

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

March 2003

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 2003 was 1559.5 showing an increase of 0.5 per cent over the index for February 2003. The rate of inflation for the month of February was -0.6 per cent and for January it was -0.3 per cent. Additionally the rate of inflation for the fiscal year-to-date is 6.2 per cent, 1.4 percentage points below the 7.6 per cent for the corresponding period in 2002.

A look at the regional indices shows increases for all three regions: "Kingston Metropolitan area" 0.3 per cent "Other Towns" 0.7 per cent and "Rural Areas" 0.5 per cent.

For the month of March all groups recorded higher indices than in February. There was a 0.1 per cent increase in the index for the group 'Food and Drink'. This movement in the index for the group largely resulted from increased prices for items in the sub-group 'Meals Away from Home' (1.5 per cent) and 'Dairy Products Oils & Fats' (1.2 per cent).

The Index for the group 'Fuels and Other Household Supplies' recorded an increase of 1.3 per cent. This was largely due to a 2.0 per cent increase in the sub-group 'Fuels' over the period.

The Consumer Price Index Bulletin further outlines additional information and may be obtained from the Distribution Office of the Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 9 Swallowfield Road, Kingston 5.