

## Headlines:

- **Macron Announces Free Condoms for 18- to 25-year-olds in France**
- **David Cameron Takes Teaching Job at New York University Abu Dhabi**
- **Pakistan's Taliban Problem is America's Too**

## Details:

### Macron Announces Free condoms for 18- to 25-year-olds in France

The French president has said condoms will be made available for free in pharmacies for 18- to 25-year-olds in an attempt to reduce unwanted pregnancies among young people. "It's a small revolution for contraception," Emmanuel Macron announced during a health debate with young people in Fontaine-le-Comte, a suburb of Poitiers in western France. The move comes after the government began offering free birth control for all women under 25 this year, expanding a scheme targeting under-18s to ensure young women do not stop taking contraception because they cannot afford it. Condoms are already reimbursed by the national healthcare system if prescribed by a doctor or midwife, a measure intended to fight the spread of Aids and other sexually transmitted infections. On sexual education overall, the president said: "We are not very good on this subject. The reality is very, very different from the theory. It's an area where we need to much better educate our teachers." Macron wore a face mask at the conference, saying he was following health ministry guidelines, as the government weighed its response to a rise in Covid cases in the run-up to Christmas, though so far no mask mandates had been reintroduced. "Faced with the new spread of the epidemic ... I think it's good to set an example because we don't necessarily want to return to overall mandates," he said. Officials are urging people to wear masks in crowded venues and to get Covid vaccine booster shots as winter approaches. [Source: The Guardian]

**As long as the French are fed a daily diet of personal freedoms, free condoms or sex education will never stop teenage pregnancies. Personal freedoms are also fuelling the rise in single parent families, irresponsible fathers and mothers, old age crisis, and a declining population. But the biggest victim of personal freedom is broken families which add to the tax payers' burden.**

### David Cameron Takes Teaching Job at New York University Abu Dhabi

David Cameron, the UK's former prime minister, has accepted a teaching position at New York University Abu Dhabi. He will lecture students on politics in the age of disruption during a three-week course in January, NYUAD confirmed to The National. The course will be available to all NYUAD students, as well as full time NYU undergraduates in other locations. Topics will include migration and the invasion of Ukraine. "David Cameron will be teaching a three-week course as part of J-Term in January titled Practising Politics and Government in the Age of Disruption," a statement from the university said. "NYU Abu Dhabi offers J-Term courses in many locations around the world. Many classes are open not only to NYU Abu Dhabi students but also to full-time NYU undergraduates from other locations in their sophomore, junior, or senior year. These courses give students the opportunity to study together and experience the rich diversity of the NYU Global Network. "In addition to faculty, J-Term courses are taught by renowned scholars, writers, artists, journalists, practitioners, and policy analysts who teach only during the January term." Mr Cameron appeared at the Abu Dhabi Ideas Festival in 2018, an NYUAD event, and spoke at a session titled Polarising: Bridging the Gaps and Cancer: An End in Sight. There he commented on one of the topics he will be lecturing about in January. "Clearly in Britain, we have to do better in controlling immigration ... [it is the] number one political issue year after year," he said. Political disruption is a subject Mr Cameron knows much about. He was prime minister between 2010 and 2016, when he agreed to give the British people the choice of whether to remain in the

EU or not. When the vote for leaving it came in, he resigned, prompting a carousel of leaders for a divided nation. [Source: The National]

**Cameron continues in the footsteps of former UK PMs and has leveraged his old position to make money in education. In the West, it is normal for politicians to leave government and then take lucrative roles in the private sector. By doing so, the “revolving door” concept is kept alive i.e., power and connections move in specific circles at the detriment of the public. The net impact on society is increased corruption and nepotism in elite circles which is protected by law, while corruption of the poor is prosecuted to the full.**

## **Pakistan’s Taliban Problem is America’s Too**

When the United States withdrew its forces from Afghanistan after 20 years in the country, it did so on a promise that the Taliban once back in government would provide no haven for terrorist groups. The Taliban pledge covered not only al Qaeda – the terror group whose presence in the country led to the US invasion in 2001 – but also the Taliban’s ideological twin next door, the Pakistani Taliban or TTP (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan). But the recent break down of an already shaky year-long ceasefire in neighboring Pakistan between the TTP and Islamabad raises some troubling questions over whether that promise will hold. The end of the ceasefire in Pakistan threatens not only escalating violence in that country but potentially an increase in cross-border tensions between the Afghan and Pakistani governments. And it is already putting links between the Afghan Taliban and its Pakistani counterpart under the spotlight. As recently as spring last year Pakistani Taliban leader Noor Wali Mehsud told CNN that in return for helping to push the US out of Kabul his group would expect support from the Afghan Taliban in its own fight.

Like their erstwhile brothers in arms in Afghanistan, the Pakistani Taliban want to overthrow their country’s government and impose their own strict Islamic code. In an exclusive interview with CNN this week, Mehsud blamed the ceasefire’s breakdown on Islamabad, saying it “violated the ceasefire and martyred tens of our comrades and arrested tens of them.” But he was more guarded when asked directly whether the Afghan Taliban was now helping his group as he had once hoped.

His answer: “We are fighting Pakistan’s war from within the territory of Pakistan; using Pakistani soil. We have the ability to fight for many more decades with the weapons and spirit of liberation that exist in the soil of Pakistan.” Those words should be of concern not only to Islamabad, but Washington too.

The FBI has been tracking the TTP for at least a decade and a half, long before they radicalized and trained Faisal Shazad for his brazen attack setting fire to a vehicle in New York’s Times Square in 2010.

Following the Times Square attack the TTP was designated a terrorist organization and is still considered a threat to US interests. And while Islamabad is keen to play down the threat from the group – Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah says Pakistan can “fully” control conflict with the TTP and describes conversations with the TTP during the ceasefire as talks “which are held in a state of war” – its control of the situation pivots on the TTP remaining within Pakistan’s borders. [Source: CNN]

**Ever since America’s arrival in the region in the early 80s, Pakistan’s security and territorial integrity continues to be undermined. Fighting America’s global war on terror (GWOT) or before that working with the US to curb the Soviets in Afghanistan have extracted a huge toll on Pakistani society. The outcome of having a pro-American foreign policy is that Pakistan once again faces the spread of armed insurgency stemming from GWOT. America is no longer around to deal with the blow back, and the Pakistani leadership is fully expected by Biden to deal with this simmering threat. Yest despite being abandoned by America, the Pakistani leadership continues to put US interests ahead of Pakistan.**