

UK Headlines — 31 Aug 2026

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? Top Story — US and Iran Trade Strikes for First Time in Weeks

Iran and the US have exchanged direct military strikes after American forces attacked two rocket launchers on **Larak Island** in the Strait of Hormuz — the first known US strikes on Iran since late July.

- US Central Command said it took "limited, precise action" against "minelaying forces posing an imminent threat in the Strait of Hormuz". Iran's IRGC said two people were killed and two injured, vowing "response and punishment".
- Hours later, Iran said it struck US military bases at **King Hussein** and **al-Azraq in Jordan** with ballistic missiles. Jordan's army said it intercepted eight missiles early Monday morning. Iran's state TV also claimed a drone attack on an air base in the UAE, which said it shot down a drone.
- President Trump posted apparent AI-generated videos on Truth Social showing oil infrastructure exploding, one captioned "Kharg Island being blown to smithereens!!!" — a reference to Iran's major oil terminal.
- Iran is reportedly forcing tankers to pass Larak Island for inspection and pay **\$2m (£1.5m)** to cross the strait, which carried ~20% of world oil and LNG before the war began.
- The escalation follows a fresh US sanctions campaign announced 24 August and an ongoing US naval blockade — Centcom said Saturday it had disabled three vessels, boarded two and redirected 82.
- Iranian President Pezeshkian: "We are not seeking war, but we will deliver a decisive response to the aggressors."

?? UK Politics

PC Harper's killers to stay in jail — PM changes early release scheme

Prime Minister **Andy Burnham** told BBC Breakfast that PC Andrew Harper's killers will remain behind bars as he announced changes to the early release scheme designed to ease prison overcrowding. Anyone convicted of unlawful killing — including all forms of manslaughter — will be excluded from the scheme, which would have made two of the officer's killers (Jessie Cole and Albert Bowers) eligible for early release. Burnham conceded "hundreds" more people will stay in prison in a system already **more than 97% full** in England and Wales; space will be found by deporting foreign prisoners and releasing some inmates on indefinite sentences. Harper's mother Debbie Adlam welcomed the decision but said "the overall system has left some huge gaps still."

Tory reshuffle: Tugendhat replaces Patel as shadow foreign secretary

Tom Tugendhat will replace **Dame Priti Patel** as shadow foreign secretary when Kemi Badenoch reshuffles her front bench next month, BBC News has been told (first reported by the Telegraph). Patel said she's leaving to take up a role strengthening "links with sister parties and centre right movements around the world" and remains MP for Witham. The reshuffle was already expected: **Sir James Cleverly** quit as shadow housing secretary to run for London mayor, and shadow energy secretary **Claire Coutinho** has maternity leave upcoming. Speculation continues over shadow chancellor **Sir Mel Stride's** position.

Burnham will not vote on assisted dying — unlike Starmer

PM Andy Burnham revealed he will abstain on the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill for England and Wales, due for a Commons debate in about two weeks. His predecessor Sir Keir Starmer voted in favour of the previous bill. Burnham wrote to Labour MPs: "My role, as the prime minister, will be to lead a government that implements the will of Parliament in this area — whether that is to change the law or not."

Other politics

- **Lib Dems** demand emergency measures to stop teachers quitting the profession.
- **Prisons:** Governors tell the BBC that prisoners freed early are returning to jail at a rapid rate.
- **Children's Commissioner:** Parents of seriously ill children should get paid leave.
- Burnham's summer tour is over — he now has to prove himself in Parliament, with his authority under scrutiny as MPs return.

? World

- **Cyprus ferry disaster:** Eight killed and 18 missing after a ferry capsized off northern Cyprus.
- **Ukraine:** At least 37 dead and hundreds evacuated after a strike on a Kyiv weapons depot/warehouse.
- **Iceland:** Votes against restarting EU membership talks.
- **Switzerland:** Manhunt under way after a shooting at a Swiss rave killed a 22-year-old woman and injured five.
- **US:** 15 hikers feared missing after "terrifying" flash flooding hits the Grand Canyon.
- **Nepal floods:** Head teacher evacuated 900 children minutes before floodwater hit a school; a 97-year-old woman rescued "looked like a warrior"; relief vehicles trapped as heavy rain turns roads to mud. (Welsh connection below.)
- **Zambia:** Opposition leader charged with treason.
- **Niger:** Russia says it helped repel an attempted coup.
- **US/UK:** Right-wing commentator Milo Yiannopoulos deported from the US to the UK.
- **Space:** NASA launches powerful new space telescope — "a giant leap forward".
- **West Bank:** BBC tracked one week of Israeli settler violence in the occupied West Bank; the UK has raised the case of a British activist detained by settlers with Israel.
- **Piracy:** Somali piracy surges as the impact of the US-Iran war ripples outwards.
- **Australia:** The world's biggest cuttlefish mating event failed to materialise this year.

??????? Wales

- **Weather warning:** Flood warning issued as heavy rain and thunderstorms are predicted across Wales.
- **Nepal floods — Welsh family fears:** A family from Ceredigion is anxious as a relative remains missing in Nepal following the deadly floods.
- **NHS Wales:** Gender surgeries paused pending a review into referral numbers.
- **Crime/organised theft:** High-value cars being stolen to order in Wales; a report finds forbidden drugs "readily available" in prison.
- **Environment:** Swimmers told to avoid a popular beauty spot after "hidden hazards" were revealed by drought and fires.
- **Manchester synagogue anniversary:** Rabbi Daniel Walker of Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation says the Jewish community feels "almost in a harder position than immediately after the attack" nearly a year on from the Yom Kippur attack that killed Melvin Cravitz and Adrian Daulby; a memorial service takes place today.
- **Lighter news:** Actor Stanley Tucci spotted trying Welsh cakes at Cardiff Market; twelve puppies from the same litter reunited for a noisy first birthday party; a man passed GCSE maths 70 years after failing.
- **Sport:** Rodon injury worry for Wales as Leeds boss Farke confirms the problem; Evans' WRC lead cut as Pajari makes history; Swansea close in on Huddersfield midfielder Iorpenda; Wrexham's Parkinson "under pressure" for the first time.

? Also Notable (UK)

- **Germany:** A British woman has been killed in a stabbing at a German railway station.
- **Rail safety:** Fears raised over a "high risk" level crossing after a train crash death.
- **A66 crash:** Video appears to show a police chase minutes before the fatal A66 crash that killed a police officer; the officer's sons led out Manchester United as mascots.
- **Middlesbrough:** Residents tell of concern after violent incidents — "It's destroying our town."
- **Festival death:** Church leads tributes for a man killed at a festival.
- **Culture:** Hints of a fiery finale for the last ever episode of *River City*; tennis — Samuel breaks new ground with a first win at a Slam.

? Quick Summary

#	Story	Category
1	US strikes Larak Island; Iran hits US bases in Jordan — first direct exchange in weeks	World
2	PM Burnham excludes manslaughter from early release — PC Harper's killers stay jailed	Politics
3	Tugendhat to replace Patel as shadow foreign secretary in Tory reshuffle	Politics
4	Burnham to abstain on assisted dying vote, unlike Starmer	Politics
5	Jewish community "in harder position" than after synagogue attack, says Manchester rabbi	UK
6	Ferry capsizes off northern Cyprus — 8 dead, 18 missing	World
7	37 dead in strike on Kyiv weapons depot	World
8	Flood warnings for Wales as heavy rain and thunderstorms forecast	Wales
9	Ceredigion family fears for relative missing in Nepal floods	Wales
10	Iceland votes against restarting EU membership talks	World

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