

NEWS RELEASE
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX
March 2006

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The March Consumer Price Index Bulletin released by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica reveals that the all Jamaica 'All Group' Consumer Price Index for March 2006 was 2297.1; this represents a movement of 0.1 per cent over the index for the month of February, which was 2295.3. Inflation rates of 0.0 per cent were also recorded for both January and February 2006. For the calendar year to date the rate of inflation was 0.1 per cent, in comparison to 1.4 per cent for the corresponding period in 2005. The rate of inflation for the fiscal year to date, March 2005 to March 2006 was 11.4 per cent, 1.8 percentage points below the rate of inflation recorded for the corresponding period March 2004 to March 2005.

A look at the regional indices shows increase of 0.2 per cent for the 'Kingston Metropolitan Area', 0.4 per cent for 'Other Towns' and a decline of 0.3 per cent for 'Rural Areas'.

For the month of March 2006, increases were recorded in seven of the eight major group indices. The index for the group 'Food and Drink' fell by 0.3 per cent, reflecting the only decline among the main groups. This reduction was due mainly to declines of 4.9 and 2.7 per cent in the index for the sub-groups 'Starchy Foods' and 'Vegetables and Fruit', respectively.

The index for the group 'Fuels and other Household Supplies' increased by 0.7 per cent. The index for the sub-group 'Fuels' recorded a 0.3 per cent increased, while 'Household Supplies' moved upwards by 1.4 per cent.

The Consumer Price Index Bulletin March 2006 further outlines additional information and may be obtained from the Distribution Office of the Statistical Institute of Jamaica located at 7 Cecelio Avenue, Kingston 10.