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**SOUTH KOREA'S DEPENDENCE ON US FOR DEFENSE NO LONGER 'VALID': PRESIDENT LEE**

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Saadet Gokce

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung has said that Seoul's traditional reliance on the United States for defense is no longer "valid" and that the country will seek to become a partner capable of self-reliant defense.

"I believe such a dichotomous approach has lost its validity amid recent shifts in the geopolitical environment," Lee said in an interview with the Italian daily Corriere della Sera published on Thursday, according to translated excerpts carried by Seoul-based Yonhap News Agency.

He was referring to South Korea's long-standing diplomatic formula of "security with the United States and economy with China."

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