

## INSIGHTS

## Chinese Economy Grows Resiliently Against Headwinds

## Voice of the World

By LI Linxu

Despite rising global uncertainties, the Chinese economy continues on a path of high-quality development, posting a robust 5.3 percent year-on-year growth in the first half of 2025 and laying a solid foundation for achieving the full-year growth target of around 5 percent.

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed that China's GDP increased 5.4 percent and 5.2 percent year-on-year in the first and second quarter of this year respectively.

Official data shows that domestic demand contributed to 68.8 percent of the country's GDP growth in the first half of this year, with final consumption expenditure contributing 52 percent.

"These figures indicate that domestic demand, particularly consumption, remains the primary driver of GDP growth," Sheng Laiyun, deputy head of the NBS, said at a recent news conference, adding that, "The upward momentum seen in consumption in the first half will likely carry into the second half."

The data showed the Chinese economy has held up surprisingly well in the face of U.S. tariffs, thanks to resilient exports as well as policy support for consumption and investment, according to Bloomberg News.

International institutes, foreign investors, and economic analysts are increasingly bullish on the growth prospects of China's economy, citing its proactive macroeconomic policies, steady recovery in domestic demand,



Ocean-going vessels line up in the Qinzhou Port dock. (PHOTO: XINHUA)

strong resilience in exports, and great potential in emerging sectors.

In an update published on July 29 to its *World Economic Outlook report*, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) raised its outlook on China's economic growth in 2025 and 2026. Relative to the forecast in April, growth in 2025 for China is revised upward by 0.8 percentage point to 4.8 percent, according to IMF.

"This revision reflects stronger-than-expected activity in the first half of 2025 and the significant reduction in U.S.-China tariffs," the IMF said. The GDP outturn in the first quarter of 2025 alone implies a mechanical upgrade to the growth rate for the year of 0.6 percentage point. A recovery in inventory accumulation is expected to partly offset payback from front-loading in the

second half of 2025.

The IMF also revised upward its forecast for China's growth in 2026 by 0.2 percentage point to 4.2 percent.

Dozens of banks, including Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs, upgraded their estimates for China's full-year GDP expansion closer to 5 percent, while the ANZ Bank now sees 5.1 percent growth for 2025.

Andrew Choy, EY China International Tax and Transaction Services Partner, expressed optimism on the growth prospect of the world's second-largest economy, citing China's drive in boosting domestic demand, advancing industrial upgrading and transformation, and developing new quality productive forces.

Choy's optimistic outlook is substantiated by both his first-hand industry

experience and EY's market data. "The accelerated pace of merger and acquisition deals, coupled with vibrant IPO activities, clearly reflects strengthening market confidence in China's economic fundamentals," Choy said.

A recent IPO report from EY reveals the Hong Kong exchanges recorded a staggering 711 percent year-on-year fundraising leap in the first half of 2025, while the A-share market posted double digit growth in both deal volume and value.

As China continues to navigate a complex global economic landscape, its economy demonstrates remarkable resilience and vitality. The robust growth momentum paints an encouraging picture for the year ahead, well-positioning itself as a key stabilizer of global economic growth.

## Fear Not, AI Is Not Here to Replace You

## AI Ripples

By YU Haoyuan

Where you require food and rest, your "AI counterparts" may merely require recharging, and where a team once toiled on a project for months, AI now delivers solutions within hours.

So, does this mean professionals are on route to becoming obsolete? Well, not necessarily. As AI capabilities advance, professionals, and society at large in the new era, will undergo self-transformation — mastering AI as collaborative machines, rather than yielding to technological inertia.

**Ineradicable human advantage**  
Undoubtedly, AI demonstrates remarkable proficiency in data processing, pattern recognition, and other domains, yet it remains fundamentally constrained — a "tool" bound by training data and algorithmic logic. Consider voice-based consultation calls: predefined queries receive efficient responses, but

complex or intricate questions reveal AI's limitations — their tangential replies exacerbate user frustration.

While generative AI can produce text, create images, and even simulate emotional conversations, it cannot truly grasp human emotional needs. The latest study by Stanford University, in collaboration with Tencent AI Lab, revealed that among 830 participants in a double-blind test, only six (0.7 percent) regarded AI counseling as superior to humans. Conversely, 93.5 percent of participants, after interacting with the AI, admitted, "what it says is correct, but I don't want to continue the conversation."

Gödel's incompleteness theorem highlights computational boundaries that human intuition transcends. This unique advantage manifests itself in scenarios such as medical AI requiring calibration based on clinical experience, architectural design demanding cultural contextualization, and poetry translation struggling to convey artistic conceptions, highlighting the humanistic brilliance that algorithms can

never replicate.

**Evolution, not extinction**

Will AI replace certain jobs? The answer is yes. While such disruption naturally provokes unease, the truth is that what ultimately replaces you is not AI itself, but those adaptable peers who master human-AI collaboration.

Looking back at human history, every major technological revolution has phased out antiquated roles.

At the same time, technological revolutions also create numerous new industries and jobs. The First Industrial Revolution brought trains, large-scale cotton spinning and steel industries; the Second Industrial Revolution introduced petroleum, industrial chemistry and aviation; the Third Industrial Revolution ushered in computers, the Internet, and semiconductors.

Nowadays, new professions such as system architects, algorithm engineers, and drone operators are emerging constantly, affirming that humans always steer the course of technology. According to statistics from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology at

the end of 2024, the number of registered users for generative AI in China exceeded 600 million, while over 190 generative AI service models capable of providing public services have been filed and launched.

**Avoiding replacement**

While incapable of human replacement, AI will undoubtedly reconfigure labor paradigms in the future.

"Everybody's job will be affected. Some jobs will be lost. Many jobs will be created and what I hope is that the productivity gains that we see in all the industries will lift society," said NVIDIA CEO Jensen Huang in a recent interview with CNN.

In the AI era, human comparative advantage lies not in routine tasks but in three key dimensions: the ability to define goals, wisdom in cross-domain integration, and the commitment to emotional and ethical values. While AI demonstrates superior execution capability, framing the right questions and making value judgments still require human leadership.

Ultimately, what society favors is perpetual learners. As Huang said, "AI is the greatest technology equalizer we've ever seen... It lifts people who don't understand technology."

## Opinion

## Green Solutions from China: A Global Model

By GONG Qian

Nine Chinese cities were recognized as international wetland cities at the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands on July 24, bringing China's total to 22 — the highest number worldwide.

Musonda Mumba, secretary general of the Convention on Wetlands, told Xinhua that China has played a major role in wetland preservation and its wetlands protection law, which took effect in June 2022, demonstrates its commitment.

Protection efforts require an enforcement mechanism. "China has done that very well, and those lessons can be shared with other countries to take forward so that other countries can learn from China," she added.

Apart from wetland preservation, China also offers valuable experience for sand encroachment prevention and control.

In early July, a green barrier spanning the Badain Jaran, Tengger and Ulan Buh deserts in north China's Inner Mongolia autonomous region, measuring 1,856 km, was completed. This achievement mirrors the completion of another major green belt across the Taklamakan Desert, located in western Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, in November 2024. The Taklamakan is China's largest desert and the world's second largest shifting sand desert.

The completion of these two green "Great Walls" marks a milestone in China's decades-long efforts to curb desertification. Thanks to a forward-looking ecological governance philosophy, scientific and technological support, and major ecological projects, China has achieved significant results in ecological governance, offering valuable experience and solutions to the world.

Promoting ecological progress has become a national strategy, laying a solid foundation for ecological conservation



A scenery in Dongying, east China's Shandong province, one of the world's first batch of "International Wetland Cities". (PHOTO: XINHUA)

and governance. China's principle is that "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets" and a holistic and systematic approach to conserving and improving mountain, water, forest, farmland, grassland, and desert ecosystems.

Sci-tech support also plays a significant role in solving ecological problems by transforming technologies into solutions adapted to different ecological scenarios, thereby improving the efficiency of governance and restoration.

In the Taklamakan Desert sand-control project, intelligent robots have been introduced. They can plant the sword-leaf dogbane, *Apocynum venetum*, which can grow in harsh environments such as saline-alkali lands and deserts, on 15 mu (about 1 hectare) of land every day. The survival rate of the plants has been found to be 27 percent higher than those planted manually.

Furthermore, major ecological projects have translated the goal of environmental protection and restoration into concrete actions, serving as a vital pillar for safeguarding ecological security.

As a responsible major country, China contributes to global ecological protection and governance, and promotes a community of shared future for all life on Earth through technology transfer, financial support, and experience sharing.

For example, China has partnered with African countries to support their green development by launching the Great Green Wall initiative. Drawing experience from its Three-North Shelterbelt Forest Program, China has promoted drought-resistant tree planting techniques in the Sahara Desert, helping curb desertification and improve local agricultural and pastoral environments.

China honors its commitments through concrete actions, offering practical solutions for global ecological governance and contributing to sustainable development worldwide.

## World's First Autonomous Subway Delivery Robots

## Hi-Tech

By LI Linxu

The rapid advancement of robotics and AI is revolutionizing urban metro systems, with Chinese cities like Shenzhen leading the wave.

In a groundbreaking development for urban logistics, Shenzhen Metro recently unveiled the world's first autonomous delivery robots using subway systems for cargo transportation.

A fleet of delivery robots were recently observed seamlessly boarding

Line 2 trains at the Wanxia Station during off-peak hours. The robots' appearance caused a stir, with passengers taking out their phones to capture the moment.

Leveraging hardware and software technologies such as AI scheduling algorithms, panoramic laser radar and mechanical chassis, these robots are capable of autonomously riding lifts, entering and exiting platforms, boarding trains and delivering goods to convenience stores across the city's subway system.

Such a feat is the first of its kind in the world and marks the latest step in Shenzhen's push to expand the utilization of robots from the factory floor to

other areas of urban life.

The trial run of the autonomous delivery robots is aimed to solve a long-standing logistical problem faced by retail outlets inside the city's subway stations.

Previously, metro store deliveries used ground transport and faced challenges like parking difficulties and peak-hour congestion.

With over 300 metro stations hosting thousands of convenient stores in Shenzhen, the wider adoption of these robots is expected to utilize idle subway capacity and improve delivery efficiency for merchants.

This move aligns with the city's

embodied intelligent robot technology innovation and industrial development action plan, which vows to foster a more robust industrial ecosystem and elevate its comprehensive competitiveness of the embodied intelligent robotics industry to globally leading levels. According to the action plan, the market value of related industries in Shenzhen is expected to exceed 100 billion RMB by 2027.

As the city produces more than 20 percent of China's industrial robots, the pioneering deployment of autonomous delivery robots is poised to set a global benchmark for high-density urban supply chains, transforming idle subway capacity into a smart logistics network.

## New 5-year-plan: Meeting People's Aspirations for Better Life

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As a global leader in renewable energy, China's installed renewable energy capacity reached 2.09 billion kilowatts by May 2025, more than double the capacity in 2020. Green lifestyles have become well entrenched, with new energy vehicle ownership soaring to 31.4 million in 2024, up significantly from 4.92 million in 2020.

High-level opening up has been expanded and the business environment improved. China has twice updated its negative list for foreign investment since 2021. All restrictions on foreign access to the manufacturing sector have

been lifted, and the agriculture and service sectors have been further liberalized. Pilot initiatives in healthcare and value-added telecommunications have opened new opportunities for foreign businesses.

According to the CPC Central Committee Political Bureau, the 15th Five-Year Plan period will continue to balance development and security, upgrade and expand economic output, and advance people's comprehensive development. It will make progress in achieving common prosperity and the basic realization of socialist modernization.