

Global population to pass 10bn by the year of 2100

The world's population is projected to surge past 9bn before 2050 and then reach 10.1bn by the end of the century if current fertility rates continue at expected levels

Most of the increase will come from so-called 'high fertility countries', mainly in sub-Saharan Africa but also in some nations in Asia, Oceania and Latin America. The *2010 Revision of World Population Prospects*, prepared by the Population Division at the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs, shows that a small variation in fertility could lead to major long-term differences in the size of the global population. Based on the medium projection, the number of people in the world — currently close to 7bn — should pass 8bn in 2023, 9bn by 2041 and then 10bn at some point after 2081. But a small increase in fertility could mean a global population of as much as 15.8bn by 2100, while a small decrease could result in an eventual overall decline in population to 6.2bn by the end of the century.

Hania Zlotnik, Director of the Population Division, says that the populations of many countries are ageing and will continue to do so as their fertility rates decline. The population of countries classed as low-fertility or intermediate-fertility — in-



People through the Nanjing Road shopping district in Shanghai

cluding China, Russia and many countries in Europe — would thus peak well before the end of the century. Life expectancy is expected to rise across all catego-

ries of countries, particularly as better treatment for HIV/AIDS cuts early deaths in many sub-Saharan African countries. Global life expectancy is projected to in-

crease from 68 years to 81 by the years 2095 to 2100.

Ms. Zlotnik noted also that the world population will surpass 7bn at some point later this year.

Sony hires detectives after gamers lose personal data



People play on Sony PlayStation Portable gaming consoles

Sony has hired investigators after a breach of security, in which the personal data of more than 100m online game users was compromised

Cyber-security detectives from Guidance Software and Data Forte, among others, have been brought on board. The Playstation Network and Sony Online Enter-

tainment have been taken offline. Information including names, addresses and potentially even credit card numbers was stolen in the attack. Officials from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation said they were looking into the breach of data, which might include some credit card numbers.

Sony has recently said the personal details of 77m Playstation users may have been stolen by hackers. It then announced that a further 25m gamers had their personal details stolen because of a security breach. The company said credit card details and other personal information had been taken from an 'outdated database'. The new attack went beyond users of Playstation hardware, affecting PC and Facebook gamers.

2020 vision: a look forward to the promises of a truly amazing year

Robotic moon bases, chips implanted in our brains, self-driving cars, and high speed rail linking London to Beijing. According to a dazzling number of technology predictions that single out the year 2020, it's going to be one hell of a year. Here, we take a look at some of the wonders it holds in store.

2020, of course, is just a con-

venient target date for roughly-ten-years-off predictions. "It's not any more particularly interesting, in my opinion, than 2019 or 2021," says Mike Liebhold, a Distinguished Fellow at the Institute for the Future, and an all-around technology expert with a resume that includes stints with Intel, Apple, and even Netscape. "There's a continuum of techno-

logical development, and that's just an easy date for an editor or a writer to get a handle on."

After spending decades helping various top-tier tech companies develop and deploy their cutting edge technologies around the world, Mr. Liebhold now helps clients take a long view of their businesses so they can make better decisions in the short term.

Gauguin's sculpture sells for record price

A wooden bust by Paul Gauguin has sold for \$11.3m at Sotheby's in New York, a record price for a sculpture by the 19th century French artist

Jeune Tahitienne (Young Tahitian) was last seen in public in 1961.



The work had been estimated to sell for between \$10m and \$15m.

The current record for a Gauguin work is held by *L'homme à la Hache (The Man with an Axe)*, which sold for \$40.3m in 2006. The latest auction coincides with a Gauguin exhibition taking place at the National Gallery of Art in Washington.

It is the first major exhibit of the artist's career in the United States in around 20 years. The recent sale contrasts with an earlier auction in London in February when a rare Gauguin painting failed to sell. *Nature Morte A L'Esperance (Still Life with Sunflowers)* had been expected to fetch up to £10m at the Christie's event.

Married life begins for William and Kate

Prince William and Kate have woken up to their first day as a married couple after a royal wedding that provided all the pomp and circumstance expected of it

The couple took their vows in Westminster Abbey in front of 1900 guests ranging from the Queen to the postman from Kate's home village. Hundreds of thousands lined the streets of London to cheer the Prince and Kate, the first commoner in 350 years to become Queen-in-waiting. After the service there was the obligatory appearance at the balcony of Buckingham Palace and the kiss everyone was waiting for. Canapes at the palace, then time for a quick change ready for the evening party — a relatively intimate affair for 300 close friends and family — hosted by Prince Charles.

Portugal reaches deal on EU and IMF bail-out

Portugal's caretaker Prime Minister Jose Socrates says he has reached agreement on a bail-out from the EU and the International Monetary Fund

In a televised statement, Mr. Socrates said the three-year loan was a 'good agreement that defends Portugal'. His office says Portugal will be asking for financial assistance worth 78bn Euros. Officials from the European Commission, European Central Bank and IMF have been working on a deal for three weeks. Mr. Socrates said that Portugal would be given more time to reach its budget deficit targets than had previously been expected. The deficit will have to be cut to 5.9 percent of GDP this year, 4.5 percent in 2012 and 3 percent in 2013. Portugal had previously aimed to reduce the deficit to 4.6 percent this year, 3 percent in 2012 and 2 percent in 2013.

"I would like to announce to the Portuguese people that the Government has reached agreement today with the representatives of international institutions on the programme of financial aid to our country," he said. Mr. Socrates resigned as Prime Minister after failing to get austerity measures through Parliament. There will be a general election on June 5th. The deal has to be endorsed by the main opposition parties. The deadline for the bail-out money to be in place is June 15th, when Portugal has to repay nearly 5bn Euros of debt.

Portugal was the third Euro-zone country to have to ask for a bail-out, after Greece and Ireland. Its economy is expected to contract this year as a result of the latest set of austerity measures.