

Samsung to launch foldable smartphone in September

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South Korean electronics giant Samsung announced Thursday it will release its cutting-edge foldable smartphone in September, despite a trade dispute between Seoul and Tokyo which analysts say will affect delivery.

Tokyo earlier this month restricted export to South Korea of several key materials crucial to its world-leading electronics and [smartphone](#) companies, including market leader Samsung.

The decision was made in response to a South Korean court decision ordering Japanese firms that used forced labour during World War II to compensate Korean victims.

Tokyo's move has raised international concern about the effect on global tech supply chains and the possibility of price hikes for consumers worldwide.

Samsung's Galaxy Fold is among the end products that will be affected as it relies on a chemical film produced by Japanese firm Sumitomo Chemical, said IHS Markit display research director Tadashi Uno.

Samsung had planned to launch the Fold in April, but pushed back the release date after early reviewers reported screen problems after just days of use.

The smartphone giant said it has "made improvements" to the device since then.

Samsung has spent nearly eight years developing the Fold in an effort to spark demand and potentially revive a sector that has been struggling for new innovations.

Tech companies are already under pressure from a weakening global outlook, while the chip sector in particular is suffering from weak demand.

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