Earth Hurtles Toward 6.5 Billion



The planet's population is projected to reach 6.5 billion at 7:16 p.m. EST Saturday, according to the U.S. Census Bureau and its World Population Clock. Thomas Malthus, the 18th-century thinker who famously predicted the human population would outrun its food supply, would be astounded. Back in 1798, when Malthus penned his classic An Essay on the Principle of Population, barely a billion Homo sapiens roamed the planet. Today, Earth's population teeters on the brink of a new milestone: 6.5 billion living, breathing humans. "Malthus would be astonished not only at the numbers of people, but at the real prosperity of about a fifth of them and the average prosperity of most of them," said demographer Joel Cohen, a professor of populations at Rockefeller and Columbia universities. "He wouldn't be surprised at the abject poverty of the lowest quarter or third." The clock, which operates continuously, estimates that each second 4.1 people are born and 1.8 people die. The clock figures are estimates, subject to error, given the difficulties of maintaining an accurate global population count. However, the key concept -- that population levels are growing, but at a slower rate than in the past few decades -- reflects the consensus view of demographers. But such formulas are subject to tinkering. Changes in agricultural practices, more efficient water-desalination technologies and a host of other factors can increase the number of people the planet can support. Shifts in behaviour -- such as acceptance of new food sources that are cheap to produce -- can have a similar effect, noted Cohen.

The Disinfecting and Deodorising Washer



Tomoyo Nonaka, chairman of Sanyo Electric, shows off the company's latest washing machine, "Aqua," the world-first drum type washing machine with "Air Wash" function. The Aqua has three key features, World-first disinfecting and deodorising using Ozone function, "Air Wash"; World-first purifying water using Ozone function, "Aqaualoop", Easy-to-use design from the kitchen, "Kitchen Work Style." Sanyo will put the Aqua washing machine in Japanese market from mid March this year with a price of about 2,110 USD.



iShirt Says it With Music

We love iPod-friendly clothing, but most of the 'Podwear out there comes in either jacket or jean form, which just won't cut it when summer comes around. Now PodShirt has a tune-a-riffic t-shirt that you can wear year-round. The 29 USD iShirt not only lets everyone know just how iPod obsessed you really are, it also holds an actual iPod Shuffle right on the front. The iShirt comes with two caveats: "People who use pacemakers should never wear this shirt," and "This product can only be used with the iPod Shuffle. Any other model of iPod will not work and may be damaged."

Source: AFP, Wired and Webindia123

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