

Home | Israel-Gaza war | Cost of Living | War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | More

Business | Politics | Culture

Scotland | Scotland Politics | Scotland Business | Edinburgh, Fife & East | Glasgow & West |

Highlands & Islands | NE, Orkney & Shetland | South | Tayside & Central | Alba | Local News

Nicola Sturgeon 'cannot turn a blind eye' to Rangers crowds

9 March 2021



REUTERS

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has said she "cannot simply turn a blind eye" to crowds of Rangers supporters breaching lockdown rules at the weekend.

There were mass gatherings in Glasgow after Rangers clinched its first league title since 2011.

Ms Sturgeon said the club could have done more to stop it happening.

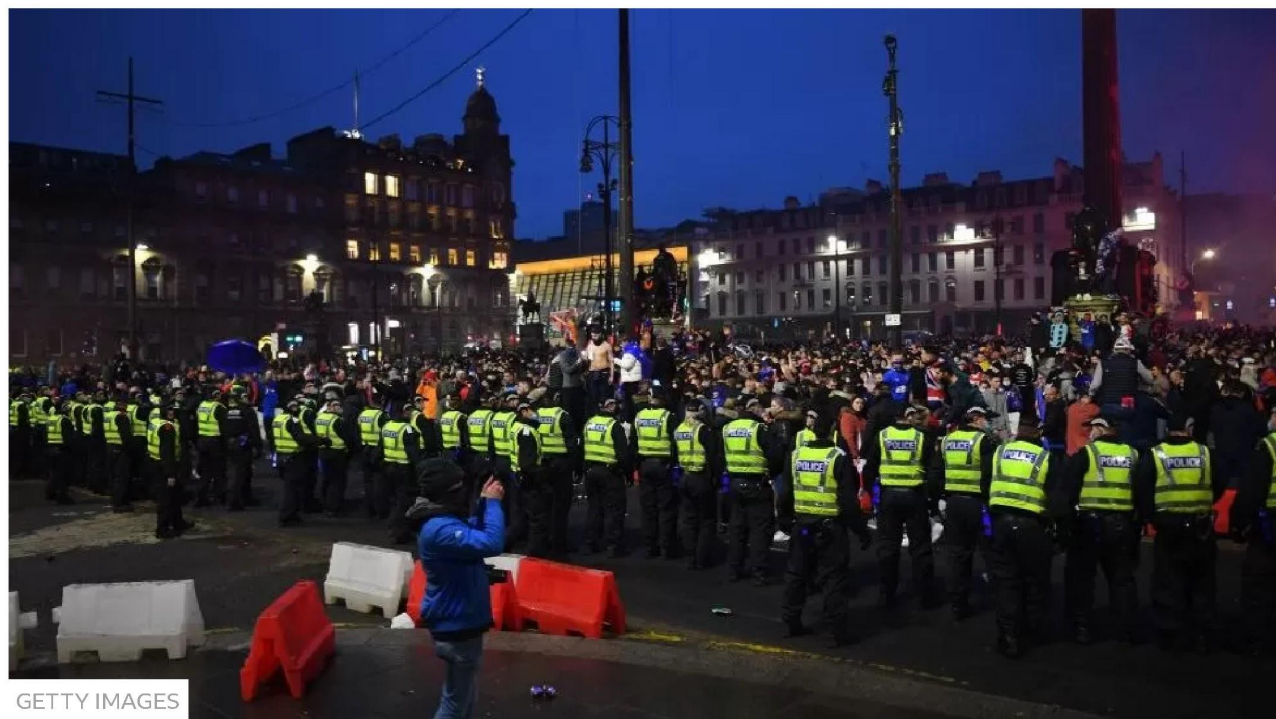
Rangers earlier wrote to the first minister saying strong criticism from the Scottish government and Police Scotland was "disappointing".

Ms Sturgeon told MSPs during her Tuesday Covid update that discussions were taking place to make sure the scenes were not repeated.

- Police condemn club's 'lack of support'
- When fans fall foul of coronavirus rules
- 'More to come' after title win - Gerrard

She said she would report back on the outcome ahead of the Old Firm match scheduled for 21 March.

"We will have to try to assure ourselves there will be no repeat of the scenes we saw at the weekend and that, frankly, is very much a work in progress," Ms Sturgeon said.



GETTY IMAGES

Officers made 28 arrests, of suspects aged 18 to 44, and seven people were issued with fixed penalty notices

Ms Sturgeon said she shared the "anger and despair" of the majority of people as crowds of supporters flagrantly breached the rules.

"The behaviour witnessed at the weekend was disgraceful and selfish," she said.

In a letter to the first minister, Rangers chairman Douglas Park said he was "at a loss as to what more Rangers Football Club could have done to limit the reaction to winning our historic 55th league title".

The letter said: "It is particularly disappointing that there has been a lack of acknowledgement from the Scottish government to the wide range of efforts we undertook to limit public safety issues.

"It is also particularly disappointing that Mr Swinney has chosen to lambast Rangers publicly, given the fact that we had proactively initiated engagement with Police Scotland, the SPFL, the Scottish government as well as a local MP."

Nicola Sturgeon said Rangers needed to show much more leadership.



GETTY IMAGES

| Ms Sturgeon said the behaviour of fans was "disgraceful and selfish"

She said: "At no point did Rangers simply and unequivocally say to their fans 'stay at home' or when they were gathered say 'go home'."

She said the police were put in a "deeply invidious situation" by the behaviour of fans and she would speaking to Police Scotland to consider what further action might be necessary to avoid any repeat.

Officers made 28 arrests and handed out fixed penalty notices for offences including assaulting police officers, sectarian-related breaches of the peace, breaking Covid rules and use of pyrotechnics.

Police said no officers were injured and confirmed those arrested were aged 18 to 44.

Police Scotland's chief constable Ian Livingstone has asked a leading QC John Scott to review the force's response to the title celebrations.



Mr Scott was asked last April to scrutinise its response to the pandemic and provide updates to the Scottish Police Authority.

Mr Livingstone said Mr Scott had now been asked to consider the events of the weekend in relation to the "fundamental human rights principles of legality, necessity and proportionality."

Mr Livingstone added: "This should not have happened given the continuing public health crisis.

"Experienced officers, highly-skilled in public order management, took appropriate steps to manage these challenging circumstances to protect people and minimise disruption to communities."



Benches were broken in George Square during the celebrations

Glasgow City Council said a number of memorial benches donated by grieving relatives were damaged in George Square, and that it was working to trace the families.

A crowdfunding appeal to pay for the repairs, set up by the owner of the Loudon Tavern at Ibrox Stadium, quickly raised its £5,500 target, with any extra funds being donated to the Anthony Nolan cancer charity.

Under current Scottish government coronavirus guidance, public gatherings are banned and a maximum of two people from separate households are allowed to meet outdoors.

Scotland's chief medical officer Dr Gregor Smith warned there was a "real risk" the celebrations would lead to a spike in Covid infections in the coming weeks.

More about coronavirus



- RULES: [What are the restrictions in your area?](#)
- LOCKDOWN: [Six months that changed our lives](#)
- CASES: [Where are the latest cases in Scotland?](#)
- VACCINE: [When will Scots be vaccinated against Covid?](#)
- WHO? [The people who have died with Covid-19](#)

Related Topics

[Coronavirus lockdown measures](#)

[Glasgow](#)

More on this story



Police condemn Rangers 'lack of support' over crowds

8 March 2021



Crowds of celebrating Rangers fans 'disgraceful'

8 March 2021



When fans fall foul of coronavirus rules

8 March 2021

From other local news sites

Ayrshire: Largs Yuletide Night and Santa's sleigh rides

Largs & Millport Weekly News

Clyde Flyer route to see increase in buses amid festive season

Largs & Millport Weekly News

Vital charity holding first-aid event in Greenock next month

Greenock Telegraph

St Laurence's Church to hold a Christmas quiz night

Greenock Telegraph

Boundary Commission inquiry on Holyrood seat change plan

Helensburgh Advertiser

Auchinleck: Further arrest made after villager incidents

Cumnock Chronicle

i [Information about BBC links to other news sites](#)

Top Stories

Shoppers hit by escalating prices of branded goods

10 minutes ago

LIVE Hopes of Gaza truce extension as more hostages set to be freed

Four teenagers drowned after crash, inquest hears

58 minutes ago

Features



Timothée Chalamet on how his Wonka is different



'Every Greek felt offended' - how Athens sees the Elgin Marbles row



The story behind this heart-warming father-son kiss



'I was sold into marriage for £7 at the age of 12'



The Papers: 'Royal race row' and 'pressure' for PM on migrants



The mystery over a baby found in a recycling tip



How much could you be paid to use less energy?

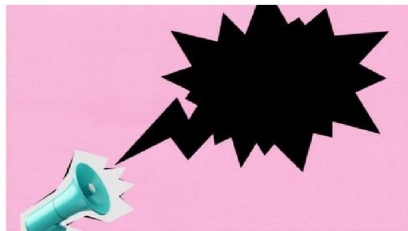


Spotify Wrapped: Are music genres irrelevant now?



In pictures: Bolivians care for animals affected by wildfires

Elsewhere on the BBC



How well do you know these famous quotes?

You know a quote is truly quotable when it stands the test of time

Bitesize



Why can't we get Kylie Minogue out of our heads?

How a TV icon become one of the greatest pop stars of all time...

Sounds



How an innocent DNA test revealed an unsolved mystery

A son's quest to learn about his late father unravels a shocking criminal cold case

Sounds



Have you tried bubble tea?

Ben Henderson speaks to Liu Han-Chieh who invented it in a Taiwanese teashop in 1987

Sounds

Most Read

- 1** Four teenagers drowned after crash, inquest hears
- 2** Coldest November night in 13 years for parts of UK
- 3** Franklin's sons awarded homes via handwritten will
- 4** Beyoncé's mum hits out at skin lightening comments
- 5** Shoppers hit by escalating prices of branded goods
- 6** Footballer faced pressures before death, family say
- 7** US military plane carrying six crashes off Japan
- 8** Dutch Scobie book withdrawn over race row 'error'
- 9** England getting new national park to protect nature
- 10** Bake Off winner relieved to end secrecy

BBC News Services

 On your mobile

 On smart speakers

 Get news alerts

 Contact BBC News

Best of the BBC



A new lead in Cheryl Grimmer's case

 BBC Sounds



When Louis met Dame Joan Collins

 BBC iPlayer



Take That live at the BBC Radio Theatre

 BBC Sounds



Keeping secrets buried

 BBC iPlayer

Home

Weather

CBBC

Bitesize

Local

News

iPlayer

CBeebies

Arts

Three

Sport

Sounds

Food

Taster

[Terms of Use](#)

[About the BBC](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Cookies](#)

[Accessibility Help](#)

[Parental Guidance](#)

[Contact the BBC](#)

[Make an editorial complaint](#)

[Get Personalised Newsletters](#)

Why you can trust the BBC

© 2023 BBC. The BBC is not responsible for the content of external sites. [Read about our approach to external linking.](#)