

## 《Sri Lanka-China FTA feasibility study completed》

COLOMBO, March 20 -- Sri Lanka and China have completed the joint feasibility study for establishing a free trade agreement (FTA) between the two countries and will push ahead with signing it before the end of the year, a statement from the Finance Ministry said on Thursday.

The finalization of the joint feasibility study on the proposed Sri Lanka-China Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was jointly announced by Sri Lankan Finance Ministry Secretary Dr. P B Jayasundara and Assistant Minister of China's Ministry of Commerce Wang Shouwen during an official meeting in Beijing on March 11, 2014.

The finalization of the joint feasibility study opens the avenue for discussions on the free trade negotiations, which is expected to commence soon, the statement added.

During the visit of Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa to China in May 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of a joint working group on trade to study the feasibility of the Sri Lanka-China FTA was signed between two countries. Accordingly the Joint Feasibility Study on FTA commenced in August 2013.

Dr. Jayasundara stated that the proposed FTA will bring substantial economic and trade benefits to both countries while strengthening the friendly relationship between the two countries.

Dr. Jayasundera expressed the hope that the FTA will be implemented at an early date.