



Many tariff reduction pledges made by signatories to RCEP and CPTPP are only gradually coming into effect. (Illustration by Yoshiko Kawano)

POLICY ASIA

Asia's big trade pacts soften damage from Trump tariffs

Benefits of CPTPP and RCEP accrue to different industries and countries unevenly

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TOKYO -- For nearly 25 years, the U.S. was consistently the best customer for Vietnamese seafood exporters. Although issues with trade barriers and tariffs kept popping up, Vietnamese shrimp, catfish and tuna steadily found more and more American buyers.

But Donald Trump's return to the U.S. presidency last year has made American buyers far less reliable. As tariff rates fluctuated, the flow of incoming U.S. orders became wildly erratic. So Vietnamese exporters turned their attentions elsewhere.

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