UK Headlines — 05 Nov 2026

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Thursday 5 November 2026 — UK & World news sweep

? Top Stories

?? Blue Wave: Democrats win control of Congress in midterm rout

Democrats have taken **both the Senate and the House** in the US midterms, controlling Congress for the rest of Donald Trump's presidency. Senate seats flipped in **Texas, Iowa, Kansas, North Carolina, South Carolina and Ohio** in what the Guardian calls a "blue wave" rejection of Trump's agenda. Near-three-decade senator **Susan Collins** went down in Maine, and Democrats eye a **historic upset in Mississippi** as their lead grows there. Trump admitted the **Iran war and rising fuel prices** contributed to the Republican defeat — then, in a primetime address, revived election-fraud claims accusing **China** of interference, which Democrats say is an attempt to contest the results. The Republican blame game has begun, with **Pete Hegseth** tipped to take the fall despite Trump's support. Trump, undeterred, boasted about his "magnificent" White House ballroom the day after the rout.

?? Russell Brand trial: jury retires to consider verdicts

After more than three weeks of evidence at Southwark Crown Court, the jury of eight men and four women has retired to consider verdicts on the rape and sexual assault charges against Russell Brand, who denies all counts. Mr Justice Bennathan is presiding. A verdict could come at any moment — this is the story to watch today.

? British healthcare worker with Ebola evacuated from DR Congo

A British humanitarian worker who tested positive for Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo is being medically evacuated to the UK — the first case involving a British national linked to the current outbreak. He is reportedly in stable condition and expected to arrive today (5 November) for treatment. Switzerland evacuated an Ebola patient from Nigeria last month; France reported an infected doctor in June.

?? UK Politics

- **Commonwealth slavery apology — diplomatic victory?** The UK will work towards a **formal apology over Britain's role in slavery without direct reparations**, giving it "the moral high ground but no legal liability" (Guardian analysis). PM Andy Burnham and Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband judged the Starmer-era "we're not talking about it" approach untenable; **King Charles stopped short of an apology** in his Commonwealth speech at CHOGM in Guyana, where he and Burnham also faced "Reparations now" protests in Antigua. Gordon Brown will lead on debt restructuring ahead of the **G20 in Manchester**.
- **Burnham to unveil EU trade deals worth billions** — a UK-EU food produce deal is on the table, with analysis of what shoppers will actually feel. A former chief Brexit negotiator says the UK could even return to the EU without rejoining the euro.
- **Migration settlement shake-up:** Home Secretary **Shabana Mahmood** set out changes to settlement rules for legal migrants — a 30-year **"earned settlement"** plan the **UNHCR has criticised**. Guardian analysis: "Migration is a moral issue for Burnham — but is he trying to please everyone?"
- **Chris Rennard:** a panel has **ruled out any further inquiry** into the historic sexual harassment claims against the Lib Dem peer.
- **Palace of Parliament at risk of a "Notre Dame-style fire"** as renovation costs continue to rise.
- **Aid cuts:** the UK made huge aid cuts to Commonwealth nations despite the warm words at CHOGM.
- **Budget fallout (last week's Healey budget):** the M&S boss called it a "whole lot of nothing"; Poundland suppliers warn against letting the owner "maximise its return at our expense"; readers on £126k salaries say nothing's left at month end.
- **Be Ready campaign:** every Briton is being urged to stockpile up to **nine litres of water and three days' food** for cyber/climate emergencies — the guidance remains in the spotlight.
- **Tommy Robinson's conviction** has left the far right with a leadership void (Guardian analysis).

? World

- **North Korea fired multiple missiles** from the Sondok area towards the Sea of Japan — its **fourth weapons launch in a month**. South Korea issued an air-raid alert for residents on an eastern island. Pyongyang separately denied US claims over the Binance hack.
- **Oil crash:** Brent fell below $95 and WTI beneath $90 — over two-month lows after the US midterms.
- **Geoffrey Hinton:** the AI "godfather" says "it might turn out we were better off without AI".
- **Australia seeks to change its visa deal with the UK** after an influx of Britons.
- **900+ academics** urge the UK to reverse its decision to bar academic Andreas Malm.

??????? Wales & Northern Ireland

- **Belfast: 17 improvised explosive devices** and other material found in Shankill Road searches (30–31 October) are linked to **"extreme rightwing terrorism"**, police say; a man arrested has been granted further questioning time.
- **Welsh Government childcare:** the number of local authorities offering funded childcare for all two-year-olds rises from three in May to **19 by the end of November**.
- **Sport:** Harry Wilson is back in Wales' squad for the Nations League matches against Norway and Portugal; goalkeeper Joe Duncan earns his first call-up.
- **Courts:** a former assistant head teacher who featured in a Channel 4 documentary series was spared jail after admitting sexually assaulting a teenage girl.

?? UK — Other Headlines

- **Court:** a husband who invited men to rape his wife asked for an online review afterwards, a court was told.
- **NHS:** the world's largest early-warning system for severe child illness launches in A&Es across England; Palantir AI tech is unused or little-used by 29 NHS trusts said to be benefiting from it.
- **Newcastle hospital** told a woman whose unborn baby had died to go home and "book a slot to give birth".
- **Cambridge** has asked the Post Office inquiry barrister to lead the review into the death of Jason Arday.
- **Animal welfare:** Great Britain's worst-ever bluetongue season called "a major animal welfare crisis"; the government is told to drastically cut firework noise limits.

- **Culture:** Phoebe Waller-Bridge has donated a flat to help early-career writers live in London; Sarah J Maas's new book is the UK's fastest-selling adult fantasy novel; tributes continue for Sir Patrick Stewart, who has died aged 86 after "a brief and poignant journey" with Alzheimer's disease and Lewy body dementia.

? Quick Summary

Story	Status	Watch for
US midterms	Democrats control Senate + House	Mississippi upset; Trump fraud claims; Hegseth fallout
Russell Brand trial	Jury deliberating	Verdict possible today
Ebola evacuation	British worker en route to UK	Arrival + treatment updates today
Slavery apology	Formal apology path agreed, no reparations	Apology text over coming months; G20 Manchester
North Korea	Multiple missiles fired, 4th test in a month	Regional response
Oil markets	Brent <$95, WTI <$90	Post-midterm energy policy shifts
UK-EU food deal	Burnham unveiling trade deals	Shopper impact analysis
Settlement rules	Mahmood's 30-year "earned settlement"	UNHCR criticism, parliamentary reaction
Belfast IEDs	17 devices, rightwing terrorism link	Further arrests

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