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U.S. prison population doubles over 12 years

By ARNIE GILMAN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The number of American adults imprisoned in state or federal prisons reached its highest level ever last year, the government said Monday. The big jump occurred despite the highest rate of incarceration in the world, and experts say it is likely to continue.

The number of adults in state and federal prisons grew by about 7 percent last year, reaching a record 1.7 million, the Department of Justice said. That means an additional 122,000 people were behind bars last year, most of them for drug offenses.

The increase is part of a longer-term trend. Prison populations have grown by more than 200,000 each year since 1985, the first year for which data are available. The Justice Department now estimates that about 7 in every 1,000 adults were in prison last year.

The number of inmates sentenced for drug-related offenses has risen 82 percent since 1985, the Justice Department said.

The growth in prison populations is one of the factors that has driven up state and local budgets. States and localities spend about $9 billion a year to house inmates.

The federal government spent about $1.5 billion last year on prison costs.

The report also noted that the number of inmates on probation and parole in the United States reached a record 5.5 million last year, a 7 percent increase over the previous year.

The report's conclusions do not reflect the impact of recent changes in federal drug laws, which have resulted in a decrease in the number of drug-related convictions.

Peace talks on Kosovo begin today

By R. W. WILSON

Peacemaker talks were scheduled to begin in the United Nations' New York headquarters on Monday, a step toward ending the conflict in Kosovo.

The talks will be a turning point in the conflict, which began in 1998 when ethnic Albanians in Kosovo declared independence from Yugoslavia.

The United States and other Western countries have supported the talks, which will be attended by representatives of Kosovo, Serbia, and other countries in the region.

The talks are expected to last for several weeks, and the sides are expected to make progress in their efforts to end the conflict.

Fetal alcohol syndrome leaves mark

Woman struggles daily with damage inflicted in womb

By LINDA WATSON

Fetal alcohol syndrome leaves a mark on a woman's daily struggle with the damage inflicted in womb.

Melissa Clark, 22, a victim of fetal alcohol syndrome, is a student at a college in Seattle. She is the first person her family knew who had been diagnosed with the condition.

"I can't describe what it's like," said Melissa. "I don't know if it's a curse or a blessing."

"My mother told me that I was always sick. When I was a baby, I had a cold every day."

Melissa's mother, also a victim of fetal alcohol syndrome, is now 30 years old. She has a 9-month-old son who is also a victim of fetal alcohol syndrome.

Melissa's father, a former soldier, is now 30 years old. He has a 9-month-old son who is also a victim of fetal alcohol syndrome.

Melissa's parents are now divorced, and she lives with her mother.

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Berger concedes that China benefited in Los Alamos spy case

By JEFF PARIS

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — The Chinese government has conceded that it benefited from a U.S. government spy case involving Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

Chinese officials have acknowledged that the laboratory was a source of highly sensitive technology, according to a source familiar with the situation.

The Chinese government has also acknowledged that it received technology from the laboratory through an exchange program.

The China government has denied that it has been involved in any illegal activities.

Sandy Berger and other experts have raised questions about the extent of the Chinese government's involvement in the laboratory.

The case of the U.S. government's spy, who worked at Los Alamos National Laboratory, has raised concerns about the security of the laboratory.

The laboratory is one of the most sensitive U.S. government facilities.

The laboratory has been the target of many government investigations, including the one conducted by the Department of Energy.

The laboratory was the target of a series of investigations by the Department of Energy after a 1995 incident in which a laboratory worker was killed.

A year after the incident, a congressional report was released that raised questions about the laboratory's security.

Despite the concerns, the laboratory continues to receive funding from the Department of Energy.
Struggle: Years of hard work have turned Clark into a success story.

Having fatal alcohol syndrome makes you feel like an animal all day, said one of Clark's sons. "I don't think it's a good thing to have."

Stress is particularly hard for Clark and his family, said one of their sons. "It's hard being a parent when you have a child with this disease."

The family has a support group that meets regularly to discuss the challenges of living with a child with fatal alcohol syndrome.

Pet has had a rough life, but now she's doing well. She's a happy, healthy dog now."

Dogs can be good companions and can help people who have struggled with mental health issues."

The family has been working with a local animal shelter to find a loving home for Pet, who deserves a good life."

Clint has made progress since his arrest last year. "I'm doing better now. I know I have to stay away from that stuff."

He's started going to meetings and working with a counselor. "I want to get my life back on track."

The family is proud of how far Clint has come and are hopeful for his future.

Clint, left, and his foster mother, Maryanne Bevan, operate a walk-in dog services. Wachovia's Clint uses the money to pay for expenses for his foster mother to educate the public about fatal alcohol syndrome.