

By Sachin Sachin, Science Editor

## [An Anti-Knife Shirt](#)

### *From Japan*

In many fairy tales ('The Lord of the Rings' included) the heroes wear a cloak or another garment that makes them invincible. A real life version of this could be available due to the Japanese company Nihon Uni, based in Chuo Ward, Osaka, which has developed a shirt that protects its wearer against stabbing. Crime through stabbings occurring late in the night is at high levels in many urban areas worldwide and a lightweight security garment to be worn daily would help. The producer declared it was inspired to come with this product following an "increasing number of malicious crimes that have victimized children and late-night convenience store clerks."The fabric of the new shirt is made from a thicker fiber, which is also three times stronger than the cotton thread employed for making common T-shirts.This fiber is a ultrahigh molecular weight polyethylene, similar to the aramid fiber (more familiar under the name Kevlar) employed in military body armor. Still, the shirt is machine washable, the thickness and density of the ultrahigh molecular weight polyethylene fiber is lower than in Kevlar, so that it is flexible enough to serve as everyday clothing.The new product will be released in Japan, in June, and will come in two models: a T-shirt and long sleeve form. The prices will be of \$220-590 for the long sleeve model and \$190-522 for the short-sleeved model. At these costs, I doubt vulnerable kids in the slums will use these shirts for protection too soon. Moreover, Nihon Uni also said that, while the new T-shirts are slash-resistant, the fabric cannot impede a direct thrust with the point of the knife.