

Press Release



Central Statistical Office

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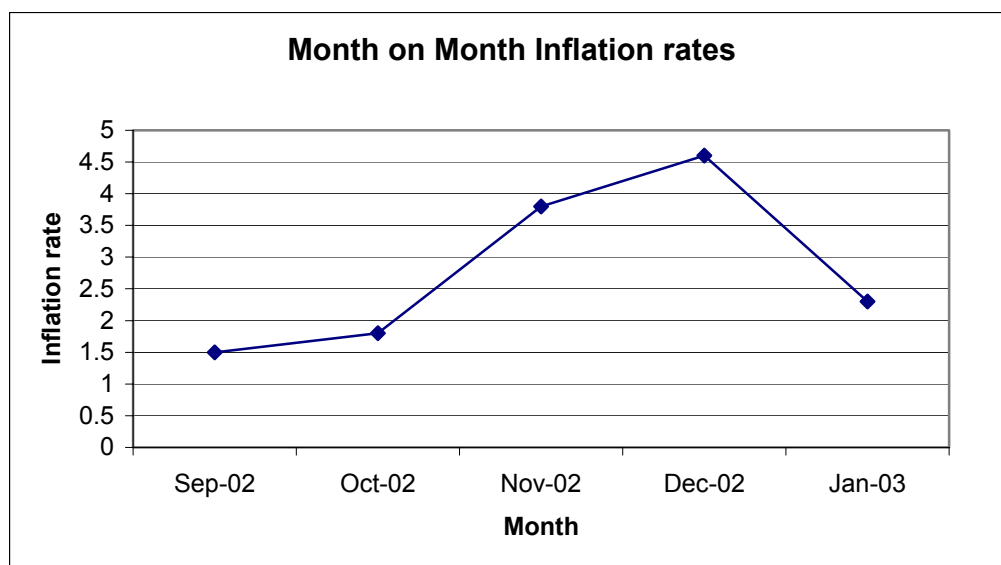
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Consumer Price Index (CPI)- January 2003

The Central Statistical Office, through its monthly data collection on prices, today announced that the monthly inflation rate was recorded at 2.3 percent as at January 2003, representing a decline of 2.3 percentage points on the December rate of 4.6 percent. Monthly inflation rates for the metropolitan low, high income and non-metropolitan groups were recorded at 3.0, 1.1 and 2.7 percent respectively.



Similarly, the annual rate of inflation declined to 24.3 percent as at January 2003, from 26.7 percent as at December 2002. Annual inflation rates for the Metropolitan Low, High and Non-Metropolitan Groups were recorded at 29.1, 21.2 and 23.6 percent respectively.

Relatively stable prices occurred in maize grain, mealie meal, other cereals and cereal products, meat, poultry products, tubers and fruits. Increases were however, registered in

the prices of fish and kapenta, fresh vegetables, dried beans, milk and milk products, cooking oil and fats, sugar including other processed food commodities.

The food index increased by 3.2 percent in January 2003, 3.1 percentage points lower than the increase of 6.3 percent recorded in December 2002. Measured on a 12-month basis, food inflation stood at 31.1 percent as at January 2003, declining by 4.4 percentage points on the December rate of 35.5 percent.

Other factors contributing to the observed January inflation levels were the relatively lower prices in the transport sector and increases in the cost of household energy (charcoal), household appliances, cleaning materials, school fees, hotel accommodation and meals.

Comparatively, the average price of a 25Kg bag of roller meal decreased by 0.9 percent, from K40,461 in December 2002 to K40,083 in January 2003 while maize grain measured in a 20 litre tin registered a marginal increase of 3.3 percent. Additionally, the average price of 1Kg of dried kapenta (siavonga) increased by 8.2 percent, while the average price of 1kg of tomatoes rose by 57.8 percent during the month..

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