

UPDATE 1-Colombia says industrial output up 5.98 pct in Sept

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(Adds details)

BOGOTA, Nov 20 (Reuters) - Colombia's industrial production rose 5.98 percent in September compared with the same month a year earlier while output for the January to September period climbed 11.96 percent versus the year-ago period, the government said on Tuesday.

The monthly growth in output was slower than a month earlier this year in August when the government statistics department reported industrial output hiked 7.67 percent versus the same month in 2006.

Retail sales for September increased 9.42 percent versus the same month a year earlier while so far this year retail sales grew 11.17 percent compared with a year ago.

Colombia is experiencing strong economic growth as foreign investment climbs due to better security under President Alvaro Uribe, who has led a U.S.-backed campaign to crack down on rebels fighting a four-decade-old conflict.

(Reporting by Nelson Bocanegra; writing by Patrick Markey in Bogota; Editing by Diane Craft)