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A WARM WELCOME

Inside the streamlined system that's changing the tourism game



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China
International
Fair for
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INvest in China

Time: September 8th to 11th, 2026

Location: Xiamen City, Fujian Province, China

About CIFIT:

CIFIT is hosted by the Ministry of Commerce, P.R.C. and is co-hosted by six international organizations, including the World Trade Organization. CIFIT bears the permanent theme of “Expanding Two-Way Investment, Jointly Facilitating Global Development” and is dedicated to building the platform for two-way investment promotion, authoritative information release and investment trend discussion. As China’s only state-level exhibition focusing on investment and one of the world’s most influential international investment events, CIFIT has become an effective platform for global investors to deepen concrete cooperation.

The Outcomes of 25th CIFIT

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Total Planned Investment Volume

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International Organizations

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EDITOR'S DESK



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Peak Travel

In recent months, "China Cool" has become a hot topic on international social media platforms. This summer's growth in the number of international visitors is being driven by both increased interest in China and the country becoming more open and accessible to tourists.

China has expanded its visa-free entry program in recent years, simplified customs clearance procedures, increased international flight routes, improved port services and upgraded other tourism services aimed at visitors, reducing the time, cost and difficulty of visiting China. Statistics by leading online travel booking platform Trip.com show the number of purchases on the platform by European tourists traveling to China surged by 275 percent this summer over the previous year, a break from the norm of inbound tourism being dominated by travelers from neighboring countries.

Inbound tourists are also becoming more adventurous as they pursue niche and interest-based experiences. Where international visitors once largely remained within large cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Xi'an in Shaanxi Province, many are now exploring smaller destinations in search of nature, culture and picture-perfect scenery. In the scorching heat of summer, the Changbai Mountains in northeast China, Huangguoshu Waterfall in mountainous Guizhou Province and small plateau

towns in the northwest have all become top choices for overseas travelers seeking respite from the heat.

The appeal of Chinese culture is also increasing, with more travelers engaging with forms of intangible cultural heritage such as arts and crafts. Mainstream visitors are now less satisfied with traditional sightseeing and are seeking to immerse themselves in local life, customs and traditions.

The growth in visitor numbers reflects improvement in China's image abroad. While some continue to imagine China as backward, polluted and closed off, social media content created by travelers who have visited the country is helping share the reality of a modern, clean, safe, friendly and increasingly accessible destination with boundless natural beauty and a deep and fascinating culture.

Word of mouth has always been a trusted form of marketing, and in the digital age, a visitor to China now has the potential to share their experiences with thousands or even millions of others. Given time, momentum and China's increasing openness, the country's charms, many of which have existed for millennia, will replace the misconceptions and draw new demographics of enthusiastic visitors. China looks forward to welcoming them! **BR**



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GLOBAL DEBUT

An Air China C919 aircraft takes off from Beijing Capital International Airport on August 12. Headed for Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia, the plane was the first of China's homegrown C919s to complete an international commercial flight. The C919 is China's first self-developed commercial jetliner and made its maiden commercial flight on May 28, 2023.



Blooming Prosperity

A farmer harvests lotus flowers at a planting base in Longshui Town, Dazu District in Chongqing Municipality, on August 11. The district has cultivated a thriving lotus industry, generating around 430 million yuan (\$64 million) annually from fresh-cut flower sales alone, providing a vital income stream for local farmers.

Mega Water Project

The first phase of China's South-to-North Water Diversion Project has diverted a cumulative total of more than 90 billion cubic meters of water through its eastern and middle routes as of August 10, a new milestone for the world's largest water diversion initiative.

The middle route has diverted over 80.05 billion cubic meters of water, while the eastern route has transferred more than 9.95 billion cubic meters, according to the Ministry of Water Resources and China South-to-North Water Diversion Corporation Ltd.

Since the first phase of the eastern and middle routes became fully operational in 2014, the project has provided a stable and high-quality water supply to 48 major cities, benefiting 195 million people.

The first phase has also played a crucial role in ecological restoration. More than 13.1 billion cubic meters of water have been diverted for ecological replenishment to over 50 rivers along the routes.

Peak Power Load

China's peak power load hit a fresh record high on August 7, the fourth such record since the start of this summer, reaching 1.56 billion kilowatts (kw), the National Energy Administration (NEA) said.

This figure is 4.8 million kw higher than the previous record, the NEA revealed, attributing the surge in power consumption to high temperatures and steady economic growth.

To cope with rising electricity demand, the NEA has stepped up efforts to upgrade power distribution facilities in areas with relatively weak infrastructure and established a

rapid-response mechanism for emergency power restoration.

It has also strengthened power supply for tourist attractions, hotels, guesthouses and expressway service areas, while ensuring stable operation of the country's electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

China's electricity demand has maintained robust growth so far this year, driven primarily by the improving economy, accelerated industrial upgrading and the expansion of new growth drivers, according to the NEA.

Hundred Flowers Awards

The 38th edition of the Hundred Flowers Awards, one of China's most prestigious film honors, was held in Beijing from August 7 to 10.

This year, the event featured a range of activities, including themed forums and discussions

on artificial intelligence-generated works. The eight awards, including Best Picture and Best Director, were presented on August 10.

Ne Zha 2, the Chinese animated feature that shattered global box office records, claimed the Best Picture Award at the event, becoming the first animated film to win this honor in the history of the Hundred Flowers Awards.

During the event, more than 70 films were screened at 13 cinemas, 10 outdoor venues and multiple public cultural spaces across Beijing, showcasing the achievements of Chinese filmmaking while enriching the city's summer cultural offerings.

Inaugurated in 1962, the Hundred Flowers Awards are distinctive for being determined by audience choice. While the winners are ultimately decided by audience representatives voting at the ceremony, the finalists are determined in advance by a panel of cinema managers, media representatives and industry experts. To be eligible for the awards, a film must have attracted at least 1 million cumulative theatrical admissions.

Personal Data Crimes

The Ministry of Public Security on August 11 released 10 typical cases involving the infringement of citizens' personal information, underscoring ongoing nationwide efforts to combat data-related crimes and protect individual rights in the digital era.

The cases revealed organized criminal networks that exploited inducements, cyber intrusions, and insider collusion to harvest and trade personal data for profit, according to the

ministry's cybersecurity bureau.

In one case, a gang used cash rewards to lure people into registering e-commerce accounts and business licenses under their real names, and then sold the credentials on to facilitate money laundering.

In another case, suspects bought large volumes of real-name-verified accounts on online platforms such as superapp Weixin (known internationally as WeChat) and Douyin (the Chinese version of TikTok), and then resold them to overseas syndicates for telecom and online fraud crimes.

All suspects in the 10 cases have been handled in accordance with the law, the ministry said.

The latest crackdowns reflect China's sustained drive against data-related crimes.

High-Speed Railway Test

A high-speed railway traversing a permafrost zone in Heilongjiang Province entered trial operation on August 6, bringing the country's northernmost bullet-train line one step closer to official service.

A test train departed Harbin, the provincial capital, at 7:40 a.m. and arrived in the forest city of Yichun two hours and two minutes later.

According to China Railway Harbin Bureau Group Co. Ltd., the trial run comprehensively verifies train scheduling, arrivals and departures, service frequency, passenger facilities and system compatibility to provide a scientific basis for the official opening of the railway.

With a designed speed of 250 km per hour, the 318-km line will slash travel time between Harbin and Yichun from about seven hours to just two hours once it becomes operational.

Running through the alpine permafrost zone, the track has been designed with numerous bridges, which together account for 72 percent of the total length of this railway section.

Chinese-Style Wrapper

The wrapper of a six-decade-old Chinese brand of milk candy has become an unlikely social media sensation in the West, with experts saying its popularity reflects growing global fascination with Chinese aesthetics untouched by Western design.

White Rabbit, a household name in China since its launch in 1959, was born in an era of material scarcity, when sweets were a rare luxury. Although the times have improved, its packaging has remained virtu-



Robot Homecoming

A staff member (first right) introduces a robot band member at the first robot 6S experience store in Qingdao, Shandong Province, on August 11. The newly opened facility has drawn crowds of consumers eager to interact with the latest technology. By integrating six core functions—sales, spare parts, service, survey, leasing and personalized customization—the store is paving the way for robots to become an integral part of daily life.

ally unchanged.

The wrapper, featuring a seated white rabbit against a red background and framed by blue-and-white rabbit motifs, which won a national packaging award in 1983, is now drawing millions of views overseas.

An X post on August 5, describing the wrapper as a “masterstroke of graphic design,” garnered several million views. The trend has also spread to more platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, reviving

interest in other vintage Chinese packaging.

Zhang Di, a professor at Renmin University of China, who studies cross-cultural content diffusion, attributed the wrapper's immense appeal to its visual language—bold primary colors, a simple composition and animal motifs—which he said requires no specific cultural knowledge for interpretation and is aesthetically accessible across cultures. Zhang also cited algorithmic recommendations as a key driver.



Cool Cavescape

Tourists relax at a café nestled within a karst cave in Anshun, Guizhou Province, on August 8. Famous for its spectacular karst topography, the region has creatively repurposed these natural caverns into unique, cool-climate retreats.

NEV Penetration

China's penetration rate of new-energy vehicles (NEVs), a major gauge of popularity, reached a record 65.1 percent of total passenger car retail sales in July, an industry survey showed on August 11.

The figure represents a year-on-year increase of 11.6 percentage points and month-on-month growth of 2.1 percentage points, according to data released by the China Passenger Car Association.

In July, the NEV retail penetration rate among domestic brands reached 83.8 percent, while the rate stood at 30.9 percent for luxury vehicles, the data showed.

The NEV penetration rate refers to the proportion of NEV sales in total vehicle sales within a certain period.

Retail sales of new-energy passenger vehicles stood at 951,000 units that month, down 3.9 percent year on year and bringing the cumulative retail

sales in the first seven months to 5.67 million units.

Production of new-energy passenger vehicles hit 1.45 million units in July, up 25.6 percent year on year, with cumulative output in the January-July period reaching 8.21 million units, up 7.9 percent year on year, according to the data.

Economic Performance

China's economy showed steady improvement across multiple sectors in July, with offline consumption growing steadily, the investment structure improving and innovation remaining robust, high-frequency data from the State Information Center (SIC) showed on August 8.

Offline consumption payments rose 2.2 percent year on year in July, up 0.8 percentage points from the previous month. Payments for household appliances and audio-visual equipment rose 8.5 percent, with the growth rate up 10.9 percent-

age points from June.

"The most encouraging change in consumption in July was that the recovery became more broad-based," Xing Yuguan, a researcher with the SIC, noted. He said steady growth in offline consumption, a recovery in big-ticket spending and strong summer tourism activity had helped boost consumption at major shopping districts, street shops and neighborhood stores.

Investment in advanced manufacturing surged 73.1 percent year on year in July, up 42.5 percentage points from June. The value of contracts awarded for projects related to new infrastructure, including computing power, data and networks, rose 0.8 percent year on year.

Xing said the continued improvement in the investment structure and the active flow of market capital into sectors related to new quality productive forces reflected confidence in the prospects for industrial upgrading. New quality productive forces refer to the shift

toward innovation-driven growth, technological advancement and high-quality development in multiple sectors of the economy.

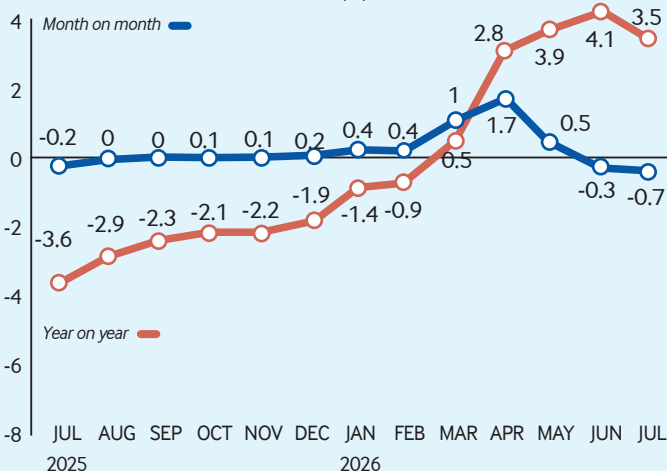
On the industrial front, an index tracking production activity in industrial parks rose 1 percent year on year in July, indicating broadly stable operations. Activity indexes for the semiconductor, new materials and digital intelligence sectors rose 11.6 percent, 8.9 percent and 4.8 percent, respectively.

Patent authorizations related to strategic emerging industries rose 10.7 percent year on year, with AI-related patent authorizations surging 60 percent. The growth rate was 21.7 percentage points higher than in June.

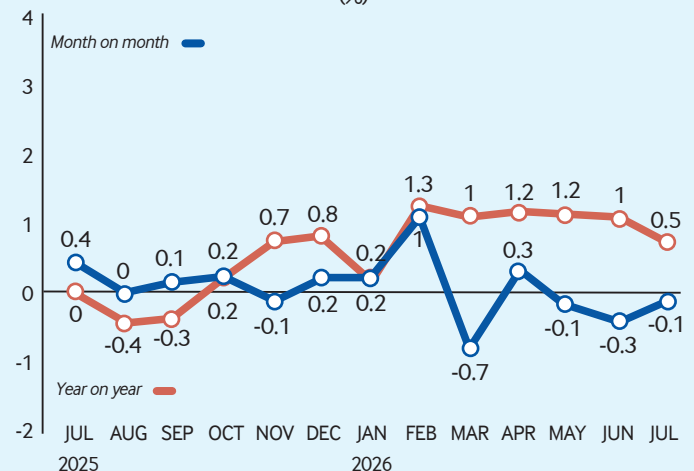
Xing said data on industrial activity showed that enterprises in semiconductors, new materials and digital intelligence remained highly dynamic, while AI-related innovations were emerging at a rapid pace, providing strong impetus for the shift from old to new growth drivers in the industrial sector.

NUMBERS

China's Producer Price Index (PPI) Growth (%)



China's Consumer Price Index (CPI) Growth (%)



Forex Reserves

China's foreign exchange (forex) reserves stood at \$3.4188 trillion by the end of July, up by \$2.5 billion, or 0.07 percent, from the level by the end of June, official data showed on August 7.

This slight increase was mainly attributed to the combined effects of exchange rate conversion and changes in asset prices, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange said in a statement.

Influenced by global macroeconomic conditions and monetary policies of major economies, the U.S. dollar index, a measure of the currency against a basket of major peers, fell, while global financial asset prices recorded mixed movements in July, the administration noted.

China's economy, which has demonstrated strong resilience and vitality with new drivers gaining momentum and structure constantly improving, is expected to help keep the

country's forex reserves basically stable, it added.

Foreign Trade

China's foreign trade in yuan-denominated terms grew 19.2 percent year on year in July, data from the General Administration of Customs of China showed on August 7.

The total value of goods imports and exports reached 4.66 trillion yuan (\$686 billion) in July, remaining above 4 trillion yuan (\$593 billion) for five consecutive months, the data showed. Exports rose 17.8 percent from the same period last year, while imports increased 21.2 percent.

In the first seven months of the year, total foreign trade in goods amounted to 30.13 trillion yuan (\$4.5 trillion), up 17.3 percent year on year.

Exports of hi-tech products, including industrial robots and 3D printers, surged by over 50 percent year on year in July, outpacing the 39 percent growth

recorded in the first half of 2026 (H1).

Gold Consumption

China's gold market saw divergent demand trends in H1, with jewelry consumption declining and investment demand remaining strong amid high prices and new tax policies, industry data showed on August 6.

Gold consumption rose 1.23 percent to some 511.41 tons in H1, according to the China Gold Association. By category, gold jewelry consumption fell 33.88 percent to 132.13 tons, while gold bar and coin consumption surged 28.42 percent to 339.34 tons.

Elevated and volatile gold prices, coupled with the rollout of new gold tax policies, have reshaped domestic gold consumption patterns, the association noted. Strong investment demand has driven purchases of gold bars and coins, with temporary price corrections boosting gold bar sales through banks.

Meanwhile, consumption of gold for industrial and other uses declined 2.9 percent to 39.94 tons, as high prices have pushed up costs for industrial users, weighing on industrial gold consumption.

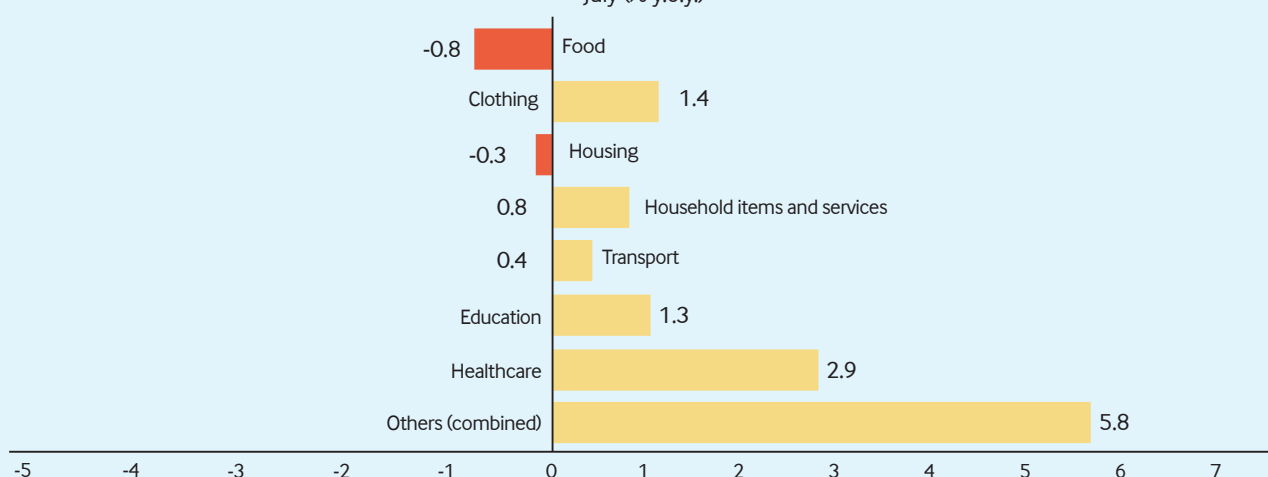
In H1, China produced 152.91 tons of gold, down 14.62 percent from a year earlier, the data showed.

The association said the decline in domestic output was partly due to temporary production halts at some mines as major gold-producing regions carried out safety inspections and rectification campaigns. Meanwhile, the overseas production capacity of major Chinese gold companies continued to expand, with their overseas mined gold output rising 21.43 percent year on year to 48.1 tons in the period.

China added 40.12 tons of gold to its reserves in H1, bringing its gold reserves to 2,346.45 tons by the end of June, ranking fifth globally. Since November 2024, China's central bank has increased its gold holdings for 20 consecutive months, the association noted.

China's CPI Growth by Type

July (% y.o.y.)



(Source: National Bureau of Statistics)



JAPAN

An anti-war rally outside an annual memorial ceremony on the 81st anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombing of Nagasaki at the Peace Park, Nagasaki, on August 9



COLOMBIA

Search and rescue operations underway among the ruins of a building damaged in an earthquake in Cali on August 12. The death toll from the 7.4-magnitude earthquake had risen to 265, with 3,771 others injured, as of August 13



CHAD

Members of the Defense Forces march in the Independence Day military parade in N'Djamena on August 11



AUSTRIA

Paris Saint-Germain's Marquinhos holds up the trophy after his team beat Aston Villa 2-1 in the UEFA Super Cup in Salzburg on August 12



GERMANY

Stargazers observe the partial solar eclipse at the Zeiss Grand Planetarium in Berlin on August 12



ZIMBABWE

Search and rescue operations at the site where a boat capsized on Lake Kariba in Mashonaland West Province on August 12. President Emmerson Mnangagwa declared a state of disaster that day as the death toll had risen to 44



THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

↓ FORMER CHINESE PREMIER DIES AT 98

Former Chinese Premier **Zhu Rongji** died of illness in Beijing on August 12 at the age of 98.

Zhu served as a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee from 1992 to 2002. Born in October 1928 in Changsha, Hunan Province, Zhu became a CPC member in October 1949. In the early years of his career, he held a series of posts related to economic affairs in regional and central government departments and institutions. From March 1998 to March 2003, he was premier of the State Council, the highest state administrative organ.



Zhu introduced a series of policies to broaden opening up and encourage exports, while preventing the devaluation of the yuan. He also took measures to attract foreign investment and better utilize both domestic and international markets and resources.

Trading in the Future

Global Times

August 11

On August 10, Chinese robotics company Unitree opened subscriptions for its initial public offering (IPO) on the Shanghai Stock Exchange's Science and Technology Innovation Board. With shares priced at 150.8 yuan (\$21) and an implied valuation of about 61 billion yuan (\$8.5 billion), the deal is set to make Unitree the first humanoid-robot maker listed on China's stock market.

Unitree's listing, alongside the record-breaking listing of memory-chip maker ChangXin Memory Technologies last

month points to a broader shift in China's innovation ecosystem, as research, engineering and manufacturing become more closely connected with capital markets. Investment is increasingly flowing into chips, machine vision and other hi-tech sectors where technological advances can be translated more quickly into commercial applications.

The implications could extend far beyond China. Emerging technologies have long been judged against benchmarks set by Silicon Valley and Nasdaq. Unitree's IPO could help establish an alternative reference point for valuing frontier technologies and push the global pricing of technology assets from a largely single-center system toward a more multipolar one.



The NPD Epidemic

Lifeweek

August 10

Narcissistic personality disorder (NPD), in the clinical sense, describes a pattern of grandiosity, entitlement, a strong need for admiration and impaired empathy, often accompanied by serious difficulties in relationships. In China, estimates typically put its prevalence at around 1-2 percent of the general popula-

“Chinese animation has moved beyond its traditional child-oriented positioning to embrace all-age storytelling and contemporary social concerns.”

Gui Lin, a professor of literature and art theory at the University of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, as animated blockbuster *Ne Zha 2* became the first animated film to win the Best Picture Award at China's Hundred Flowers Awards on August 10

“Mainstream English large models show clear shortcomings when serving many overseas markets. There is strong, genuine demand for large models customized for local tongues.”

Dong Bin, Vice President of the brand marketing center of Chinese tech company iFLYTEK. Its large language model Spark supports speech recognition and simultaneous interpretation for more than 130 languages

tion. On Chinese social media, however, NPD appears to be everywhere. An aloof ex has NPD, so does a controlling parent, a belittling partner or an arrogant boss.

As awareness of mental health has grown, psychological terms such as NPD have spread rapidly online. Their popularity often reflects a common set of grievances: the feeling of being exploited for one's time, emotional energy and care. NPD is especially viral because, unlike some disorders that invite both sympathy and condemnation, the NPD is often a pure villain.

That points to a broader shift in the social mood. The phrase "family of origin," which became fashionable around 2016, encouraged people to ask how the past had shaped who they were. The attachment theory, popular a few years later, offered a framework for understanding the dynamics of close relationships. NPD serves a different purpose. It functions more like a security screening system. In a society marked by fiercer competition and greater uncertainty, the term is increasingly used to answer a more defensive question: Who might hurt me?

Experts, however, warn against such simplification. Labels rarely resolve interpersonal conflict. Understanding a relationship means confronting the specific person, rather than reducing them to a simple label.

Rooftop Recreation

Guangzhou Daily

August 6

As ground-level space in China's cities becomes ever more crowded, businesses are looking upward. Rooftops once left empty are being turned into sports grounds, campsites, market fairs and urban farms.

Yet the rooftop economy remains highly formulaic. "Views plus dining" is still the dominant model, while limited offerings and weak connections to the surrounding neighborhood risk making these spaces commercially unsustainable. The challenge now is to turn rooftops from a novelty into a lasting part of urban life.

Successful rooftops will depend on three things. The first is accessibility. A terrace

hidden atop an office block, invisible from the street and difficult to reach, cannot attract casual visitors.

The second is openness. Freed from many of the physical constraints of enclosed malls, rooftops can accommodate activities that would be difficult indoors. Simply copy-pasting shops and restaurants from downstairs misses the point.

The third is a sense of escape from the pressures of urban life. Rooftops can be linked with nearby parks through flower shows and outdoor sports, while shared terraces can serve as stages for community events. Woven into the neighborhoods around them, such spaces offer more than a place to spend: They give people a place to linger and connect.

↓ OLYMPIC CHAMPION NAMED SHORT TRACK HEAD COACH

Olympic champion **Wu Dajing** has been appointed head coach of China's short track speed skating team, the Winter Sports Management Center announced on August 12.

Wu, 32, became the first Chinese man to win Olympic gold in short track speed skating when he came first in the 500-meter event at the Pyeongchang 2018 Olympic Winter Games. He also helped China win the mixed 2,000-meter relay title at Beijing 2022.



Wu's appointment follows a public selection process launched on July 29 as China began preparations for Alpes 2030. China took only one silver medal in short track at Milano Cortina 2026 earlier this year, its first Winter Olympics without a gold medal in the sport since 2002.

"With stronger policy support and measures taking effect, China's economy is expected to maintain a steady recovery in the second half of the year."

Nathan Chow, Senior Economist at DBS Bank in Singapore, in a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency

"Chinese consumers are moving from 'buying useful products' to 'buying what they like.'"

Liu Xiaolong, Global Partner at U.S. management consulting company Kearney, in a recent interview with Xinhua, adding that digital technologies are helping service providers to strengthen their ability to understand consumers, craft engaging scenarios and build communities



Visitors film a Unitree humanoid robot at the Wensan Digital Life Block in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, on April 18

COVER STORY

TECH, TOURISM AND TRANSFORMATION

Efforts to build world-class destinations for the digital age pay off By Li Wenhan