Obama: Public demands pullout

By Steven Thomson, Jonathon S. Lensky and Nancy A. Tevald McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama announced plans Wednesday to pull 33,000 U.S. troops out of Afghanistan well before next year’s election, signaling a rapid drawdown sure to please Americans weary of the almost decade-long war and to stop spending hundreds of billions of dollars.

The quick drawdown will be faster than military commanders had recommended. Instead, it reflects growing public pressure to get out of Afghanistan and to stop spending hundreds of billions of dollars.

See Obama, Page A3

LEOMNT HAUNTED GRANARY

Association says farewell to fright

By Amanda Overholt

CENTRE DAILY TIMES

HARRISBURG — Gov. Tom Corbett and top Republican lawmakers in the Senate and House state budgets closed them- selves in private meetings Wednesday in an attempt to sort out their remaining differences on a state budget ahead of the June 30 end of the state’s fiscal year.

There were few details about what, if any, progress they made.

Morning and evening meet- ings in the Republican governor’s offices broke up without negotiators announcing any agreement or revealing where their differences remain in a $29 billion budget package that would talk about 2 percent less than this year’s budget and deliver deep cuts to spending on education.

“I feel confident that we’ll see Budget, Page A3

STATE BUDGET

Meeting shapes fiscal picture

By Marc Levy

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Republicans seized on the failure growing national debt could soon spark a European-style crisis unless Congress moves quickly, the Congress, and Budget Office warned Wednesday in an attempt to sort out their remaining differences on a state budget ahead of the June 30 end of the state’s fiscal year.

The report said the national debt, now $14.3 trillion, is on a path to grow to $49 trillion by 2040, nearly double the annual size of the economy within a decade. It warned that “without deep cuts to spending on education, Medicare and Medicaid, among other programs, we are on track for a fiscal crisis” if it is left unchanged.

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