



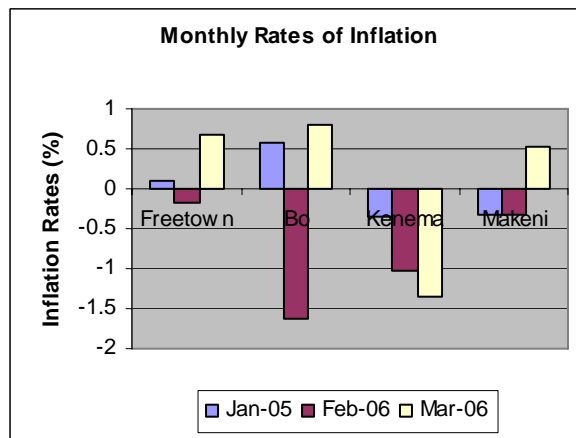
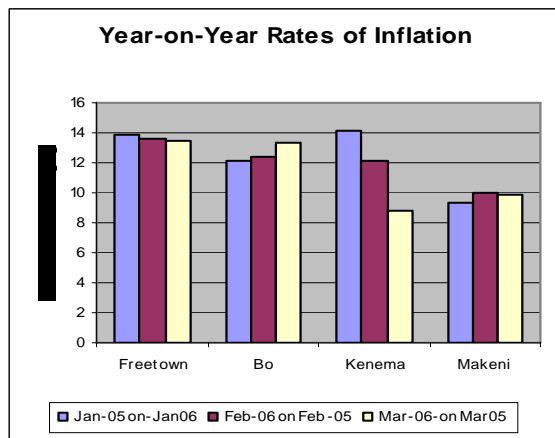
Friday April 28, 2006: released at 1:00 pm
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI) MARCH 2006: PRESS RELEASE
THE RATE OF INFLATION INCREASES SLIGHTLY

In March 2006, the monthly rate of inflation increased slightly in Freetown (0.68 percent), in Bo (0.79 percent), and in Makeni (0.53 per cent) but decreased in Kenema (1.36 per cent) when compared with the respective indices in February 2006. The annual rate of inflation was in the double digits in Freetown (13.52 per cent) and in Bo (13.30 per cent) but single digits year-on-year rates of inflation were recorded in Kenema (8.86 per cent) and Makeni (9.84 per cent).

The year-on-year rate of inflation (i.e the CPI for the reference month compared with that for the same month last year) decreased in Freetown from 13.63 per cent in February 2006 to 13.52 per cent in March 2006, in Kenema from 12.11 per cent to 8.86 per cent and in Makeni from 9.96 percent to 9.84 per cent but increased in Bo from 12.41 percent to 13.30 percent during the same period.

Figure 1a

Figure 1b



FACTORS INFLUENCING CHANGES IN THE MONTHLY RATE OF INFLATION

The increases in the CPI in Freetown, Bo and Makeni during the month of March was due to slight increases in the prices of most food products reinforced by increases in the prices of beverages and tobacco or non-food products. In Freetown, there were overall increases in the prices of food (0.25 per cent, beverages and tobacco (2.60per cent and non-food products (1.17 per cent). The increase in the prices of products which influenced these increases include, rice and other cereals, vegetables and fruits, tobacco products, children’s clothing, and educational materials. A similar trend was observed in Bo where price increases were recorded for all main groups, food (1.28 per cent), beverages and tobacco (0.21 per cent) and non-food products (0.27per cent). The increase in the price of food (1.20per cent) in Makeni was not sufficient to offset the increase in the prices of beverages and tobacco (4.7 per cent) and non-food products (2.73 per cent). In Kenema, the decrease in the rate of inflation during the month of March was influenced by decreases in the prices of food(1.48per cent) and non-food products(1.52 per cent) which outweighed the increases in the prices of beverages and tobacco(3.70 per cent).

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 The all- items consumer price index (CPI) is the main measure of what is commonly called inflation. It measures the change in prices, on average, from month to month, of the goods and services bought by most households, in Freetown, Bo, Kenema and Makeni including all expenditure groups and both families and single persons. Prices are collected for 251 items. All prices collected are the prevailing retail market prices from six (6) markets in the Greater Freetown area, three (3) Markets in Bo Town, three (3) markets in Kenema Town and two (2) markets in Makeni Town for weekly prices and other outlets for monthly items whose prices are less likely to fluctuate rapidly.

For More Detailed Information: **Subscribe to the Detailed CPI Report.** Please Contact: *The Statistician General, Statistics Sierra Leone P. O. Box 595, Tower Hill, Freetown, SIERRA LEONE Telephone: (232) 22- 223287 Call: (232) 76 – 609989 Facsimile: (232) 22- 223897 E-Mail: statistics@statistics.sl statistics@sierratel.sl*

More information can also be obtained from our website: www.statistics.sl