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The new opening-up measures such as cutting Chinese auto tariffs and better protecting intellectual property rights are part of a long-term economic restructuring strategy and have no connection with the ongoing trade dispute with the United States, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Wednesday.  
Experts said if the administration of US President Donald Trump continues to wage a trade war with China, China should not allow US companies to have access to benefits from China's expansion of its economic opening-up.  
The Foreign Ministry's comments came after speculation that the country's announcement was a conciliatory gesture in the face of US pressure to ease the ongoing trade spat.  
Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said China's new measures are based on the country's own tempo of economic opening-up, adding that the introduction of the policies is based on "thorough consideration and careful arrangement". It is impossible for China to make these decisions within a short period, he said.  
China reiterated on Tuesday its pledge to open its markets wider to foreign competition as the nation continues its role as a defender of free trade and cooperation in contrast to growing protectionism and unilateralism in the United States, manifested by the Trump administration's notorious "America First" approach.  
China had planned and arranged a number of opening-up policies to reorganize its economic structure, as mentioned in the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in October and the Government Work Report in March.  
In addition to encouraging manufacturers to shift to the central and western regions, policy details mentioned at those meetings also included China expanding imports, hosting the first China International Import Expo in Shanghai and lowering import tariffs on products like automobiles and some daily consumer goods.  
"The opening-up will advance in line with the Chinese tempo and vision ... and will not be affected by external pressures," Geng said. "It is time for the US to seriously study the situation and make the right decision."  
On Wednesday, central bank Governor Yi Gang also ruled out the possibility of China resorting to yuan devaluation to counter trade tensions with the US as the yuan's exchange rate is based on market supply and demand conditions.  
Yi said China's trade surplus with the US actually represents the surplus of the entire East Asia with the US, because China sell imports from such economies as Japan and South Korea to the US, and such transit trade with the US has been taken as coming entirely from China.  
It's wrong to interpret China's long-term strategic plan of economic opening-up as an expedient move to allay a trade standoff with the US, said Wei Jianguo, former vice-minister of commerce.  
Judging by the current situation, Wei said China's opening-up measures are not necessarily applicable to US companies, which gain handsome profits in China, if the Trump administration continues to adopt the unilateral and protective measures to undermine World Trade Organization rules and threaten to wage trade wars.  
"The US, to a large extent, will depend on China's ever-increasing consumer market to support its growth, but if the Trump administration continues down the wrong path, the US should not be allowed to have access to benefits from China's further opening-up," he said.  
Zhou Jin contributed to this story.

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