



Gov't confident RP economy to finish 2007 on strong note

SAN FERNANDO CITY, LA UNION, Dec. 20 (PGON) — The government expects the economy to finish 2007 on strong note as it posted a record monthly surplus of P54.1 billion in November, an increase in exports and a robust consumer spending in the last quarter of the year.

The Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC), an interagency body that sets the government's economic targets and policies, projected the economy to grow between 6-9 and 7.3 percent in the last quarter of 2007, putting the Philippines on track for seven percent full-year growth, the fastest in 30 years.

Earlier, President Arroyo has lauded the 10.5 percent increase in merchandize exports for October 2007 after posting single-digit growth rates since February this year.

After suffering two consecutive months of negative growth rates, exports of electronics products led by semi-conductors have also rebounded with a remarkable 111.6 percent growth particularly in consumer electronics.

Other products also posted sturdy growth for the month such as office equipment (35.2 %), control and instrumentation (78.5%) and automotive electronics (65.3%), according to the National Statistics Office.

Based on NEDA report, shipments of total agro-based products increased by 51 percent due to strong coconut products (105.3%) which continue to benefit from improved prices of coconut oil in the world market. Other agri-products such as abaca fibers (48.8%), tobacco (42.9%) also contributed to the strong export growth.

The peso, the best performer among the Asian currencies has gained more than 18 percent so far this year and looks set to surge further over Christmas as millions of overseas – based Filipinos send more money for the holidays to their families in the Philippines.

The posted budget surplus has tremendously reduced the deficit and gives government better chance to end up the year with a balanced budget. (PIA La Union) #

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