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Meanwhile, in March 2019, year-on-year Food and Non-food inflation recorded -2.3% and 7.1% respectively, the Central Bank said in a statement.

The change in the NCPI measured on an annual average basis remained unchanged at 1.7% in March 2019. When monthly change is considered, the NCPI declined by 0.2% in March 2019 with the decrease observed in the prices of the items in the Food category, particularly that of rice, coconut and vegetables.

However, within the Non-Food category prices of the items in Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco; Transport (petrol and diesel); Clothing and Footwear; and Miscellaneous Goods and Services subcategories increased during the month.

The core inflation, which reflects the underlying inflation in the economy, increased to 5.8% in March 2019 compared to 5.5% in February 2019 on year-on-year basis, mainly due to increase in prices of items in the Non-food category, particularly in Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco sub-category. Annual average NCPI Core inflation also increased to 3.3% in March 2019 from 3.0% in February 2019.