

NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS DECREE 1973



ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

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Decree No. 24

[22nd May 1973]

Commence-
ment.

THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT hereby decrees as follows :—

1.—(1) There is hereby established a scheme to be known as the National Youth Service Corps (hereinafter referred to as the “service corps”).

(2) With a view to the proper encouragement and development of common ties among the youths of Nigeria and the promotion of national unity the service corps shall be charged with all such functions as pertain to the objectives of the service corps set out in subsection (3) below.

Establish-
ment and
objectives
of National
Youth
Service
Corps.

(3) The objectives of the service corps shall be—

(a) to inculcate discipline in Nigerian youths by instilling in them a tradition of industry at work, and, of patriotic and loyal service to the nation in any situation they may find themselves;

(b) to raise their moral tone by giving them the opportunity to learn about higher ideals of national achievement and social and cultural improvement;

(c) to develop in them attitudes of mind, acquired through shared experience and suitable training, which will make them more amenable to mobilisation in the national interest ;

(d) to develop common ties among them and promote national unity by ensuring that—

(i) as far as possible, youths are assigned to jobs in States other than their States of origin ;

(ii) each group, assigned to work together, is as representative of the country as possible ;

(iii) the youths are exposed to the modes of living of the people in different parts of the country with a view to removing prejudices, eliminating ignorance, and confirming at first hand the many similarities among Nigerians of all ethnic groups ;

(e) to encourage members of the service corps to seek, at the end of their corps service, career employment all over the country thus promoting the free movement of labour ;

(f) to induce employers, partly through their experience with members of the service corps, to employ more readily qualified Nigerians irrespective of their States of origin ; and

(g) to enable Nigerian youths to acquire the spirit of self-reliance.

Calling up
of members
of the service
corps.

2.—(1) Subject to the provisions of this Decree every Nigerian up to the age of 30 years shall—

(a) if, at the end of the academic year 1972-73 or as the case may be at the end of any subsequent academic year, he shall have successfully completed his first degree at any university in Nigeria ;

(b) unless exempted under section 15 below,

be liable to be called upon to serve in the service corps for a continuous period of one year as from the date specified in a call-up instrument served upon him or, as the case may require, a notice thereto is given in the prescribed manner ; and when so called upon such person shall make himself available for service and shall present himself at such place and time on such day and to such person or authority as may be specified in the instrument or notice.

(2) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, the Head of the Federal Military Government may by an order extend the application of subsection (1) above to every Nigerian up to the age of 30 years who shall immediately after the academic year 1972-73 and subsequent academic years have successfully completed his first degree at a university outside Nigeria.

(3) The Head of the Federal Military Government may as aforesaid by the said order or any subsequent order extend the application of the provisions of subsection (1) to other categories of Nigerians up to the age of 30 years who shall have obtained such diplomas, certificates or such other qualifications as may be prescribed in the order from universities, colleges and other institutions of higher learning within or outside Nigeria, and the order may specify different dates for the calling up in relation to different categories of those affected or to be affected by the order.

3.—(1) There shall be established a Directorate which shall be the governing body of the service corps.

Establishment and constitution of a Directorate.

(2) The Directorate shall comprise the following members that is—

(a) a Chairman ;

(b) the Vice-Chancellor of each of the universities in Nigeria or any person appointed in that behalf by any such Vice-Chancellor to represent him ;

(c) one member of the Armed Forces of the Federation ;

(d) one member of the Nigeria Police Force ;

(e) a representative of the Nigerian Employers' Consultative Association ;

(f) the Director as appointed under section 5 below ;

(g) one representative of the Cabinet Office ;

(h) one representative of the Federal Ministry of Education ;

(i) one representative of the Federal Ministry of Labour ; and

(j) three other persons, at least one of whom shall be a woman.

(3) The Chairman and members of the Directorate shall be appointed by the Head of the Federal Military Government.

4.—(1) The Directorate shall—

Principal functions of the Directorate.

(a) draw up detailed programmes of training and schedules which shall be designed for achieving the objects of the service corps ;

(b) ensure that such programmes and schedules are strictly adhered to ;

(c) maintain regular contacts with all universities and colleges in Nigeria as necessary ;

(d) assign members of the service corps to the programmed work in the States as provided by the Directorate ;

(e) co-ordinate the work of State Committees in the furtherance of the objects of this Decree ;

(f) assess and review, from time to time the progress of the scheme ; and

(g) make such reports in respect of such matters as it deems fit.

(2) The Directorate may delegate any of its foregoing functions to a State Committee :

Provided that such delegation shall not prevent the Directorate from exercising the functions so delegated.

5.—(1) There shall be a Director of the scheme who shall be appointed by the Head of the Federal Military Government.

The Director and his functions.

(2) The Director shall be the chief executive and shall be charged with the general responsibility for matters affecting the day to day running of the scheme.

6.—(1) There is hereby established for each State a National Youth Service Corps Committee (hereinafter referred to as "the State Committee") with its office in the Military Governor's Office of the State.

Establishment and functions of State Committees.

(2) The State Committee shall be responsible for—

(a) arranging accommodation, boarding, transportation, and providing other facilities which are essential for the welfare of members of the service corps and for the success of the scheme in the State;

(b) assembling reports on members of the service corps and transmitting them to the Directorate;

(c) arranging the provision of facilities for induction courses and winding-up exercises;

(d) compiling information on such opportunities as there may be for employment in a State; and

(e) deploying members of the service corps within the State.

7.—(1) The State Committee in each State shall consist of the following members—

(a) one official in the Military Governor's office in the grade of a Permanent Secretary who shall be the Chairman;

(b) a member of the Armed Forces of the Federation;

(c) a member of the Nigeria Police Force;

(d) a Principal Inspector;

(e) four other persons who shall be appointed from among persons concerned with the following sectors of the Nigerian economy—

(i) commerce and industry,

(ii) agriculture and natural resources, and

(iii) local government.

(2) All members of the State Committee shall be appointed by the Military Governor of the State in question.

8.—(1) Every member of the service corps shall be registered by the Director in such manner as may be prescribed by this Decree, and it shall be the duty of the appropriate registrar in Nigeria to furnish the Director with such particulars of every person who is subject to be called up pursuant to the provisions of this Decree in such manner as may be required.

(2) The Directorate shall on the commencement of this Decree and at such times as may be prescribed compile a list of all prospective members of the service corps, and for that purpose it may obtain or direct to be obtained such information as it may require from the appropriate registrar within or outside Nigeria.

(3) Where any information is required in relation to the compilation of the list of members of the service corps for any academic year the Director shall make a request in writing to the appropriate registrar in Nigeria, and it shall be the duty of the said registrar to provide such information as requested.

(4) For purposes of ensuring notification of call-up for service to all members of the service corps pursuant to section 2 above the Directorate may in accordance with such procedure as may be prescribed give directions to the appropriate registrar and it shall be the duty of the said registrar to comply with the directions.

Membership
of State
Committee.

Registration
of members
of the service
corps, etc.

(5) In this section "appropriate registrar" means the registrar of a university, college or educational institution or such other person having the management of any university, college or other educational institution.

9.—(1) The Directorate shall determine the place and time each person qualified to be registered under the provisions of this Decree shall be deployed.

Placing of members of the service corps.

(2) The Directorate shall register each member of the service corps and shall deploy him for national service in the following undertakings and projects, that is to say, in—

- (a) hospitals,
- (b) road construction,
- (c) farming,
- (d) water schemes,
- (e) surveying and mapping,
- (f) social and economic services,
- (g) teaching,
- (h) food storage and eradication of pests,
- (i) rehabilitation of destitutes and the disabled,
- (j) development of sports,
- (k) all government departments and statutory corporations suitable for new graduates,
- (l) development projects of local councils,
- (m) the private sector of the Nigerian economy, and
- (n) such other undertakings and projects as the Head of the Federal Military Government may by order determine.

(3) For the purposes of this section priority shall be given to service in any of the undertakings or projects mentioned in subsection (2) above situated within such appropriate urban or rural areas of the Federation as may be selected by the Directorate.

(4) Before placing any member of the service corps in any of the undertakings or projects aforementioned, the Directorate shall take into consideration the qualifications of each member and vacancies then existing, and the Directorate shall not be compelled to deploy a member only to a particular undertaking or project.

10.—(1) The Directorate shall cause quarterly returns and reports on each member of the service corps to be compiled by such officers including training officers as it may designate.

Evaluation and report on members of the service corps.

(2) The quarterly reports of each member of the service corps shall show—

- (a) the extent of his interest in the undertaking or project ;
- (b) the degree of comradeship he engenders amongst his fellow members and the people within the community he is serving or has served ;
- (c) industry at work, resourcefulness and initiative ;
- (d) character, address, temperament and integrity ;
- (e) leadership and readiness to accept responsibility ; and
- (f) any other information which may assist in evaluating the character of each member of the service corps.

Discharge
certificate.

11. The Directorate shall, on completion of the service of a member of the service corps unless such person is exempted under section 15 below, issue him with a discharge certificate which shall contain such particulars as may be prescribed.

Production
of certificates
for employ-
ment
purposes.

12.—(1) For the purposes of employment anywhere in the Federation and before employment it shall be the duty of every prospective employer to demand and obtain from any person who claims to have obtained his first year degree at the end of the academic year 1973-74 or, as the case may be, at the end of any subsequent academic year the following—

(a) a copy of the discharge certificate of such person issued pursuant to section 11 above;

(b) a copy of any exemption certificate issued to such person pursuant to section 15 below; and

(c) such other particulars relevant thereto as may be prescribed by or under this Decree.

(2) It shall also be the duty of every employer to produce on demand to a police officer, not below the rank of an Assistant Superintendent of Police, any such certificate and particulars or copies thereof.

Offences and
penalties.

13.—(1) Any person—

(a) who fails to report for service in the service corps in the manner directed by the Directorate, or as may be prescribed, pursuant to the provisions of this Decree; or

(b) who refuses to make himself available for service in the service corps continuously for the period specified in section 2 above,

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable upon conviction to a fine of ₦200 or to imprisonment for twelve months or to both such fine and imprisonment.

(2) Any person who fails to comply with or who contravenes any provision of this Decree (not being a provision relating to the calling up of members of the service corps) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable upon conviction to a fine of ₦500 or imprisonment for three years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

(3) Any person who—

(a) in giving any information for the purposes of this Decree knowingly or recklessly makes a statement which is false; or

(b) forges or uses or lends to or allows to be used other than in the manner provided by this Decree by any other person any certificate issued pursuant to the provisions of this Decree; or

(c) makes, or has in his possession any document so closely resembling any certificate so issued as to be calculated to deceive,

shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine of ₦500 or imprisonment for three years or to both such fine and imprisonment.

(4) Where an offence under subsection (2) above which has been committed by a body corporate is proved to have been committed with the consent or connivance of, or to be attributable to, any neglect on the part of, any director, manager, secretary or other official of the body corporate, or any person purporting to act in such capacity, he as well as the body corporate shall be deemed to be guilty of that offence and shall be liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly.

14.—(1) The Head of the Federal Military Government may make such regulations as may be necessary or expedient for the purposes of achieving the objects of this Decree, and in particular, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provisions—

Regulations,
etc.

(a) for the proper functioning and conduct of the work of the service corps ;

(b) setting out the programmes and schedules for the training of the members of the service corps ;

(c) specifying the procedure for call-up and the manner in which notification of call-up shall be made to members and prospective members thereof ;

(d) for providing forms for the use of the Directorate ;

(e) for the procedure for determining the medical fitness or otherwise of persons to be called up and the manner in which such matter shall be determined ; and

(f) other matters (unless it is otherwise provided expressly) required to be prescribed by this Decree.

(2) The Directorate may with the approval of the Head of the Federal Military Government make bye-laws for the proper administration of the service corps, and in particular—

(a) governing the pay, remuneration, allowances and other emoluments and expenses of the persons affected ; and

(b) in relation to the general discipline, control and welfare of members of the corps.

15.—(1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, the Directorate may, with the prior approval of the Federal Executive Council, by an order published in the Gazette exempt any person from all or any of the provisions of this Decree, and may subject thereto and with such approval impose in relation to any exemption such conditions as it may think fit.

Exemptions
from and
deferment of
service, etc.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1) above and with the approval of the Federal Executive Council the Directorate may on being satisfied that there is reasonable cause for so doing by an order defer the calling-up of any person or category of persons liable to be called up for service in the service corps for such period as may be specified in the order, and may subject to such approval reduce or extend the period of service specified in section 2 above in relation to the service of any person or category of persons liable to be called up.

(3) Where an order is made for an exemption of any person it shall be the duty of the Directorate to issue to that person an exemption certificate in the prescribed form, and for the purposes of this section where the service of any person in the service corps is deferred or where the period of service is extended or reduced as the case may be pursuant to subsection (2) above an exemption certificate setting out such particulars or the prescribed particulars shall be issued to such person.

16. The Public Officers Protection Act shall apply to every member of the service corps and to any other person employed under any undertaking or project for the duration of his service in the service corps.

Protection
of members,
etc.

Interpre-
tation.

17.—(1) In this Decree unless otherwise stated—

“academic year” means a year beginning in September or October and ending in June or July as the case may be in the following year ;

“Directorate” means the body established under section 3 of this Decree ;

“membership of the Directorate” means the membership as provided for by section 3 of this Decree ;

“Registrar” includes a secretary ; and

“State Committee” means a committee set up under section 6 of this Decree.

(2) For the purposes of this Decree, the reference to a “member of the service corps” includes unless the context otherwise requires or it is otherwise expressly provided, a prospective member of the service corps or any person who is registered as a member.

Citation.

18. This Decree may be cited as the National Youth Service Corps Decree 1973.

MADE at Lagos this 22nd day of May 1973.

GENERAL Y. GOWON,
*Head of the Federal Military Government,
Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces,
Federal Republic of Nigeria*

EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note does not form part of this Decree but is intended
to explain its effect)*

The Decree establishes a scheme under which Nigerian citizens up to the age of 30 years are called upon to serve in a National Youth Service Corps. The scheme affects, in the first instance, Nigerians of up to the age of 30 years who shall have at the end of the academic year 1972 to 1973 obtained their first degrees in Nigerian Universities. Provisions have been made to apply the Decree to certain other categories of Nigerians within or outside Nigeria.

All members or prospective members of the corps are to be registered in accordance with the procedure to be prescribed under the Decree.

The Decree also makes provisions for membership and functions of a Directorate and State Committees and creates, inter alia, certain offences.