

PRESS RELEASE
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX
December 2003

The December Consumer Price Index Bulletin released by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica reveals that for the calendar year 2003 the rate of inflation as represented by the movement in the All Jamaica Consumer Price Index was 14.1 per cent, 6.8 percentage points above the 7.3 per cent for the corresponding period in 2002. The rate of inflation for the fiscal year to date is 14.6 per cent.

The All Jamaica "All Group" Consumer Price index for December 2003 was 1786.8 reflecting an increase of 0.8 per cent over the index recorded for November 2003. The rate of inflation was 0.9 per cent for the month of November and 1.6 per cent for the month of October. A look at the regional indices shows increases for the three regions - 'Kingston Metropolitan Area' 0.7 per cent, 'Other Towns' 1.1 per cent and 'Rural Areas' 0.6 per cent.

For the month of December, all groups recorded higher indices than in November. There was a 0.8 per cent increase in the index for the group "Food and Drink. The movement in the index for this group largely resulted from increased prices for items in the sub-groups, 'Starchy Foods' (1.5 per cent) and 'Vegetables and Fruit' (2.1 per cent).

The index for the group 'Fuels and Other Household Supplies' recorded an increase of 0.6 percent. There was a 1.6 per cent increase in the index for the group 'Housing and Other Housing Expenses'. This was largely due to a 1.9 per cent increase in the index for the sub-group 'Other Housing Expenses'.

For the group 'Household Furnishings and Furniture', there was a 0.2 per cent increase over the period. 'Health Care and Personal Expenses' recorded a 0.6 per cent increase. A 0.3 per cent rise in the index for the group, 'Personal Clothing, Footwear and Accessories' was recorded.

The groups 'Transportation' and 'Miscellaneous Expenses' also showed an increase of 1.1 per cent and 0.3 per cent respectively.

The Consumer Price Index Bulletin December 2003 further outlines additional information and may be obtained from our Distribution Office of the Statistical Institute of Jamaica located at 7 Cecelio Avenue, Kingston 10.