

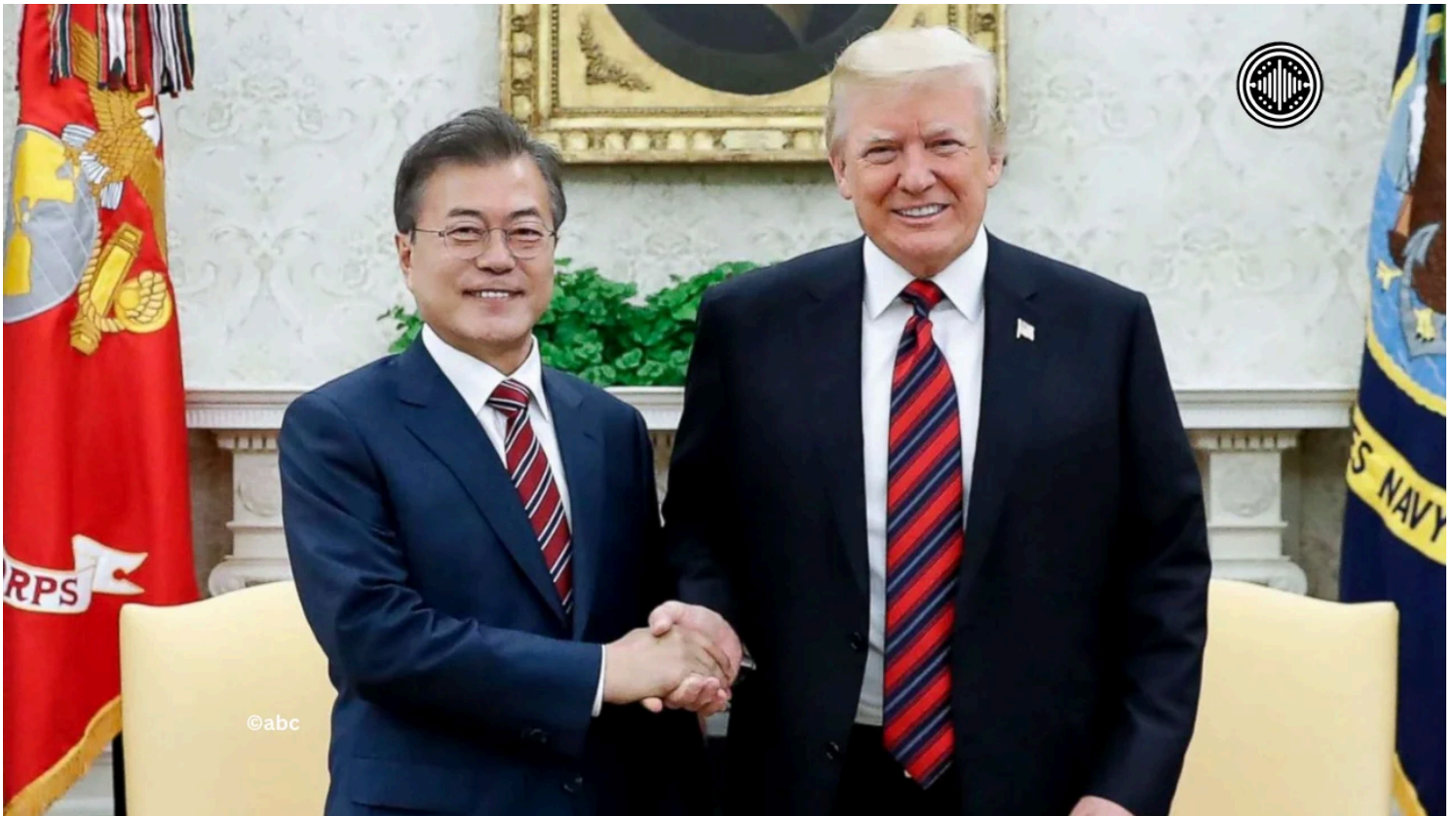
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South Korea, U.S. Leaders Set Washington Summit Talks

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South Korean President Lee Jae Myung will begin a high-profile diplomatic tour of Japan and the United States on August 23, marking his first major overseas trip since taking office. The visits are expected to focus on trade, security, and economic cooperation, with Seoul framing the trip as essential to strengthening partnerships amid growing geopolitical and economic challenges.

According to the presidential office, Lee will first travel to Tokyo for talks with Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba. The agenda will center on reinforcing bilateral ties and

expanding areas of cooperation. Officials in Seoul said both governments will likely discuss security coordination in the Indo-Pacific, technology collaboration, and ways to bolster resilience in global supply chains. The meeting is also expected to reaffirm trilateral security cooperation with the United States, particularly as tensions with North Korea remain high.

Following his stop in Japan, President Lee will head to Washington for his first summit with U.S. President Donald Trump on August 25. The two leaders are expected to address a wide range of issues, including defense cost-sharing arrangements, modernization of the U.S.–South Korea alliance, and prospects for expanded trade and investment. Analysts view the summit as a test of how Seoul and Washington will align their strategies on both security and economic fronts at a time of shifting global dynamics.

The visit comes against the backdrop of renewed debates over defense burden-sharing and heightened competition in industries critical to both economies, such as semiconductors, batteries, and clean energy. South Korea, a leading player in advanced manufacturing, has sought to secure stronger economic ties with the United States while also ensuring that its industries remain competitive under evolving trade rules.

Alongside official meetings, President Lee is expected to engage with business leaders and policymakers in Washington. Seoul officials noted that discussions will likely highlight South Korea's role in strengthening supply chains for semiconductors and energy technologies, areas where both countries see strategic interest. Cooperation on nuclear energy and shipbuilding may also feature prominently in the talks, reflecting efforts to expand economic ties beyond traditional trade sectors.

President Lee has described the tour as a “crucial step” in advancing South Korea's strategic and economic priorities. “In a time of global uncertainty, it is vital that we deepen cooperation with key partners to safeguard both security and prosperity,” he said ahead of his departure.

The outcomes of the Tokyo and Washington visits are expected to shape Seoul's diplomatic and economic agenda in the months ahead. Observers note that the trip signals Lee's intent to position South Korea as an active and reliable partner, while navigating complex regional and global challenges.