

## Cracks Appear in U.S. Trade Leverage

Just days before President Trump's April 2nd "Liberation Day" in which reciprocal tariffs are expected to be announced on all U.S. trading partners, three Asian powers are pushing back. Chinese state media announced yesterday that China, Japan, and South Korea will conduct speedy negotiations toward a trilateral free-trade agreement and will strengthen dialogue on supply-chain cooperation and export controls. According to the post, Japan and South Korea are hoping to import semiconductor raw materials from China, while China is interested in importing chip products from Japan and South Korea. Although a South Korean trade minister told The Wall Street Journal that the Chinese social-media post had "some exaggerated aspects" and Japan denied any agreement had been reached, progress has clearly been made over the past few days.

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