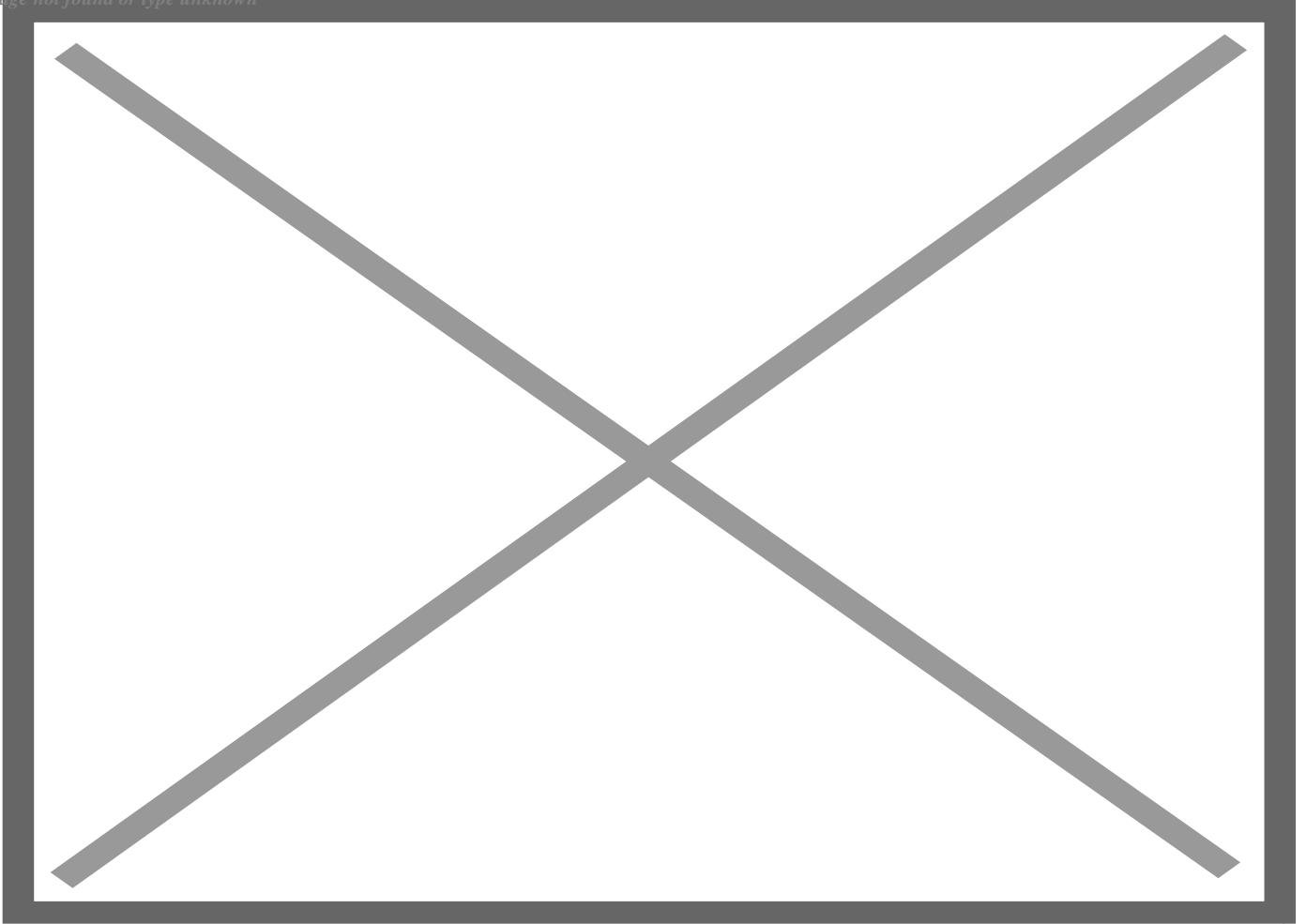


# *British prime minister faces renewed pressure over Partygate photos*

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**Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson adjusts his tie at the start of a cabinet meeting [Daniel Leal/Pool via AP]**

London, May 25 (RHC)-- British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is facing renewed accusations of lying after photos emerged of him drinking at a Downing Street party during a coronavirus pandemic lockdown in

2020.

The revelations come as Sue Gray, a senior civil servant, was expected to publish her long-awaited full report into a series of rule-breaking parties dubbed by media as the “Partygate,” despite claims that Johnson was trying to have it dropped.

The photos published on Monday evening by ITV News were taken during a leaving party for Johnson’s communications chief Lee Cain on November 13, 2020, days after the government ordered a second lockdown, and banned household mixing.

Johnson can be seen raising a glass and chatting with several people around a table with bottles of wine and food.

Police have investigated the event as part of their probe into “Partygate” and fined one person, but not Johnson. When he was asked in parliament in December last year about the gathering, he insisted there was no party on that date and that no rules were broken.

Johnson has been fined over a surprise birthday party he attended at Downing Street in June 2020 but not for any other event. The deputy leader of the main opposition Labour party, Angela Rayner, said it was “astonishing” that Johnson was not fined for the November gathering.

She told ITV News that it looked “pretty clear” there was a party that was not a work event, calling it “pretty shocking” he had not been fined for it. “He knew that he broke the rules, and he’s known it all along and yet he’s tried to get away with it. He’s tried to lie to the British public, and he’s tried to lie to parliament,” Rayner said.

But Secretary of Transport Grant Shapps sought to defend Johnson on Tuesday, saying the new pictures showed he was “clearly not” partying. “It looks to me he was asked to go and thank a member of staff who was leaving, raises a glass to them and I imagine comes in and out pretty quick, which is presumably why the police have not issued a fixed-penalty notice to the prime Minister,” Shapps told BBC radio.

Shapps said he did not think London’s Metropolitan police needed to explain why Johnson had not been fined over the event. The Times newspaper reported on Tuesday that Johnson had put pressure on Gray to drop her much-anticipated report.

Sky News quoted sources as saying Johnson had questioned what more would be left to say after the police concluded their work. Rayner joined a chorus of opposition voices calling for the Gray report to be published “as soon as possible.”

“The full report – and all the evidence – must be published without delay,” she tweeted. “Anything less will amount to a further cover up from this deceitful, untrustworthy PM.”

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