

Staff reporter Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are stepping forward to sign Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the two countries, said Sri Lankan Industry and Commerce Minister Rishad Bathiudeen. He said this when ICC Bangladesh President Mahbubur Rahman called on him at his office in Colombo recently, said a media release on Wednesday. Rahman assured the Minister of all possible cooperation of the private sector. "I'll brief our Commerce Minister and request him to expedite the FTA process for expanding trade between the two countries," he said. Responding to ICCB President Rahman, Minister Bathiudeen said, "We welcome your intervention and this will greatly boost bilateral efforts. In fact, we too agree that it is the private sector at both sides that would finally drive trade." "We are ready for the nature of Agreement that you look forward to-whether a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) or a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)," he added. Minister Bathiudeen was briefed by ICCB President about the outcome of the ICC International Conference on Global Economic Recovery: Asian Perspective, which was organized by ICC Bangladesh in Dhaka on 25-26 October.