati J. K. Bhonsle, the weather-beaten, tempest-shaken, veteran I. N. A. Chief, the righthand man of Netaji Subhashchandra Bose.

Long before the N. D. S. was lunched by him, Senapati Bhonsle made an intensive study of the training of cadets in national discipline in the U. K., Germany and Japan. The seed of the scheme was planted in his mind very early. He was lucky to get a chance of going round the world before the second world war. He made the most of this opportunity, a military man as he was, in studying the methods of training children in various countries in the values of life side by side with physical discipline. He was very agreeably impressed by what he saw in this connection especially in the U. K., Germany and Japan. He came back from the world tour to resume his duty as the Lt. in the Indian Army. The absence of any kind of systematic training of the Indian children made him very uneasy. But nothing could be done about it even if one wanted to. India was under the British domination and Jagannathrao himself was a military servant of the Government.

Jagannathrao got a second chance of going to Japan in 1943, this time as the I. N. A. Chief and in the company of Netaji Subash Chandra Bose. He lived in Japan for about three months on this occasion and during this period of time visited many Japanese villages, small scale industries, schools and other training centres for children. He wanted to learn how a small nation like Japan with limited resources could challange the combined might of the allies in 1942. He was amazed at Japan's all-round progress in an unimaginably short time. A keen observer that he was, he was quick to realise that the secret of Japan's success lay in the national discipline together with physical fitness of the people at large. Every emphasis was laid on integrity of character, patriotism and the spirit of supreme sacrifice for the country if need be. Jagannathrao rightly felt that a nation of highly disciplined, determined, and dedicated people like that of Japan could never be wiped out, even if defeated sometimes.

Jagannathrao very much admired the Japanese method of training their children and devoutly wished for a similar scheme for Indian children. After the conclusion of the second world war he came back to India as a prisoner but was set at liberty within a short time. Soon afterwards India became independent and Jagannathrao was full of hopes. He was eager for experimenting on the younger generation on the Japanese lines. But the enthusiastic Jagannathrao was very much disappointed by the conditions obtained in the country at that time. Swaraj came to us at a very awkward time—at a time when we were hardly prepared for it. The one hundred and fifty odd years of the foreign domination had maimed quite our capacities and capabilities. During the years of national agitations our people cultivated fearlessness in courting imprisonment. There was indeed no dearth of volunteers ready to fill the prisons but there was a severe dearth of able and devoted administrators, so essential for making the long cherished swaraj a reality.

It would be difficult to find a parallel to the confusion amongst the politicians of the day. The evil of indiscipline had become all embracing. During the various freedom movements indiscipline among the students and the people as well came to be encouraged knowingly or unknowingly. The Demon of indiscipline assumed alarmingly enormous proportions at the dawn of our swaraj. Jagannathrao was quick to see that many of the politicians of the day were the most indisciplined and unscrupulous in their approach. He also realised that something could be done about the student indiscipline but the task of reforming the politicians was absolutely hopeless.

Jagannathrao repeatedly spoke about the urgent need of bringing about an emotional integration of the people. He pleaded for the immediate introduction of training in national discipline to the younger generation. His speeches were

patiently heard ; his writings were eagerly read. But somehow they did not evoke much interest among the authorities. Jagannathrao regretted the attitude of the authorities but was not disheartened. He patiently waited for an opportunity to give a trial to his scheme. In 1952 he became an M. P. and a Minister and very opportunely got the Refugee Rehabilitation portfolio. He made a beginning of his National Discipline scheme by training the refugee children at Delhi. The importance of the N. D. S. was then realised on all hands. The scheme was being extended by the Central Govt. to all the states of the Union.

Jagannathrao had given many clear appraisals of his N. D. S. before he could launch it in 1954. One such appraisal of the Scheme is given here which not only gives a clear picture of the Scheme but also reveals the dynamic personality of its architect.



The First President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad is blessing
Senapati Bhonsle's National Discipline Scheme.

NATIONAL DISCIPLINE

One of the many problems which face the country at present and to which the attention of everyone, who takes an intelligent interest in the development of our younger generation at schools and colleges into useful citizens, has been forcibly drawn during recent years, is the problem of indiscipline. Indiscipline is visible not only amongst students but can also be noticed amongst politicians, services, organizations, etc. While the country has made rapid progress in almost every other sphere, the problem of discipline has not received the attention it deserves. Countries like U. K., Germany and Japan have high traditions of discipline. It is this trait of their character which makes these nations truly great. It is, therefore, imperative that in order to make our country equally strong and great, we must strain every nerve to build up discipline among our younger generation.

The growth of indiscipline amongst students may be put down to the senseless use of slogans and demonstrations which seem to have become the fashion of the day in the political field due to a misconceived notion of freedom a feeling that you have only rights and no duties, to a confused sense of values that literacy is education and that education received through a few text books and cheap notes a culture, to indiscriminate admissions to colleges of students who are likely to benefit little by University education, to the unfortunate atmosphere of flippancy in which fun and frolic of the vulgar type have taken the place of morality and beauty, and possibly to a sense of frustration and lack of purpose in life.

Growth of indiscipline amongst politicians is, alas, due largely to greed for power. The principle of service of the country on which Mahatmaji had laid so much emphasis

1. Page 53 Biography of Senapati Bhonsle by Dr. D. G. Naik, May, 1964.

appears to have been consigned to the limbo of oblivion. This is not all. What is far worse is that unscrupulous and self-seeking politicians do not hesitate to contaminate young students. If India is to become great, these things must be eschewed and discarded.

It is true that so long as India was under bondage we had no opportunity of tackling our different problems. But with the dawn of freedom, it rests with us to grapple with this difficult problem in right earnest. Fortunately, for us we have amongst us a great leader and statesman who is loved and respected and held in great esteem and affection and on whom rests the heavy responsibility of giving a lead to the country. I have no doubt in my mind that with his help and guidance this vexed problem which has eluded solutions so far will no longer remain a problem.

In this connection I venture to make a few suggestions. Discipline is normally imparted to young boys and girls in three different places, viz :—

- (a) at home, (b) in school and (c) when they go out in the world.

I am sure no one will deny that the home is the most suitable place where lessons in ordinary discipline can best be taught to young boys and girls when their minds are most receptive. In India, however, unfortunately, the parents of young students, majority of whom are illiterate, have not had proper training in discipline themselves and they are therefore not in a position to impart elementary training in discipline to their young children at home.

Training in discipline at home generally not being possible, it can, therefore, be imparted only in schools and emphasis is laid on studies and attainment of bookish knowledge. This is not a happy sign and if we are to prosper as a nation, the present system of education shall have to be reformed. Great

responsibility therefore devolves on the teachers for training the young generation on right lines, and it is the duty of the teacher to see that a bond of active and responsive co-operation is established between him and the student during the whole process of his education and formation of his character. It will be clear, therefore, that if proper training of mind is not given to a student in the school, he will not know how to use his mind when he comes out in the world. Students these days seem sometimes to lose their way and in periods of uncertainty, become easy victims of exploitation by extraneous influences which divert their attention from the pursuits of knowledge. The exploitation at the hands of unscrupulous agitators is a challenge to the teachers and students alike and it is time that this challenge is met boldly and steadfastly and with courage and determination. If one happens to be present at a congregation the lack of discipline both among the younger generation as well as elderly people manifests itself in many ways and cannot escape attention. Discipline, cannot, however, be inculcated simply by putting the young boys in khaki. Attention has to be paid to a host of other details such as cleanliness, mode of speech, dress, mode of sitting and standing in the class-room while answering a question, punctuality, behaviour towards his fellow children and in fact to every detail which would ultimately contribute towards his becoming a disciplined citizen of our country. This of course can be done only when we have got trained teachers for this purpose.

If discipline is not taught at home or school then we have no right to expect discipline from such students when they come into the open world.

I visited Japan twice. My second visit in 1943 was undertaken with a view to discovering how a small country like Japan with a population hardly equal to 1/5th of this country and with its meagre resources could challenge the Anglo-Americans in 1942. Though the Japanese lost the war, there

is no denying the fact that they impressed the whole civilized world with their sense of discipline, their patriotism and their spirit of sacrifice, displayed in all the theatres of the Second World War. I found that in Japan every care is taken to see that sufficient attention is paid to the training of the boy particularly in the matter of discipline right from the time of his admission to the school till the conclusion of his studies. The spirit of patriotism is also instilled in him during his school days. One of two periods are exclusively kept apart for what is known as spiritual training. The curriculum of this training is worked out by the State with the sole object of infusing in the younger generation a spirit of patriotism. The spirit of sacrifice displayed by the Japanese has no parallel in the world. I have myself watched a Japanese spontaneously committing Harakiri on account of the failure of a mission assigned to him. A high sense of discipline and patriotic fervour inculcated in him, drives him to a state of frenzy which takes into account no other consideration except that of the country to which he belongs. We must not forget that this spirit of sacrifice has not been uncommon in the history of India either. Rajput history is replete with instances of warriors committing 'Johar' when they had lost all hopes of success. I am all in favour of reviving this dormant spirit in a systematic and scientific manner.

After a careful and detailed analysis of what I saw there, I have come to the conclusion that the Japanese possess three great qualities namely, discipline, patriotism and the spirit of self-sacrifice.

I must make it clear at once that I am not enamoured of the Japanese but I certainly do admire their virtues and qualities and I think it will be a good thing if we could profitably develop these virtues among our younger generation to the advantage of our country.

J. K. Bhonsle

Here are some of the important observations on the Senapati's N. D. S. which conclusively show how the N. D. S. was universally acclaimed as the right scheme for our country.

"I think the problem which we have to face rapidly is the so called discipline. It can be met with more effectively by giving this physical training and I should like the Chief Ministers to consider this matter and encourage it.

The second thing is a thing which is called National Discipline Scheme which was started by the Rehabilitation Ministry here for children in schools of refugees who come here from Punjab. There are plenty of them in Delhi. It was started in Delhi and it has spread to Bengal and elsewhere [and our Deputy Minister for Rehabilitation Shri Bhonsle, is incharge of it. Well he has produced extraordinary results and it is most impressing to see 3000 of these children, boys and girls to display such a fine discipline. It is very amazing to see for half an hour these children. I have been wanting to spread it. It has spread to some extent. But still I think it is confined to refugee children. It is good for all schools. The other day Mr. Chon En-lai, the Prime Minister of China saw it in Delhi and he said in Bombay that there were two things which have impressed him the most one is the National Physical Laboratory here and the other is this National Discipline Scheme. He asked Bhonsle to send some people to China. Bhonsle has done remarkable work and I think we should encourage it in our schools. It is spreading in Delhi and Punjab Schools and it is very very good. As a matter of fact he is doing such good work that I feel like



relieving him of all other work and putting him in charge of this work alone..... Really it has produced very good results for the money spent on it”

Jawaharlal Nehru.

¹After having watched everything carefully and having read the literature of the National Discipline Scheme, I have not the least doubt that from the point of view of National Discipline as well as from the point of view of generating in our young people a sense of national integration, this scheme is entitled to be regarded as the most important in the country. I say this with a good deal of deliberation and the sense of responsibility because I believe that I am the first member of the National Integration Council, who have had the privilege of spending a day seeing for myself what is being done in the quest of leadership under the banner of National Discipline Scheme. It will indeed be a very good thing for the National Integration Council to have at least one meeting here so that they could see themselves what are the practical ways of bringing about national integration as already done at Sariska. My fear, however, is that the members will perhaps feel that there is no need for National Integration Council and may disband it. In any case I shall make it my duty to report to the council what I have seen, and what happiness for the country I see in the development and the extension of this very unique enterprise that has been started by Gen. Bhonsle.

Sd/-**Dr. C. D. Deshmukh**
Vice-Chancellor,
Delhi University.

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THE NATIONAL DISCIPLINE SCHEME

Fostering patriotism and sense of unity in youth

“ The Emotional Integration Committee is concerned with devising the means to forge the future unity of India.

It is not concerned primarily with the immediate present ; it realises that conditions in the country are not happy, but it hopes to put forward a practicable scheme to deal with young and old for the rapid unification of the cultures and peoples which history has thrown into India.

Among the most interesting experiments that have been made towards this end, is the scheme of instruction known as the National Discipline Scheme. We had, as members of the Emotional Integration Committee, heard a great deal about it, pro and con. And we decided to see for ourselves. The Arabs and Persians say : How can that which is seen be the same as that which is heard ?



Senapati Bhonsle with Netaji (1943)

FOUNDER

Three members of the Committee including myself paid a visit to Sariska on November 18 and 19, 1961. We came by car late on the 18th, stayed the night enjoying the hospitality of "General" Bhonsle (as he is familiarly known to his friends) saw the exercises and the cultural demonstration on the 19th, and returned to Delhi by sundown.

What I saw for myself of the movement at Sariska and that fell from the lips of its founder, made me desirous of returning to Sariska and studying NDS with some care. And so I returned, alone, and stayed for three days, March 2, 3 and 4, 1962. These observations are based on my first hand impressions gathered during these days, and are not the result of reading and paraphrasing the remarks of eminent persons to be found in the Visitor's book, or their speeches reported in newspapers.

Jagannathrao Krishnarao Bhonsale, the founder of the scheme, is a Sandhurst-trained Officer of the Indian Army, who broke the letter of the law and joined the I. N. A. under Subhash Chandra Bose, and fought for the independence of India. He was tried with General Shahnawaz and others, and was almost hanged for mutinous behaviour.

Jawaharlal Nehru came to the rescue and patriotism was valued above a mere routine obedience to a law imposed under foreign rule. Bhonsale saw that the main disease in the country was lack of unity and patriotism. He decided to fight frustration and cowardice and the forces of disunity with the same zeal and courage which brought him the Royal Humane Society's Silver Medal for conspicuous bravery.

As a young officer he once saved the life of an English-woman, swimming out three miles to rescue her, contrary to the command of his superior officer.

His brother officers, mostly British smarted under a sense of shame, angry at their own hesitation in the face of this great act of manliness. But they were Englishmen and sportsmen; they recommended and applauded him for the distinction.

It seems that the Meos of Rajasthan have greatly appreciated the just manner in which Bhonsale implemented the Cabinet Policy in dealing with them, as they had suffered grievously at the hands of dishonest officials infected by the communal virus. Bhonsale has as oldier's "restrained" contempt for politicians.

NDS was started by the Ministry of Rehabilitation in July 1954. Its moving spirit was J. K. Bhonsale (former C-in-C of the I. N.A.) Deputy Minister of Rehabilitation. Its salient features are given in the Annual Report for 1960.

The National Discipline Scheme aims at making the younger Generation Healthy, both in mind and Body, and Instilling in them a sense of Patriotism, Self Reliance, Tolerance and Self-Sacrifice. The Scheme also aims at Inculcating among the children a spirit of Nationalism and cultural unity and what is more, good citizenship.....”

A. A. Fyze

¹ “ I have, ever since I came to India, wondered if there is a remedy for some of the ills, one reads about so much in the papers—indiscipline of students, lack of enthusiasm, lack of patriotism and self-confidence. After so many years spent in India even a foreigner begins to associate himself with the country he lives in. While doing so I began dreaming about a school where NEW INDIA is shaped. It is such a surprise for me that this school exists already, here in Sariska. I think it is the best thing I saw in India in a ‘10 year star’.”

Mr. Thilo Bode.
Repesentative, Die Welt, Hamburg.

"I would commend the extension of the National Discipline Scheme to each and every school in the country."

Shri S. K. Patil

"..... If this type of training is given in all educational institutions, it will produce a nation, well-equipped both mentally and physically to tackle all problems in future."

Shri Gulzarilal Nanda

"..... We keep our standards in the Indian army very high, but I must say I find that your standards are higher than those in the army. It takes us nine months to train a fresh recruit to be a soldier and I am really surprised how you have achieved this progress in such a short time

Your training is also very useful in infusing nationalism into the children."

Genl. K. S. Thimmayya

"..... Credit for the scheme (NATIONAL DISCIPLINE SCHEME) goes, most of all, to Major General J. K. Bhonsle of Indian National Army fame, whose one passion in life today is to help build a new type of youth in the country, disciplined, dedicated and ever ready to respond to the call of service for the people. I went to a demonstration given lately in New Delhi by several thousand children who are trained under the Scheme and it was a fascinating experience. High ranking officers of the army who were present in the show particularly appreciated the precision of the drill and sheer beauty of the children's movements. Two little youngsters a boy and a girl, commanded the parade and their performance was flawless. The children came from different parts of India and from different social groupings. But they showed us all the vivid feeling for the oneness of our India, and the cadence of co-ordinated movement evoking simultaneously a sense of beauty and power. With a lac of more money, the National

Discipline Scheme can expand the scope of its work. How I wish my friend Bhonsle and his colleagues receive the additional encouragement which their work so eminently deserves ”

Prof. Hiren Mukerjee

..... I am entirely with you in thinking that national progress is impossible without discipline.

Justice M. C. Chagla

“ Highest appreciation for a splendid performance. I've never seen such discipline in a school, even not in Europe. and the reception was hearty and warm and then a brilliant and colourful dancing. We will never forget it.

Mr. Win Dussel.

Mr. Dirk H. A. Kolff.

Mr. Peter Alissink.

(Visitors from Holland)

On the Occasion of the N. D. S. Day celebrations on 26th of March 1963, barely two months before Senapati Bhonsle's death Shri Morarji Desai, the then Finance Minister wished that the National Discipline Scheme should be extended to all schools of India for which the Government of India made an allotment of Rs. 6 crores. He also advised the instructor-trainess to impart the knowledge, they gained from the course of training to the students in order to make our country strong to face the challenge to its integrity. He congratulated Gen. Bhonsle, the Director-General of the Scheme for his commendable efforts in infusing into younger generation the qualities of leadership. Dr. K. L. Shrimali who also spoke on this occasion said that in the initial stages, the Ministry of Education was also not clear about the utility of National Discipline Scheme but with the sustained efforts of Gen. Bhonsle

the significance and importance of the Scheme was realised as an effective medium of preparing the younger generation of today into patriotic and disciplined citizens.

Senapati Jagannathrao Bhonsle, the Founder and Director General of the National Discipline Scheme died in harness at Sariska on 14th of May 1963. A short biography detailing the chief facets of his personality and the aspects of his N. D. S. was published on the 14th of May, 1964, his first Shradha Day, The President Dr. Radhakrishnan sent his blessings to the biography, said in his message that General Bhonsle's National Discipline Scheme performed a useful role in the training of youth and further hoped for the expansion of its scope in the years to come.

Within a fortnight from the Senapati's first death anniversary and the publication of his biography our beloved Prime Minister Nehru passed away. Thus the two illustrious sons of our country, who contributed magnificently to make The National Discipline Scheme a success were snatched away from amongst us one after another within the span of a year. But no one ever dreamt that the National Discipline Scheme would also pass away without causing any flutter and so soon after the death of the P. M. who was its staunchest supporter.

The Senapati's National Discipline Scheme was accepted by our country after giving it a hard test and trial. The observations, included in this brochure, are clear evidence to show how the Planning Commission, the various Govt. Committees on the problems of national discipline and emotional integration, the entire national leadership and all honest thinkers unanimously held the National Discipline Scheme as the most effective remedy for our many ills. It can be easily seen by all those who wish to see that the N. D. S. has great sanctions behind it. The Senapati gave the scheme the most precious years of his life. Indeed, for the last decade or so the N. D. S.

all along, gathered round it a tremendous goodwill and a kind of magic to conjure the people with, owing to its Founder's dynamic personality and its close association with and approval by National leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru.

But alas, the National Discipline Scheme, Senapati Bhonsle's dream of a nationally disciplined, strong and united India, the hope of our illustrious national leaders is to be no more, as if it has met with a fatal accident ! They say that more than six crore rupees have already been spent on the Scheme. According to observers at home and abroad the Scheme has been a great success. Eloquent tributes have been showered on it and its Founder time and again. In short the scheme came to be regarded as a symbol of national effort and a tower of national pride.

But all of a sudden that national tower is to be pulled down ! The N. D. S. which received the nation's sanction and won respect for the nation in foreign countries has a lease of life only up to 31st March, 1965 ! We raise funds to set up memorials to our departed leaders. The late Senapati had already set up his own memorial by giving the motherland his National Discipline scheme which filled a real need and by laying down his life in its service.

In this connection it is interesting to note what our late Prime Minister said at Sariska immediately after the Senapati's death. "There was a certain appropriateness in Shri Bhonsle ending his life at the fine centre he had built up and surrounded by his trainees who were devoted to him. His last memorial is The National Discipline Scheme which he built up with so much love and labour. This represents work which will endure"

But, ironically enough, on the 1st of April, 1965 that memorial of Senapati Bhonsle would be pulled down and his name would be wiped out from the history of his

country for which he laid down his life with a will. No one could be so stupid as to imagine that the N.D.S. is to be pulled down merely for the pleasure of pulling down. Indeed, it is heard, that our nation is to get another scheme on that memorable day ! Now the question as to who took this momentous decision to replace the erst-while efficient N.D.S. by another unknown scheme, confronts us. It is a matter of common knowledge that in a democratic country like India, decisions of wide national significance are taken by govt.s after inviting public opinion and taking the national leaders into confidence.

Strangely enough there is an intriguing silence about the fate of the N.D.S. The people would like to know the compelling reasons for the unceremonial scrapping of the Scheme. Even a dog is first called mad and then shot. But the N.D.S. has been called excellent all along by all those who matter and yet it is to be discarded !

It appears that our representatives in the Lokasabha and the State Assemblies are also not aware of what is happening to Senapati Bhonsle's National Discipline Scheme. They would do well to take up the issue actively with those concerned with it and give the people a clear appraisal of the facts. The press could play a signal role in giving a clear lead in matters of such national importance. In fact it is the duty of the Press and the representatives of the people to be alert and watchful to all such issues of national importance and educate the people to face them. In the present context the people would like to be satisfied that Senapati J. K. Bhonsle's National Discipline Scheme is being scrapped in the interest of the nation.

