

QUICK NEWS**NING****Chinese ambassador notes huge growth of trade with Thailand since 1975**

Trade between Thailand and China has jumped 3,000 times in value since the countries formalised ties 41 years ago, the Chinese Ambassador Ning Fukui told an audience yesterday.

Bilateral trade was just US\$25 million in 1975, when the two countries officially established relations, he said, but has grown to reach \$75.4 billion this year.

Ning said China imported more than Bt6.5 billion worth of Thai agricultural products last year, double its farming imports from the United States. He added that China was Thailand's largest trading partner, export market and source of foreign tourists and foreign students.

The diplomat also said Chinese investments in Thailand have exceeded \$3.5 billion (about Bt122 billion), which makes China the second largest foreign investor in this country.

Ning was giving a speech on "Thailand-China Economic Cooperation" at Mae Fah Luang University in Chiang Rai province in the North. The event was held to mark the 10th anniversary of the founding of the university's Confucius Institute.