

PM BROWNE: GOV'T HASN'T RECEIVED CHOKSI ABDUCTION REPORT

UPDATE



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Prime Minister Gaston Browne has rejected the accusations that his government has played any role in the alleged abduction of Mehul Choksi in May, 2021.

Local News



PM insists gov't not privy to Choksi abduction report

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has assured the House of Representatives that his government has not received a report concerning the alleged kidnapping of Indian fugitive, Mehul Choksi.

He has further affirmed that his administration was in no way involved in the incident.

Browne was responding on Tuesday to a question

posed by the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, Jamale Pringle, about why the government had not shared the contents of a report prepared by the police with the public.

A 19-page investigation report, believed to have been completed last year by the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda, determined that Choksi was in

fact abducted, as he had contended.

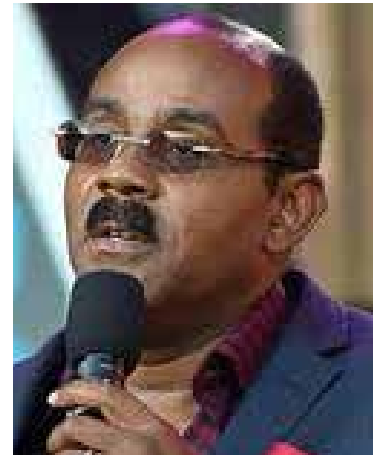
Law enforcement officials in Saint John's are yet to comment on this.

According to the *Hindustan Times*, the report mirrored allegations made by Choksi and sought to trace the five suspects who are believed to have carried out the abduction. The *Hindustan Times* further claimed that the report recommended seeking Interpol's help in identifying the suspects.

Prime Minister Browne said his administration has nothing to hide and predicted the matter will likely take a particular course.

"It was our administration based on what we considered to be credible information about the abduction that had caused an investigation into the said abduction," Browne told parliamentarians.

"The ONDCP as well as the Royal Antigua and Barbuda Police Force would have been involved. The Cabinet was briefed at least on one or two occasions by ONDCP, and so far, they have been able to identify the suspects who are not citizens of Antigua and Barbuda, and clearly this is a matter that is before law enforcement and possibly will end up in court. So eventually, this issue will be sub judice, and the less said at this point the better, but we have absolutely noth-



Prime Minister Gaston Browne "ing to hide," the prime minister declared.

According to Browne, he is cognizant of the fact that Mehul Choksi, who is fighting extradition to India, remains a citizen of Antigua and Barbuda. Therefore, an investigation was ordered into his abduction out of concern that there would be accusations that the government was somehow involved.

"I can say that we have acted with probity at all times. We respect the fact that Mr. Choksi is a citizen of Antigua and Barbuda, and there is no way that we would have been involved in any decision or any attempt to remove him from the state illegally."

Choksi claimed he was kidnapped and beaten by his captors on 23rd May 2021, after which he was taken to Dominica on a boat.

He was subsequently charged with illegal entry into Dominica.

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House of Representatives approves US\$4M CDB loan

The House of Representatives, late Tuesday afternoon, approved a US\$4.6 million loan from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), which the government says will go towards strengthening the country's COVID-19 resiliency project.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne, who is also the country's finance minister, introduced a resolution in the House

seeking its approval for the loan, which the government has already negotiated.

"We intend to further build-out our health infrastructure. So for example, we will be establishing a Renal Unit at the former Holberton Hospital. That is currently under construction and we hope to utilize some of these funds to complete that project. In addition, we will be establishing a Cardiac Unit at SLB Mount

St. John's Medical Centre," Browne reported to the House.

He said discussions are now underway with a well-known medical facility in the United States to establish a joint venture agreement under which the Cardiac Unit will be established.

"Most of these funds will go towards expanding our health facilities as we seek to bring first-world health care to the people of Antigua and Barbuda," he said. Earlier in the session, several Supplementary Appropriation Bills were tabled in the House for approval. These covered government spending over several years, which addressed expenses that were not provided for in previous budgets.

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Dominica's High Court later approved a consent order for the Indian national to travel to Antigua and Barbuda to seek advanced medical treatment.

Recently, prosecutors in Domini-

ca discontinued the illegal entry case against him.

The diamantaire is wanted by the Indian government on a slew of charges including allegedly defrauding the Punjab National Bank of billions of dollars.



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Local News



Daryll Matthew defends cost of E-book programme

Minister of Education and Sports, Daryll Matthew, has rubbished the claims of the government's detractors that some \$78 million in textbooks and e-books were discarded at the Cooks Sanitary Landfill.

Last week, a viral video showed countless electronic devices, textbooks and other learning material strewn around the dump.

Since then, the Board of Education and the Ministry of Education have been under fire, primarily by the main opposition United Progressive Party, for having wasted the public's resources and for the failure of the so-called "E-Book" initiative implemented in 2016.

On Tuesday morning during a meeting of the Parliament, however, Minister Matthew offered an explanation to the nation regarding what really occurred.

As far as the ever-increasing cost of the initiative, Matthew said the government entered an agreement with FortunaPIX for the provision of the electronic devices, learning material



Minister of Education and Sports, Daryll Matthew

and programme licences, which came to a total cost over a five-year period of EC\$21.3 million.

He also informed the Lower House that the facts which he presented on Tuesday will all be verified once the results of an audit now taking place at the Board of Education becomes public.

The minister also addressed the damage that has been done to the credibility of FortunaPIX, which the opposition has insinuated over charged the government for its services.

While Antigua and Barbuda has

only 6,800 users who benefit from FortunaPIX and its services, Matthew outlined other countries in the region who also conduct business with the company.

"In Barbados, FortunaPIX currently has 47,000 users using the exact same platform that we use in Antigua and Barbuda. In the British Virgin Islands, they have 1,200; in St. Lucia they have 8,000.

"But Mr. Speaker, what I think is noteworthy, is that in Grenada, FortunaPIX has approximately 21,000 users on their platform, but they provide a technology solution for the entire education system in Grenada; both primary and secondary schools. In Antigua and Barbuda, we were only using the e-book platform in the secondary school system," the education minister explained.

Initially, FortunaPIX quoted the government of Antigua and Barbuda a cost of USD\$250 per user to be covered by the initiative, however after negotiations, this was drastically reduced to only USD\$156.

Police on the hunt for escaped prisoner

Authorities are on the hunt for yet another escapee.

This time, it is the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda that has fallen under the microscope, after word came on Tuesday that a man in their custody managed to escape officers while being transported to Her Majesty's Prison.

Rikardo Bassawan, 27, of Bennett Street, Villa, was in custody on a charge of aggravated robbery, following a crime he is alleged to have committed last Saturday in Jolly Harbour.

Bassawan was being transported to the prison after making his appearance in the District "B" Court on Tuesday morning, where he

was denied bail and ordered to be remanded.

Police have not revealed exactly what transpired, except to say he escaped from their custody in Potters, while being transported to prison.

At the time, Bassawan was wearing a yellow shirt and green sweatpants.

He is of slim build, fair



Rikardo Bassawan

complexion and has braided hair.

Anyone seeing him, or knowing his whereabouts, is asked to call the closest police station or Crimestoppers at 800-TIPS (8477)

Sightings reported, but Haitians still at large

Law enforcement personnel have met with no success in their search for two groups of foreigners who are in the country illegally.

Chief Immigration Officer, Katrina Yearwood, has confirmed that her department has received several tips reporting sightings of the five Haitians who escaped from detention sometime between Thursday night and Friday morning last week.

Since then, an extensive search has been launched to recapture the individuals – four males and one female – but they continue to elude authorities.

The Haitians arrived in Antigua via the Dominican Republic with plans for onward travel to Montserrat. However, when they presented their travel documents to immigration personnel at the airport, it was discovered that their documents were not in order and they were denied entry.

They were subsequently held at the immigration detention centre which is located at the former US Air Base, now under the control of the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force.

The five were scheduled to be deported on Saturday, however, early Friday morning they were reported missing and have been on the run since then.

With growing suspicion that locals may be assisting the Haitians to elude the au-



thorities, law enforcement officials are warning that this is an offence.

They are further urging persons with information

regarding the whereabouts of the escapees to contact the nearest police station or the Department of Immigration.

Meanwhile, the Indian family of seven that gained entry into Antigua and Barbuda, is on the run as well.

They were also to have left the country last Saturday after they were advised that they would not be permitted to continue their journey to the British Virgin Islands, but they never showed up to the airport for their flight out of Antigua and Barbuda.

Immigration officials say they believe both groups are still in Antigua, noting that in the case of the nationals of India, they “have not crossed our borders.



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Local News



Annual Grade Six National Assessment commences

Education officials are ready to administer the 2022 Grade Six National Assessment over a two-day period commencing today.

Education Officer, Measurement and Evaluation, Ineta Francis, said 1,396 students from public and private schools, along with three home schooled pupils, will be assessed in four core subject areas as their primary school years come to an end.

Language Arts and Science will be administered today, and on Thursday, students will be tested in Mathematics and Social Studies.

As was the case in 2021, Ineta Francis explained the national assessment will be administered at individual



schools instead of bringing the students together in large settings as the need remains to protect their health.

“We have 53 centres, which is different to what would have pertained pre-COVID.

“We usually merge schools at large centres, but we’re following last year’s procedures, so we are using schools, keeping the chil-

dren in their bubbles,” the education officer detailed.

Teachers will serve as invigilators over the two days, but supervisors and readers will be dispatched by the Measurement and Evaluation Unit to oversee the assessment.

It was revealed that the ministry has also made arrangements to accommodate students who may be experiencing learning difficulties.

“The names of students who require such assistance

will come from the Special Education Unit via Ms. [Joy-ann] Harrigan - we compile a list - and so depending on what accommodation Ms. Harrigan would have indicated, the student will be given that.

“Majority of the students would need reader assistance, and so they would have a separate reading room set up, and we provide that reader to offer that support for those students,” Francis pointed out.

She estimates that the results of the examinations will be released by 1st July, 2022, after grades are manually entered into the system and the electronic grading exercise is completed.

The scores will then be validated and analysed.

Once this process is concluded, secondary school placements will then follow.

Health authorities call for vigilance as COVID cases decline

The most recent report received by the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment revealed ninety (90) new laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda as of Monday 30th May, 2022 at 6pm.

Twenty (20) cases were recorded on May 27th, forty-five (45) on May 28th and twenty-five (25) on May 30th.

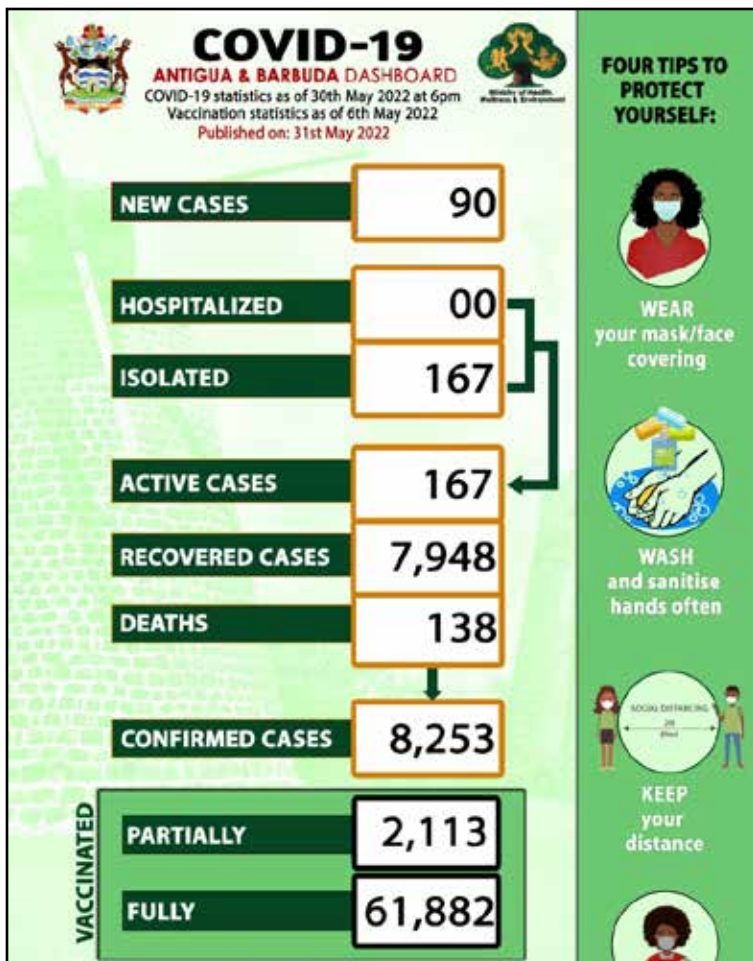
One hundred and ninety-one (191) samples were

processed.

One hundred and ten (110) recovered cases were recorded.

Consequently, the total number of persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases in Antigua and Barbuda is eight thousand two hundred and fifty-three (8,253); which is inclusive of one hundred and sixty-seven (167) active cases.

There are no hospitalized cases.





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Lifestyle

Best exercise time may differ for men and women, study suggests

By **Philippa Roxby**

Exercise is good for you whenever you do it, but the time of day to achieve the best result may be different for women and men, according to a US study.

It found women burned more body fat during morning exercise, whereas evenings counted more for men.

Much of what is known on this topic is based on studies on men, the researchers say.

Differences in hormones, in biological clocks and sleep-wake cycles between the sexes, could all play a role.

The study of 30 men and 26 women - all active and healthy, and between 25 and 55 years old - lasted 12 weeks and monitored the effects of a varied fitness programme, which included stretching, sprint, resistance and endurance training.

One group exercised for an hour before 08:30 while the other group followed the same activities in the evening, between 18:00 and 20:00. All participants fol-

lowed a specially-designed meal plan.

The researchers tested everyone's blood pressure and body fat over the course of the study, as well as their flexibility, strength and aerobic power at the start and end.

All those who took part in the study improved their overall health and performance over the 12-week trial, no matter when they exercised.

"The best time for exercise is the best time you can do it and fit it into your schedule," says Dr Paul Arcerio, lead study author and professor of health and human physiological sciences at Skidmore College, New York state.

But he suggests there is "something else going on" which may mean the ideal time of day to exercise is different for women and men.

Early or late?

Based on the results, women interested in reducing fat around their middle and reducing their blood pressure should aim to ex-



Early morning exercise could benefit women who want to reduce body fat and blood pressure

ercise in the morning, Dr Arcerio says.

This is important because belly - or abdominal - fat wraps around the body's internal organs, including the liver, and can be dangerous.

However, he says women trying to improve muscle strength in their upper body as well as their overall mood and food intake, should take evening exercise,

The men in the trial were less sensitive to the time of day they exercised, improving their strength in the mornings and evenings.

But evening exercise was found to be "ideal for

men interested in improving heart and metabolic health, as well as emotional wellbeing," says Dr Arcerio.

Improving metabolic health means reducing the risk of conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

It's not clear exactly why men and women's responses to the timing of exercise were so different, and the researchers say more research is needed to find out more.

They say women may burn more body fat in the morning because they are more likely to have excess belly fat. The body's internal rhythms may also be a factor. The study, published in *Frontiers in Physiology*, tracked people with a healthy weight, but the researchers say the programme could also work on people who are overweight or obese.

"They have more opportunity to benefit," says Dr Arcerio.

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Sunrise 5:32 am	Sunset 6:37 pm	Moonrise 7:03 am	Moonset 8:42 pm
		● Waxing Crescent	

The Way We Think

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How self-deception allows people to lie

By David Robson

Self-deception can fool us into believing our own lies – and even make us more convincing.

The media today is full of people who have lived a lie.

There's Elizabeth Holmes, the biotech entrepreneur, who in 2015 was declared the youngest and richest self-made female billionaire. She now faces 20 years in prison for fraud. Then there's Anna Sorokin – aka Anna Delvey, who pretended to be a German heiress, and subsequently fleeced New York's high society of hundreds of thousands of dollars. And Shimon Hayut, aka Simon LeViev – the so-called Tinder Swindler.

What marks all of these people is not just the lies they told others – but the lies they must have told themselves. They each believed their actions were somehow justifiable, and – against all odds – believed they would never be found out. Time and again, they personally seemed to deny reality – and dragged others into their scams.

You might hope that this kind of behaviour is a relatively rare phenomenon, restricted to a few extreme situations. But self-deception is incredibly common, and may have evolved to bring some personal benefits. We lie to ourselves to protect our self-images, which allows us to act im-



morally while maintaining a clear conscience. According to the very latest research, self-deception may have even evolved to help us to persuade others; if we start believing our own lies, it's much easier to get other people to believe them, too.

This research might explain questionable behaviour in many areas of life – far beyond the headline-grabbing scams in recent years. By understanding the different factors contributing to self-deception, we can try to spot when it might be swaying our own decisions, and prevent these delusions from leading us astray.

Safeguarding the ego

Any psychologist will tell you that studying self-deception scientifically is a headache. You can't simply ask someone if they are fooling themselves, since it happens below conscious awareness. As a result, the experiments are often highly intricate.

Let's begin with the research of Zoë Chance, an associate professor of marketing at Yale University.

In an ingenious experiment from 2011, she showed that many people unconsciously employ self-deception to boost their egos.

One group of participants were asked to take an IQ test, with a list of the answers printed at the bottom of the page. As you might expect, these people performed considerably better than a control group who did not have the answer key. They did not seem to recognise how much they had relied on the 'cheat sheet', however – since they predicted that they would do equally well on a second test featuring another hundred questions, without the answer key. Somehow, they had fooled themselves into thinking that they had known the solutions to the problems without needing the helping hand.

To be sure of this conclusion, Chance repeated the whole experiment with a new set of participants. This time, however, the participants were given a financial reward for accurately predicting their results in the second test; overconfidence

would come with a penalty. If the participants were conscious of their behaviour, you might expect this incentive to reduce their overconfidence.

In reality, it did little to puncture the participants' inflated self-belief; they still fooled themselves into thinking they were smarter than they were, even when they knew that they would lose money. This suggests that the beliefs were genuine and deeply held – and surprisingly robust.

It's not hard to see how this might apply in real life. A scientist may feel that their results were real, despite the use of fraudulent data; a student may believe they earned their place at a prestigious university, despite cheating on a test.

Moral sincerity

The use of self-deception to enhance self-image has now been observed in many other contexts.

For instance, Uri Gneezy, a professor of economics at the University of California, San Diego, has recently shown it can help

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us to justify potential conflicts of interest in our work.

In a 2020 study, Gneezy asked participants to take on the roles of investment advisors or clients. The advisors were given two different opportunities to consider – each of which came with different risks and different payoffs. They were also told that they would receive a commission if the client opted for one of the two investments.

In one set of trials, the advisors were told about this potential reward at the

very start of the experiment, before they started considering the different options. While they were ostensibly picking the best choice for the client, they were much more likely to go with the choice that was favourable to themselves.

In the rest of the trials, however, the advisors were only told of this potential reward after they had been given some time to weigh up the pros and cons of each. This time few chose to let the reward influence their decision; they remained honest to their goal

of giving the best advice to the client.

To Gneezy, the fact that the knowledge of the personal benefits only influenced the participants' decision in the first scenario suggests that their self-deception was unconscious; it changed the way they were calculating the benefits and risks without them being aware of the bias, so that they could feel that they were still acting in the clients' interest. In the second scenario, it would have required a complete change of mind, which would have been harder to justify to themselves.

"They just couldn't convince themselves that they would be acting ethically," he says.

In this way, self-deception is a way of protecting our sense of morality, says Gneezy. "It means that we can continue to see ourselves as good people," he says – even when our actions would suggest otherwise.

This form of self-deception might be most obviously relevant to financial advisors, but Gneezy thinks it could also be important for private healthcare. Despite having good intentions, a doctor could unconsciously deceive themselves into thinking the more expensive treatment was best for the patient – without even recognising their self-deception, he says.

Persuading ourselves, persuading others

Perhaps the most surprising consequence of

self-deception concerns our conversations with others.

According to this theory, self-deception allows us to be more confident in what we are saying, which makes us more persuasive. If you are trying to sell a dodgy product, for instance, you will make a better case if you genuinely believe it is a high-quality bargain – even if there is evidence to suggest otherwise.

This hypothesis was first proposed decades ago, and a recent paper by Peter Schwardmann, an assistant professor of behavioural economics at Carnegie Mellon University, US, provides some strong evidence for this idea.

Like Chance's study, Schwardmann's first experiments began with an IQ test. The participants weren't given the results, but after the test was finished, they had to privately rate how well they thought they'd done.

They then took a test of persuasion: they had to stand before a jury of mock employers and convince the panel of their intellectual prowess – with a potential 15 euro (\$16, £12.80) reward if the judges believed that they were among the smartest in the group.

Some people were told about the persuasion task before they rated their confidence in their performance, while others were told afterwards. In line with the hypothesis, Schwardmann found that this changed

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The Way We Think

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their ratings of their abilities: the prior knowledge that they would have to convince others resulted in greater overconfidence in their abilities, compared to those who had not yet been told. The need to persuade others had primed them to think that they were smarter than they really were.

He describes this as a kind of “reflex”. Importantly, Schwardmann’s experiments showed that the self-deception paid off; unfounded overconfidence did indeed increase people’s ability to persuade the mock employers.

Picking sides

Schwardmann has now observed a similar process in debating tournaments. At these events, the participants are given a topic and then randomly assigned a point of view to argue – before being given 15 minutes to prepare their arguments. During the debate, they are then judged on how well they present their case.

Schwardmann tested the participants’ personal beliefs about the topics before they had been assigned their position, after they had started formulating their arguments, and after the debate itself. In line with the idea that self-deception evolved to help us persuade others, he found that people’s personal opinions substantially changed after they had been told which side of the debate they would need to argue.

“Their private beliefs moved towards the side that they’d been given just 15 minutes beforehand – to align with their persuasion goals,” says Schwardmann.

After the debate, the participants were also given the chance to allocate small sums of money to charity – selected from a long list of potential organisations. Schwardmann found they were much more willing to choose organisations that aligned with the position of their argument – even though

it had initially been chosen at random.

Many of our opinions may have been formed in this way. In politics, it could be that a campaigner who is asked to canvas on a particular point really comes to persuade him- or herself that it is the only way of viewing the point – not because they have carefully appraised the facts, but simply because they were asked to make the argument. Indeed, Schwardmann suspects this process may lie behind much of the political polarisation we see today.

Delusions of grandeur

In all these ways, our brains can fool us into believing things that are not true. Self-deception allows us to inflate our opinion of our own abilities, so that we believe we are smarter than everyone around us. It means that we overlook the repercussions of our actions for other people, so that we believe that we are generally acting in a moral way.

And by deceiving ourselves about the veracity of our beliefs, we show greater conviction in our opinions – which can, in turn, help us to persuade others.

We can’t ever know what was truly going through the minds of Holmes, Sorokin or Hayut and other fraudsters – but it is easy to speculate how some of these mechanisms may have been at play. At the very least, these con artists seem to have had abnormally high opinions of their own abilities and their right to get what they want – and they happily shrugged off the potential ethical implications of what they were doing.

Holmes, in particular, seems to have believed in her product, and attempted to justify her use of misleading data. Despite all evidence to the contrary, she still declared at her trial that “the big medical device companies like Siemens could easily reproduce what we had done”. Hayut, meanwhile, still claims he is “the big-

gest gentleman”, who had done nothing wrong.

Schwardmann agrees it may be possible for some fraudsters to inhabit incredibly elaborate lies. He points out that some even show a kind of righteous anger when they are being questioned, which might be hard to fake. “Maybe that’s a sign that they really buy into their own lie,” he says.

Tellingly, a desire for social status seems to increase people’s tendency for self-deception. When people feel threatened by others, for example, they are more likely to inflate their perceptions of their own abilities. It may be that the bigger the stakes, the greater the lies we are able to tell ourselves.

Most of the time, our self-deception may be benign – allowing us to feel just a bit more confident in ourselves than is justified. But it’s always worth being aware of these tendencies – especially if we’re making potentially life-changing decisions. You don’t want to deceive yourself about the risks of cutting corners in your current job, or the likelihood of success from an adventurous career move, for example.

One good way of puncturing all kinds of bias is to “consider the opposite” of your conclusions. The technique is as straightforward as it sounds: you try to find all the reasons that your belief may be wrong, as if you were interrogating yourself.

Multiple studies have shown that this leads us to think more analytically about a situation. In laboratory tests, this systematic reasoning proves to be much more effective than simply telling people to “think rationally”.

This is only possible if you can accept your flaws, of course. The first step is acknowledging the problem. Perhaps you think that you don’t need this advice; self-deception only afflicts others, while you are perfectly honest with yourself. If so, that may be your greatest delusion of all.

Lupus: Five things to know about autoimmune disease triggers

By **Marisa Zeppieri-Caruana**

From stress to sunlight to hormones, here are five common factors that can contribute to a flare-up of Lupus symptoms.

When my family moved from New York City to Fort Lauderdale in the summer of 1986, we were convinced we had landed in paradise. Cold, grey winters were traded in for endless sunshine and palm trees, and the Atlantic Ocean greeted us with bath-water temperature waves, day or night. Just eight years old, and a lover of the water, I tried to squeeze in as much time as possible in South Florida's waterways. This pastime, however, also meant exposure to strong sun and blazing temperatures, and unbeknownst to us, would change the course of my life forever.

My family and I didn't know it then, but the sun and heat would come to be one of the main triggers of Lupus symptoms in my body. Lupus, a chronic inflammatory autoimmune disease that affects more than 5 million people worldwide, can wreak havoc on numerous body systems of patients, including the heart, lungs, kidneys, brain and skin. People diagnosed with Lupus will experience flare-ups (increased disease activity) and remissions and may notice over time that certain factors jump-start an increase in



symptoms. With the proper tools, patients can determine the unique triggers that may be leading to an increase in disease activity, with the goal of lessening or eradicating these conditions to achieve a better quality of life.

Unfortunately, the class and clear manifestations of Lupus provoked by my sun exposure would be missed by medical professionals for more than a decade. This is not uncommon, as studies show it takes an average of up to six years for a correct diagnosis of Lupus because the symptoms can mimic so many other diseases.

My warning signs developed slowly, beginning with extreme fatigue after spending just minutes outdoors. In time, severe joint and muscle pain was added to the mix. Heading into my teenage years, my mom chalked it up to growing pains. Then rashes and sores began after sun exposure, and time and time again my symptoms were brushed off as sun poisoning or heat exhaustion, two common ailments often seen in scorching Florida.

It became quite clear my body did not mix well with sunshine, but how do you steer clear of it in a place that averages 246 sunny days a year? I wore hats and stayed indoors until the evening hours, missed countless outings to the beach and pool. In times of loneliness and frustration, I took the risk of venturing out into the heat and paid for it dearly afterwards.

By the time I reached college, I incorporated as many adjustments as possible to limit my sun exposure. But I still had no clear answers to this overreaction to sunlight. That is until I turned 23. As I crossed the street one humid, spring evening, I was struck by a pickup truck travelling about 80 km/h (50 mph). During my year long recovery, I experienced similar symptoms as when exposed to sunlight – rashes, sores, fatigue and terrible joint and muscle pain. Then the fevers began and I had a small stroke. Under the care of multiple specialists at the hospital, they ran the gamut of tests to determine what was happening. Three

weeks later, a rheumatologist and I stared face to face as I listened to the words, “You have Lupus” leave her lips.

In the two decades that have passed, I've spent hundreds of hours researching, collecting personal data, and working with healthcare professionals to help me determine what circumstances activate Lupus symptoms in my body. While those of us with autoimmune diseases have unique reactions, they tend to fall under broader categories. Let's look at five common conditions that can contribute to a flare-up:

1. Stress

In numerous studies, physical, emotional and psychological stress was associated with an increase in flares and the need for a higher dose of medications (such as steroids). As many as 85 percent of patients surveyed reported stress as a trigger. While researchers are actively studying the effects of stress on the immune system in people with autoimmune disease, it is believed that stress-triggered neuroendocrine hormones alter or amplify cytokine production, leading to immune dysregulation.

“Avoiding stress is not possible but helping to educate my patients about healthy ways of managing stress has become very important to me,” says Dr Meggan Mackay, a rheu-

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matologist and professor at the Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research in Manhasset, New York. Physical exercise, in particular, is an “essential tool” for stress reduction.

Exercise can prove problematic for Lupus patients experiencing severe pain, trouble breathing, fatigue and mobility issues. These should consider other stress-reduction techniques such as meditation and prayer, mindfulness practices, cognitive behaviour therapies, music, pet and art therapy, yoga and breathing exercises.

The executive director of thinkpsych.com, Anton Shcherbakov, says such evaluations can prove vital, especially when it comes to exercise. “For example, you may recognise that heavy physical activity may cause your symptoms to flare up,” he says “In this case, you would want to divide physically demanding tasks into smaller parts to better manage this trigger. On the other hand, if you notice that physical activity actually makes you feel better, you can make sure to integrate some movement into every day.”

2. Sunlight and UV Rays

Photosensitivity and adverse reactions to UV radiation – whether from sunlight or artificial indoor light such as fluorescent bulbs – occur in as many as 70 percent of patients, according to the Lupus Foundation of America. Even just a few minutes of exposure can bring on fatigue, sores, rashes, and fever and, in some cases, these flare-ups can last anywhere from days to weeks. UV radiation can damage cells, and in the process set off an immune system attack.

After we identified the adverse effect of Florida weather on my health, my family and I decided to move to the Canadian border. The colder weather and shade worked charms. While hiding from sunlight and even artificial light every day is an impossibility, Lupus patients can lessen UV damage by

using sunscreen of SPF 70 or higher that blocks UVA and UVB rays. They should also wear SPF-infused clothing when spending time outdoors, avoid the sun during its peak hours, cover fluorescent bulbs with light shields that have nanometre readings of 380 to 400, invest in a wide-brimmed hat, and tint car or home windows to block out rays.

3. Food and Diet

Increasingly, people with Lupus say that eliminating specific foods has helped decrease symptoms and fatigue while also increasing energy. Dietary reactions are unique to each individual but often tied to allergies or sensitivities. Not surprisingly, seeing that numerous studies show that an overactive immune system can cause a propensity towards allergies, asthma, eczema and other hypersensitivities.

Dr Pouya Shafipour, of PalomaHealth.com, says it can be helpful to first remove common dietary triggers (gluten, dairy, sugar and soy) and then slowly reintroduce each to see which may be contributing to symptoms. With that information, a patient can stop eating foods that contain them and get to the root cause of their autoimmune issues.

No one diet is recommended for Lupus because sensitivities and allergies vary from patient to patient. But general recommendations include avoiding saturated and trans fats, too much salt, highly processed foods, and sugar, which is extremely inflammatory.

It is worth seeing a medical allergist for tests. That will scientifically prove what is going on and provide better guidance on dietary adjustments and protocols.

4. Infection

Infections are threatening to patients because they have a compromised immune system, to begin with. Infections are considered one of the common causes of mortality in Lupus patients and are a common trigger of symptoms. Patients may notice an increase in fa-

tigue, joint and muscle pain, fever, rashes, and mouth and nose sores during or right after an infection. With any infection, especially if fever is present, it is crucial that patients be examined by a physician to determine if the root of the fever is infectious due to bacteria, viruses or protozoa, or is a manifestation of increased Lupus disease activity.

5. Pregnancy, Menstrual Cycle and Hormones

Through years of research, science has made the connection between symptoms and hormone levels in the body. Studies show patients reporting an increase in flares both immediately before their menstrual cycle begins (the hormonal surge phase) and during their periods. Symptoms most reported included increased fatigue and pain levels and an overall increase in disease activity. Pregnancy is also considered a trigger for an increase in Lupus disease activity and symptoms in some patients, believed to be exacerbated by hormonal shifts, such as increased oestrogen. As many as 50 percent of women experience an increase in Lupus activity during pregnancy.

From Patient to Detective

For anyone living with Lupus, I recommend journaling daily for at least three months. Document each day: how long you slept/napped; everything eaten or drank; time exposed to UV light/heat/cold; supplements or medications taken, stressors (including people); emotional outbursts such as crying; menstrual cycle information, symptoms; exercise; and travel, if any took place. Journaling for more than three years provided me with extensive data on when I felt worse. That helped me come up with a mitigating plan.

An axiom in the Lupus medical community is that “no two cases of Lupus are exactly alike.” Once you determine your unique reactions, you can begin implementing lifestyle changes that can boost your health – and quality of life.

Rainstorm claims 100 lives in north-east Brazil

BBC – A hundred people are now known to have died as torrential rain triggered landslides and torrents of mud near the city of Recife in north-east Brazil.

Rescue workers continue the search for people still missing after poor neighbourhoods and shanty towns were swept away in the region.

President Jair Bolsonaro posted a video on social media showing him in a helicopter flying over the area.

He later said it had been too dangerous to land because of “soil instability”.

Some 1,200 rescue personnel, using boats and helicopters, were deployed in the state of Pernambuco where the disaster occurred.

Luiz Estevão Aguiar told TV Globo that he had lost 11 relatives.

“My sister, my brother-in-law, 11 people from my family died. It was difficult... I did not expect this,” he said tearfully.

Flávio José da Silva was searching for his stepfather Gilvan in the rubble of what was once his house.

He said that shortly after it col-



Landslide damage in Jardim Monte Verde [Reuters]

lapsed, he had heard Gilvan say: “I’m here, under the ground”. “We hope to find him alive,” Mr Silva said, pointing to a pile of debris.

Deadly flooding and landslides have killed hundreds of people in Brazil over the past year.

Experts link the bad weather to La Niña, a climate pattern in the Pacific Ocean that can affect weather world-

wide.

Many factors contribute to flooding, but a warming atmosphere caused by climate change makes extreme rainfall more likely.

The world has already warmed by about 1.2C since the industrial era began and temperatures will keep rising unless governments around the world make steep cuts to emissions.

St. Lucian gov’t warns of harsh penalties for flouting legislation restricting smoking in public places

CMC – The St. Lucia government is reminding businesses that they could face up to EC\$10,000 (One EC dollar=US\$0.37 cents) on summary conviction for flouting legislation aimed at preventing persons from smoking in businesses and workplaces.

In addition, an individual faces up to EC\$5,000 for

breaches of the Public Health (Smoking Control) Amendment of 2019 and Regulations of 2020.

The reminder by the Ministry of Health, Wellness, and Elderly Affairs comes one day before the island joins the international community in observing World No Tobacco Day on May 31 under the theme “Tobacco: Threat

to our environment”.

In a statement, the ministry said the Public Health (Smoking Control) Amendment of 2019 and Regulations legislation of 2020 are important smoking control laws that offer protection from the harms of smoking.

According to the legislation, smoking cigarettes, other electronic devices, or

any other substance is now prohibited in businesses and workplaces, public places like bars, restaurants, parks, and beaches, and likewise in public transport, taxis, and terminals.

The sale of cigarettes to and by minors is also prohibited, and cigarettes can no longer be sold within proxim-

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Dr. Ralph Gonsalves says US President has no right to exclude anyone from Summit of Americas

CMC – St. Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves Monday said United States President Joe Biden has no right in deciding who or which countries are invited to the Summit of the Americas next month, hinting that Kingstown will probably not be attending the June 6-10 event.

“There was agreement on four principles...that the summit must be inclusive, no one must be excluded and that the President of the United States, the United States government, does not have the right to exclude anyone.

“That’s not his right to exclude anyone that’s to be done in the whole of the Americas, he alone can’t make that decision,” Gonsalves said on state-owned NBC Radio.

He told listeners that some countries are going to attend the summit to be held in Los Angeles at the level of the heads, “some are going to attend at lower levels and some are not going to attend at all,” said



St. Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves

Gonsalves, who recently returned home from a visit to Cuba where he received the country’s highest national award.

Caribbean leaders are still undecided as to whether or not they will boycott the summit if Washington goes ahead with its plans not to invite the leaders of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua to the event.

CARICOM chairman and Belize Prime Minister, John Briceño had confirmed that Washington is lobbying for CARICOM to change its position and not boycott the summit that the United States said is expected to focus on “Building a

Sustainable, Resilient, and Equitable Future” for the hemisphere.

“We said that we would only attend if everyone is invited. As you all know, the Americans are under an intense diplomatic drive to be able to get us to attend. The Summit of the Americas is very important and we have not had one for some time now, since the pandemic.”

In addition, the regional leaders had also expressed their opposition to Venezuelan Opposition Leader, Juan Guaidó leading a Venezuelan delegation to the event.

Gonsalves told the radio programme that the President of the Community of

Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), Alberto Fernández, who is also the President of Argentina, “has made it plain that though he is going, he is going principally to protest and to speak to the issue as the summit must be inclusive and must not exclude anyone.

The US State Department in a statement announcing the Summit of the Americas had indicated that “as Chair and Host, the United States will work with the region’s stakeholders toward securing leader-level commitments and concrete actions that dramatically improve pandemic response and resilience, promote a green and equitable recovery, build strong and inclusive democracies, and address the root causes of irregular migration.

Earlier, Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley said he was hoping in the “not too distant future” CARICOM leaders would adopt a position on attending the Summit of the Americas.

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ity to schools, educational, health, religious, and sports facilities.

The ministry said it is reminding businesses and the population in general that the six-month grace period for adjustment and compliance ended December 2020 and businesses should ensure compliance with signage and other requirements.

“Everybody needs to be aware of

these smoking control laws and support the smoking restrictions to ensure our health and safety; fines for offences are up to EC\$5,000.00 for individuals or EC\$10,000.00 for business entities on summary conviction.

“In this era of COVID-19, smoking and exposure to smoking are unhealthy practices since they are associated with adverse outcomes for those who contract the disease. Let us all play our part to en-



sure a safe and healthy environment for all of us and the generations to come,” the statement added.

Canada proposes complete freeze on gun ownership

BBC – Canada should introduce a total ban on the buying and selling of all handguns, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said.

His government is proposing a new law that would freeze private ownership of all short-barrelled firearms.

The legislation would not ban the ownership of handguns outright – but would make it illegal to buy them.

Mr Trudeau's proposal comes days after a deadly shooting at a Texas primary school, in the neighbouring US, killed 21 people.

The bill, which was presented to Canada's parliament on Monday, makes it impossible to buy, sell, transfer or import handguns anywhere in the country.

“Other than using firearms for sport shooting and hunting, there is no reason anyone in Canada should



Canada already has far stricter gun ownership laws than the United States [Reuters]

need guns in their everyday lives,” Mr Trudeau told reporters.

“As we see gun violence continue to rise, it is our duty to keep taking action,” he said.

It marks the most ambitious attempt yet by his government to restrict access to firearms.

The bill would also require rifle magazines to be reconfigured so they can hold no more than five

rounds at a time.

And it would take away firearms licences from gun owners involved in domestic violence or criminal harassment.

Unlike in the US, gun ownership is not enshrined in Canada's constitution, but firearms are still popular, especially in rural parts of the country.

Canada already has stricter rules on gun ownership than its southern

neighbour and records fewer firearm incidents every year.

For example, all guns must be kept locked and unloaded and anyone wishing to buy a firearm must undergo extensive background checks.

But there have been calls in recent years to tighten gun legislation there even further, especially following a number of deadly shootings.

In April 2020, a gunman posing as a police officer killed 22 people during a shooting spree in Nova Scotia – the deadliest in Canada's history.

Within days, Mr Trudeau announced an immediate ban on 1,500 different kinds of military-grade and assault-style weapons.

The new bill would effectively limit the number of legally-owned handguns in Canada to present levels.

China sends 30 warplanes into Taiwan air defence zone



Taiwan said China had sent J-11 fighter jets (file photo from August) [Getty Images]

BBC – Taiwan says it deployed fighter jets to warn off 30 warplanes sent by China into its air defence zone.

The incident on Monday marked the biggest incursion since January.

It came days after US President Joe Biden warned China against invading Taiwan, and on the same day as a US official visited the island to discuss security with leaders.

China has ratcheted up the frequency of its air missions in recent months, claiming they are training drills.

Such moves have angered Taiwan and increased tensions in the region.

China sees Taiwan as a breakaway province, which it can take by force if necessary.

The latest incident included 22 fighters, as well as electronic warfare, early warning and antisubmarine aircraft, Taiwan's defence ministry said.

The aircraft flew in an area to the northeast of the Pratas Islands that is part of Taiwan's air defence identifica-

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Russian oil: EU agrees to compromise deal on banning imports

BBC – EU leaders say they will block most Russian oil imports by the end of 2022 to punish Moscow for invading Ukraine.

The EU-wide ban will affect oil that arrives by sea – around two-thirds of imports – but not pipeline oil, following opposition from Hungary.

Poland and Germany have also pledged to end pipeline imports, meaning a total of 90% of Russian oil will be blocked.

European Council chief Charles Michel said the deal cut off a huge source of financing for the Russian war machine.

It is part of a sixth package of sanctions approved at a summit in Brussels, which all 27 member states have had to agree on.

Russia currently supplies 27% of the EU's imported oil and 40% of its gas. The EU pays Russia around €400bn (\$430bn, £341bn) a year in return.

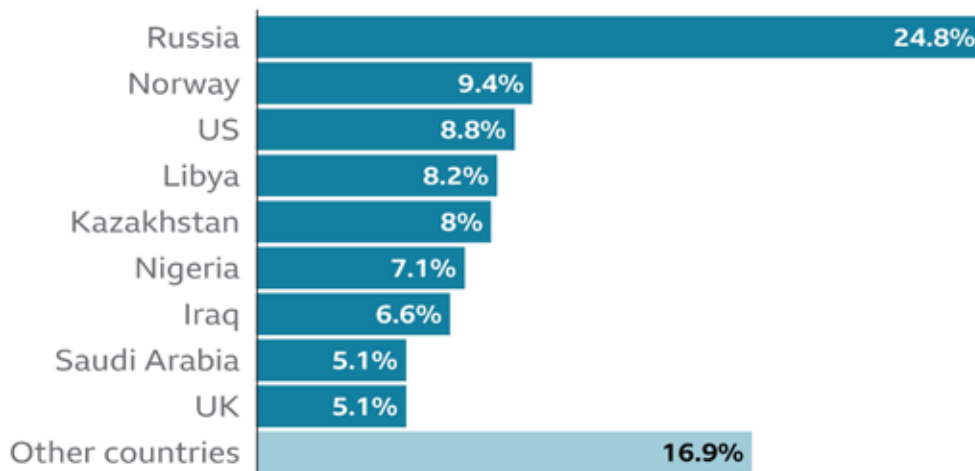
So far, no sanctions on Russian gas exports to the EU have been put in place, although plans to open a new gas pipeline from Russia to Germany have been frozen.

The UK – which gets 8% of its oil needs from Russia – has pledged to phase out Russian oil by the end of the year.

Oil prices climbed on news of the EU embargo, with Brent crude rising above \$123 a barrel, its highest level

Where do EU oil imports come from?

Percentage of European Union's total oil imports, 2021



Source: Eurostat

BBC

since March.

EU members spent hours struggling to resolve their differences over the ban on Russian oil imports. Hungary, which imports 65% of its oil from Russia through pipelines, was its main opponent. Hungary's Prime Minister, Viktor Orban, has good relations with Russian President Vladimir Putin. The compromise followed weeks of wrangling until it was agreed there would be "a temporary exemption for oil that comes through pipelines to the EU", Mr Michel told reporters.

Because of this, the immediate sanctions will affect only Russian oil being transported into the EU over sea – two-thirds of the total imported from Russia.

But in practice, European Com-

mission President Ursula von der Leyen said the scope of the ban would be wider, because Germany and Poland have volunteered to wind down their own pipeline imports by the end of this year.

A senior EU official confirmed that the three landlocked countries were given an additional guarantee that they could obtain supplies of sea-borne Russian oil in the event of an interruption to pipeline supply. The Russian ambassador to the EU, Vladimir Chizhov, said Brussels had "already approached the limits of what is possible in terms of sanctions".

Speaking to Russian state TV, he predicted "serious problems" if the EU were to try to agree on a gas embargo.

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tion zone (ADIZ), according to a map the ministry provided.

But the planes did not cross over into Taiwan's airspace itself, which would have been regarded as an act of hostility.

An ADIZ is an area outside of a country's territory and national airspace but where foreign aircraft are still identified, monitored, and controlled in the interest of national security. It is self-declared and technically remains international air-

space.

Taiwan has been reporting for more than a year that Chinese aircraft have been flying into its ADIZ, calling it "grey zone" warfare aimed at testing their military response and wearing them out.

Analysts have previous-

ly said the incursions were a warning against Taiwan's government from moving towards a formal declaration of independence.

Beijing has said in the past that the exercises were geared to protect its sovereignty

Sports News



West Indies ODI series in Pakistan moved to Multan

The ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League One-Day International Series between Pakistan and the West Indies have been moved from Islamabad to Multan. The games will take place on the same dates announced earlier, on June 8, 10 and 12, with the matches starting at 4pm PKT time (7am Eastern Caribbean/6am Jamaica)

The West Indies squad will arrive in Islamabad on June 6 and will travel to Multan on a private charter flight. West Indies are presently in the Netherlands where they are preparing for a three-match ODI Series. These matches will be played at the VRA Cricket Ground, Amstelveen on May 31, June 2 and 4.

Both series form part of the part of the ICC ODI



Super League, where teams will have the opportunity to earn points to secure one of the top seven places, excluding hosts India, to gain automatic qualification for the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.

Series schedule with umpire and match referee appointments:

June 8 – 1st ODI, Multan Cricket Stadium. Aleem Dar and Ahsan Raza (on-field umpires), Rashid Riaz (third umpire) and

Faisal Khan Afridi (fourth umpire); Mohammad Javed (match referee)

June 10 – 2nd ODI, Multan Cricket Stadium. Aleem Dar and Asif Yaqoob (on-field umpires), Ahsan Raza (third umpire), Faisal Khan Afridi (fourth umpire); Mohammad Javed (match referee)

June 12 – 3rd ODI, Multan Cricket Stadium. Aleem Dar and Rashid Riaz (on-field umpires), Asif Yaqoob (third umpire), Faisal Khan

Afridi (fourth umpire); Mohammad Javed (match referee)

West Indies Squad: Nicholas Pooran (captain), Shai Hope (vice-captain), Nkrumah Bonner, Shamarh Brooks, Keacy Carty, Akeal Hosein, Alzarri Joseph, Brandon King, Shermion Lewis, Kyle Mayers, Anderson Phillip, Rovman Powell, Jayden Seales, Romario Shepherd, Hayden Walsh Jr.

Pakistan Squad: Babar Azam (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imam-ul-Haq, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan, Mohammad Wasim Junior, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shahnawaz Dahani and Zahid Mahmood.

Sanctioned Abramovich files lawsuit at EU general court



Chelsea soccer club owner Roman Abramovich attends the UEFA Women's Champions League final soccer match against FC Barcelona in Gothenburg, Sweden, May 16, 2021. (AP Photo/Martin Meissner, File)

AP – Roman Abramovich has filed a lawsuit at the EU's general court against the European Union Council, which imposed sanctions on the former Chelsea owner as part of measures targeting Russia and President Vladimir Putin's close allies.

The EU in March included the Russian oligarch on its list of individuals targeted with frozen assets and travel bans over their role in the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Officials from the Council and the EU's court could not comment on the details of the legal case when contacted Tuesday.

Abramovich was forced to sell Chelsea after being sanctioned by the British government for what it called

his enabling of Putin's "brutal and barbaric invasion" of Ukraine.

The sale of the Premier League club for 2.5 billion pounds (\$3.2 billion) — the highest price ever paid for a sports team — was completed Monday by a consortium fronted by Los Angeles Dodgers part-owner Todd Boehly. It marked the end of the trophy-filled, 19-year tenure of Abramovich.

The European Commission, the EU's executive branch, said Portuguese authorities confirmed that the sale of Chelsea by Abramovich — who holds a Portuguese passport — does not benefit him or an entity associated with him, and that the proceeds would only be released for humanitarian ac-

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Gauff, 18, Trevisan, 28, reach first Slam semifinal in Paris

AP—Coco Gauff left Roland Garros 12 months ago crestfallen, knowing she let a big lead slip away in her major quarterfinal debut. She vowed to remember that and learn from it.

Consider that done.

Gauff, still only 18, returned to that stage Tuesday for a second time and was not about to let this one end similarly, beating 2017 U.S. Open champion and 2018 French Open runner-up Sloane Stephens 7-5, 6-2 in a matchup between Americans at Court Philippe Chatrier to reach her first Grand Slam semifinal.

“It was just a mental challenge today,” said Gauff, who began this trip to Paris by taking photos near the Eiffel Tower while holding her recently earned high school diploma. “Last year in the quarterfinals, it was a tough loss for me and I think that match made me stronger and better prepared for the tough moments today.”

Gauff has seemed to be preparing for this sort of moment for quite some time, even before she became the youngest qualifier in Wimbledon history at age 15 and



Coco Gauff of the U.S. celebrates as she defeats Sloane Stephens of the U.S. after their quarterfinal match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium Tuesday, May 31, 2022 in Paris. Gauff won 7-5, 6-2. (AP Photo/Thibault Camus)

beat Venus Williams en route to the fourth round there in 2019, even before she won the French Open junior title a year prior.

One measure of how she has continued to improve: Her forehand was long considered her weaker groundstroke, but against Stephens, that produced more winners than her backhand did.

“I believe in myself. Even last year, I was too focused on trying to fulfil other people’s expectations,” said Gauff, who hasn’t dropped a

set through five matches. “I know no matter how good or bad my career is, I know I’m a good person, so I think that’s a good message for young people. ... Just know: If you love yourself, who cares what anyone else thinks?”

Her quick rise is quite a contrast from the long road her next opponent, Martina Trevisan of Italy, travelled along the way to her own first Slam semifinal at age 28.

The 59th-ranked Trevisan is emotive as can be, and she screamed while thrusting

both arms overhead and letting her racket fly after eliminating U.S. Open finalist Leylah Fernandez, who was seeded 17th, by a 6-2, 6-7 (3), 6-3 score in a match between a pair of left-handers.

Fernandez was treated by a trainer for a problem with her right foot after the match’s fifth game and her movement was hampered throughout. About three hours following the match, reporters were told that Fernandez would not speak to the media “on advice of the tournament medical team due to” the injury.

Trevisan eventually finished things off nearly an hour after holding her first match point while serving for the victory at 5-4 in the second set. She double-faulted twice in the ensuing tiebreaker.

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tivities in Ukraine.

“This follows close engagement between the European Commission, Portugal and the United Kingdom aimed at ensuring that the sale is fully in line with the EU sanctions legislation,” the Commission said in a message to The Associated Press. “The effective implementation and

enforcement of EU sanctions are a priority for the Commission.”

When it sanctioned Abramovich in March, the EU said he “has had privileged access to the (Russian) president, and has maintained very good relations with him. This connection with the Russian leader helped him to maintain his considerable wealth.”

Sports News



After Champions League ‘fiasco,’ UEFA probes what went wrong

AP – The French government is blaming Liverpool fans. The English club is enraged by the “irresponsible, unprofessional” rush to conclusions. European soccer’s governing body, UEFA, will now try to uncover what went wrong in the disorder and chaos in Paris at the Champions League final before Liverpool lost to Real Madrid.

UEFA is starting to gather evidence about issues outside the Stade de France that marred one of the world’s biggest games in sports on Saturday.

Liverpool fans’ leadership groups are already complaining about heavy-handed policing and poor organisation on a troubling night that saw children and elderly people among those getting sprayed by tear gas.

Richard Bouigue, deputy mayor of the 12th arrondissement in Paris, said “the time for official denial is over, the time for apologies must be imposed” in a letter to a Liverpool supporters’ group.

“I deplore the dysfunctions in the organisation of the game and the lack of maintenance of order that led to this real fiasco,” Bouigue wrote to the Spirit of Shankly group in a letter seen by The Associated Press.

There were also re-



Fans show tickets in front of the Stade de France prior to the Champions League final soccer match between Liverpool and Real Madrid, in Saint Denis near Paris, Saturday, May 28, 2022. Police have deployed tear gas on supporters waiting in long lines to get into the Stade de France for the Champions League final between Liverpool and Real Madrid that was delayed by 37 minutes while security struggled to cope with the vast crowd and fans climbing over fences. (AP Photo/Christophe Ena)

newed concerns in Spain on Wednesday about the organisational failings.

“It was a pretty big mess,” said Madrid defender Dani Carvajal, whose family encountered safety issues. “They have to learn and fix the mistakes for the next events that may happen at this stadium and hopefully everything will be better. But yes, in the end there were people who suffered a lot.”

These are the key issues the UEFA review will need to take into consideration:

Organisation

The challenges of staging the final with just three months’ notice — Paris was awarded the game in February after a decision was taken to strip Russia’s St. Petersburg of hosting rights — has been floated as a reason for the chaos that unfolded.

Having months, rather than years, to plan for the final was still enough time for hospitality facilities to be prepared and the stadium wrapped in special competition branding.

There was, though, a shortage of signage on

streets leading to the stadium and on the subway and train lines. While private security was at stadium entrances, there were no volunteers deployed to help fans navigate unfamiliar streets and communicate as lines grew longer.

What was the reason behind the decision to herd fans — mostly from Liverpool — into a narrow passage on the walk up to the stadium from the metro, with police vans blocking much of the space? Why were there so few police

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officers in and around the stadium for such a big occasion?

UEFA'S Messaging

The "late arrival of fans" was the initial reason given for the delay to kickoff for what proved to be 37 minutes. Yet there was clear evidence many fans had arrived near the stadium up to three hours before the scheduled start of the game and simply ended up stuck in lines that barely moved. Liverpool fans, pressed up against the railings and many fearful of their own safety, hadn't even been told the match had been delayed. That appeared to add to the panic, as some thought they would miss the game.

UEFA seemed slow to realise the extent of the problems. Steve Rotherham, a mayor in Liverpool who attended the game, said he had his cell phone, money, bank cards and match ticket stolen outside the Stade de France. He said he saw UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin in the VIP section of the stadium later and explained his concerns. "He seemed oblivious to it," Rotherham said of Ceferin.

Police

Why did police use bottlenecks to control the flow of spectators? The review will need to look at the policing of the final, from how they planned the hazardous route to the stadium from the train station and metro stops, as well as the instances of heavy-handedness toward supporters in using tear gas and pepper spray indiscriminately in areas where there were kids and elderly people. There is footage of police deploying spray directly into the face of fans.

Repeated allegations of brutality have hit French police in recent years, notably during the Yellow Vests protests against the government, amid calls that police should exercise greater restraint.

French police have struggled to

get a grip on fan violence at domestic matches this season. Was that considered when the event was moved to Paris after direct talks between Ceferin and French President Emmanuel Macron?

Ticketing

This is likely to be a key focus of the review after French Interior minister Gérald Darmanin said there was "massive fraud at an industrial level," claiming that "70% of the tickets were fake tickets coming into the Stade de France." Those numbers have been received with scepticism. Past and present Liverpool players — including Andrew Robertson — have said tickets they had received through legitimate channels hadn't been accepted at the gates. There were undoubtedly some fake tickets — the AP has been shown an example of one. But the AP is aware of malfunctioning scanners unable to validate genuine tickets. Were those considered to be fake at the turnstiles?

Stewarding

Just like at Wembley Stadium last year when there was violence and crowd chaos at the European Championship final, stewards bore the brunt of the disorder on Saturday as they were overwhelmed by large crowds at the gates. Low-paid and under-resourced, it seems unfair to expect stewards to resist aggression and force from both frustrated fans and other people trying to enter stadiums illegally by barging through checkpoints. Even as the chaos was unfolding, some private security officials turned their focus on media, ordering video footage to be deleted.

Locals

There are a growing number of testimonies from people who attended the final, detailing how they got mugged and attacked before and after the match at the Stade de France, which is located in an impoverished suburb of northern Paris. Local thugs

appear to have exploited the chaos on the night. Some were seen fighting with police outside the stadium. Among those seen vaulting the fences to get into the stadium without tickets were people not wearing Liverpool or Madrid colours, potentially therefore locals taking advantage of overwhelmed security.

The sight of "bands of delinquents hitting and robbing" fans was recalled by Spanish professional tennis player Feliciano López.

"I saw how one person jumped over the fence to get into the stadium, the same one who tried to rob me wanted to sneak past the turnstile to get into the stadium," López tweeted. "It was a complete shambles."

Stigmatising Fans

According to some testimonies, the crowd management issues brought back disturbing memories of the Hillsborough Stadium disaster in 1989 that led to the deaths of 97 Liverpool fans. Hooliganism was rife in English football throughout the 1980s, and there were immediate attempts back then to falsely assign blame on the Liverpool fans and defend policing at the FA Cup match in Sheffield. A false narrative that blamed drunken, ticketless and rowdy Liverpool fans was created by police. It took decades of campaigning for Liverpool supporters to prove there was a cover-up by authorities who tried to blame them.

Now Liverpool fans are challenging the authorities again, this time in France. Darmanin, the French minister, claimed on Monday that "this kind of situation occurs" within certain clubs from Britain, stigmatising Liverpool fans.

"All light must be shed," said Bouigue, the Parisian politician, "the responsibilities identified, and improvements made so that this type of chaos, which must have revived the Hillsborough tragedy for many fans, never happens again."

Sports News

Williams says funding approved to continue development at YASCO

General Secretary of the Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee (ABNOC) Cliff Williams said some funding have been secured via the Ministry of Environment to make some improvement to the infrastructure at the YASCO Sports Complex.

The absence of much needed infrastructure at YASCO has been a sore point for many and it has resulted in limited use of the facility to host major social or sporting events since 2017.

Activities at the facility were curtailed in 2017 to facilitate the relaying of a new Mondo track via a collaborative effort between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, the ABNOC and to a lesser extent, the Antigua and Barbuda Athletics Association (ABAA).

A committee, comprising chairman Cleofoster Harris, who is a member of the ABAA, Williams as a representative of the ABNOC, Michael Freeland, President of the ABAA Everton Cornelius and Director of Sports Hearther Samuel Daley, was installed to oversee the resurfacing of the track and the improvement of some other facilities at the YASCO complex.

With the Ministry of Sports supervising the work and funding facilitated by the National Olympic Committee, the resurfacing was protracted with Mondo officials eventually completing the relaying of the new track in March 2021.

In July 2021, World Athletics, the international governing body for track and fields, issued a letter certifying the YASCO Sports Complex as a Class 2 Athletics Facility.

However, the second phase in the redevelopment of YASCO involving the erection of stands, improving the lighting, repairing the perimeter fence and the building of proper bath and changing room facilities are yet to be-



An aerial view of the resurfaced track at the YASCO Sports Complex. (Photo courtesy ABAA)

gin.

But Williams said funding has now been secured through the Ministry of Environment to construct the bathrooms and a storage facility as well as make some improvement to the lighting at YASCO.

“With the committee in place now, the committee had made approach to the Department of the Environment and we came up with a concept in terms of how we can utilize the funding that they have for environmental use, and so far, we come to agreement where they will erect the bathroom and a storage facility and I think they should change over the lights to LED and solar panels. So that is already approved,” Williams said.

“The construction, just the other day, I saw in the paper, they (Department of Environment) put it out to tender in terms of construction companies can now apply to do the work. So we are at that stage of waiting on them to decide on who win the bid to operate

and then start to do the work in fixing those facilities in YASCO.”

Williams, however, pointed out that the oversight committee was never given authorization of any funding to develop the YASCO Sports Complex during its appointment.

“The fundamental problem with the whole operation of the committee and getting YASCO to where it should be, is that the more fundamental needs were never spoken about in terms of getting funding from the government.

“So we basically got appointed with zero dollars so anything that you see go up at YASCO since the committee was put in place is just off of goodwill and good negotiation and begging. That is why nothing much was happening because we have zero dollar to operate,” Williams stated.

Since the resurfacing of the track, the use of the track was also reduced due to the emergence of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

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Kamar Thomas, second left, accepts his prize from General Secretary of the ABNOC Cliff Williams, second right, during the presentation of awards after the race. (Photos courtesy CPTSA Wings Sports Club)



Hannah Charles, second left, accepts her trophy from General Secretary of the ABNOC Cliff Williams, right, during the presentation of awards after the race.

Thomas and Charles win Hurricane Power 10K races

Kamar Thomas and Hannah Charles won the male and female overall titles respectively of 10K Road Race, which was staged by the Hurricane Power Athletic Club over the weekend.

Thomas, a member of Hurricane Power, won the men's 10K race, which started inside the YASCO Sports Complex and proceeded up Old Parham Road to Gourmet Basket, up to Transport Board on Sir Sydney Walling Highway and returning along the same route to

finish back at YASCO. He completed the race in 36 minutes and 51 seconds.

Fellow Hurricane Power colleague Jermaine Brann, took second place in 42 minutes and 21 seconds, while Keanu Barnwell finished third in 42 minutes and 30 seconds.

Charles, also a member of Hurricane Power, won the female 10K, which was held along the same route, in a time of one hour and two minutes.

Tanika James of Hurricane Power claimed sec-

ond place by clocking one hour and 18 minutes, while Yolanda Joseph finished third in one hour and 21 minutes.

The two 10K winners will go on to represent Antigua & Barbuda at the Caricom Heads of Government 10K Run in Suriname on 2 July.

The 10K race was held in conjunction with a 5K road run and walk. Yahnik Martin of Hurricane Power and Deancia Hamilton of EduSports won the male and female categories respectively of the 5K race, which started inside the YASCO grounds and proceeded up Old Parham Road to Gourmet Basket and returned to finish at YASCO.

Martin completed the 5K race in a time of 19 minutes and 25 seconds. Al-

monte Isaiah of EduSports captured second place in 19 minutes and 50 seconds, with fellow EduSports colleague Kishorn Hamilton grabbing third place by clocking 19 minutes and 54 seconds.

Hamilton was first to complete the women 5K by completing the race in 25 minutes and 19 seconds.

Tanica James of Hurricane Power finished second in 25 minutes and 29 seconds while Denicia Hamilton of EduSports came third in 25 minutes and 35 seconds.

Medals and trophies were presented by former veteran Antigua & Barbuda long distance runner, Dale Jones and Secretary-General of the Antigua & Barbuda Olympic Committee, Cliff Williams.

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But two major track and field events were held at YASCO this year.

Princess Margaret School brought in additional lighting, seating and barricades to host its sports

day track and field event on 30 March.

The Ministry of Sports follow suit and staged its first Inter-schools' Track and Field competition since 2017 on 6th and 7th May, 2022.

Black Hawks remain perched atop standings of two-day contest

PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks continue to lead the standings after five round of matches in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Two Day Competition.

The Black Hawks, who have already won the ABCA Super-40 and the Cool & Smooth T20 Explosion competitions, have won all but one of their five matches in the preliminaries thus far to top the two-day standings with 54 points.

The Black Hawks' draw with Empire Nation in last weekend's fifth round of matches is the only encounter the team from Liberta have failed to win outright in the two-day competition.

All Saints Pythons, with two wins and three draws, are currently in second place with 39 points.

The men from All Saints are just six points ahead of Empire Nations who are in third place after also winning two and drawing their other three matches thus far.

Jennings Tigers and defending champions Pigotts Crushers are tied in fourth place with 31 points each. Both sides have identical records of one win, one loss and three draws from their five matches.



PIC Insurance Liberta Black Hawks continue to lead the standings after five round of matches in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's Two Day Competition. (File photo)

Rising Sun Spartans are currently occupying sixth place with 27 points from their five encounters. Rising Sun have so far secured two wins, two losses and a draw from their five matches.

They are followed by Bolans Blasters and New Winthorpes Lions who are tied with 24 points each. Bolans have secured two wins and three losses while New Winthorpes have one win, one loss and three draws.

Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles are currently second from bottom of the 10-team round robin competition

with 18 points.

The Golden Eagles have recorded just one win, one loss and three draws from their five matches.

Winless Combined Schools, who have lost all five matches so far, are occupying the cellar position without a point.

The top four sides at the end of the preliminary competition will advance to the semi-finals.

With four more round of preliminary matches remaining, Liberta Black Hawks can virtually assure themselves of a semi-final berth with victory in the

sixth round of matches this weekend.

The Black Hawks will host neighbours All Saints Pythons at Ball Beef in one of five two-day matches this weekend.

In the matches starting on Saturday, Bolans will entertain Empire Nation at Bolans and Combined Schools will meet Pigotts Crushers at Factory.

In the other encounters, Caribbean Union Bank Bethesda will face Jennings Tigers at Jennings and New Winthorpes Lions will challenge Rising Sun Spartans at Rising Sun in St John's.