

### **Thai economy grows 18.9 pct in last quarter of 2012**

BANGKOK, Feb. 18 (Xinhua ) -- Thailand's gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 18.9 percent in the last quarter of 2012 from a year earlier, compared with a 3.1 percent growth in the previous quarter, the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) said on Monday. NESDB, a governmental agency for economic planning under the Office of the Prime Minister, attributed the substantial quarterly growth to the expansion of both domestic and external demands. Household consumption and investment rose by 12.2 percent and 23.5 percent respectively. Government consumption increased by 12.1 percent. The inflation rate in the fourth quarter of last year was 3.2 percent. It said that for the entire year 2012, the economy registered a 6.4 percent year-on-year growth, compared with a 0.1 percent growth in 2011 when the country was hard-hit by flooding which was considered the worst in more than 50 years. Meanwhile, NESDB forecast that GDP would increase between 4.5 percent and 5.5 percent this year as the global economy continues to recover. Inflation would be in the range of 2.5 to 3.5 percent.