UK Headlines — 05 Oct 2026

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? Top Stories

US pulls all B-1 bombers from RAF Fairford amid Iran-backed terror plot

The US Air Force has withdrawn all 12 of its B-1 bombers from RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire "with unusual speed" after new intelligence about an Iran-backed plot against the base (NYT, Telegraph, BBC). A branch of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps allegedly recruited UK nationals to carry out an attack (WSJ). Six men have been arrested and bailed in connection with the suspected plot; one detainee, a 25-year-old dual UK-Iranian national, was held on suspicion of preparing terrorist acts. In recent months B-1 and B-52 bombers had flown from Fairford for Middle East operations after the UK approved US use of the base for strikes on Iran.

Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor takes police to court over Epstein-files arrest

The former Duke of York has launched legal action against Thames Valley Police over his arrest eight months ago in relation to the Epstein files, asking a judge to rule whether search warrants used to raid his homes were lawful (Telegraph). He was questioned for almost 12 hours on suspicion of misconduct in public office before being released under investigation, and has consistently denied wrongdoing. The Telegraph notes it is the first legal challenge of its kind by a royal since King Charles I in 1649.

'Horrifying' scale of child-on-child sexual abuse in schools revealed

Thousands of sexual offences by children against other children are reported to police in England and Wales every year — on average almost five crimes a day against children aged 12 and younger are recorded in primary and secondary schools (Guardian). Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza describes peer-on-peer abuse in schools as "widespread" and "normalised".

?? UK Politics

Conservative Party Conference: Badenoch's "bonfire of green laws"

Monday's papers overwhelmingly lead on Kemi Badenoch's conference reset in Birmingham:

- **Times:** "Badenoch to pledge a bonfire of green laws" — scrapping environmental quangos, ending strict net-zero regulations, and pushing a third runway at Heathrow to break the "doom loop" of low growth.
- **Mail:** "Kemi's common sense blueprint" — a "battle-ready" party with a "direct echo of Margaret Thatcher's approach in the 1970s".
- **Mirror:** "Bad to the future" — accusations the Tories plan benefit cuts while scrapping the free-childcare earnings cap: "same old Tories" taking the country back to austerity.
- **Metro:** "Mum's the word" — Badenoch vows to be "like a no-nonsense mum".
- **Express:** Labour under Andy Burnham "is going after the elderly"; Badenoch pledges to save the pension triple lock.
- **Sun:** Badenoch warns Britain must not become a nation of "little ghettos" and migrants "should embrace our culture" (the Sun leads instead on MOTD hosts Mark Chapman and Kelly Cates dating: "Love match of the day").

AFP's take (5 Oct): The Tories are "eyeing revival" as Reform UK stumbles. A police investigation into alleged illegal donations, a sleaze probe into a £5m gift to Farage, and pressure from Musk-backed Restore Britain have dented Reform's appeal. A YouGov poll of ~17,000 projects Labour (Burnham) first, Conservatives second on 130 seats, Reform third on 123. Farage's net favourability has dropped 14 points in a year while Badenoch's has risen 20 — though both remain negative. Prof. Tim Bale: "It's too early to talk about a 'Kemi-naissance'… their ratings have improved mainly because Reform's have begun to drop." Badenoch has ruled out a pre-election pact with Reform (now boasting Jenrick and Braverman).

Farage questioned over £5m Harborne gift

Nigel Farage has been interviewed by the parliamentary standards commissioner over whether he should have declared a £5m gift from crypto billionaire Christopher Harborne (Guardian, 4 Oct). Separately, police are investigating Reform donations made by a fraudster's mother ahead of the Count Binface by-election (Google News).

BBC morale dented by "bloodletting" of job cuts

Plans to shed up to 2,000 staff, announced in stages to save £500m, have severely damaged morale, insiders say — "the bloodletting continues" (Guardian, 5 Oct lead). BBC Scotland and BBC Three are expected to become online-only. 110 compulsory redundancies in media tech (280 roles closing in total); redundancy pay terms under review. Staff fear a "doom spiral" and further waves in 2027. Weekly BBC-government talks on future funding continue, potentially widening the licence fee to streaming viewers.

i Paper: Man City owners linked to Burnham's No 10 North site

The i leads on a claimed link between Manchester City's owners and the property where PM Andy Burnham plans "No 10 North", following what it calls a "sweetheart deal" with a UAE firm.

? World / International

- **Spain on the brink:** PM Pedro Sánchez will make a televised address today amid speculation he may call snap elections, after parliament rejected his housing-crisis measures (178–172 and 184–166) — including a proposed eviction ban — following the eviction of an 87-year-old woman. PP leader Feijóo urges elections "because the country can't take any more"; housing protest camps have flared (AP, BBC, Al Jazeera, Euronews).
- **Gaza:** An Israeli strike killed five, including four women, health officials say (Reuters). Israel's Defence Minister Katz has ordered occupied West Bank and Gaza crossings closed for two days from today (Al Jazeera). Yemeni government forces have launched an offensive to seize Houthi-held Sanaa as Trump warns Tehran (Al Jazeera live blog).
- **Ukraine:** Bridges used by Kyiv commuters are the latest target in Russia's broad bombing campaign against infrastructure (NYT).
- **Morocco:** Fatima Ezzahra El Mansouri has been named Morocco's first female prime minister after her centrist PAM party won the most seats — only the second woman ever to hold the post in the Arab world (Al Jazeera, Reuters, BBC).
- **Business (FT):** Global dealmaking fell below $1tn in Q3 for the first time since Trump's trade war — down to $986bn as high interest rates threaten to derail a "blockbuster" M&A period.

??????? Wales

- **Murder investigation in Prestatyn:** A body was found inside a van set alight on Gas Works Lane at ~11.30pm on Sunday 4 October. Identity not yet known; a cordon remains today (WalesOnline/North Wales Live).
- **Plaid Cymru conference:** First Minister Rhun ap Iorwerth, in his first conference address since ending Labour's 27-year reign, formally called on Andy Burnham to deliver a "new deal" on devolution — more powers for the Senedd (Guardian, Channel 4, BBC). Welsh Conservative leader tells Plaid to "get on with the day job" (ITV Wales).
- **Sport:** Wales lost 1-0 to Denmark in the Nations League (Højlund penalty) — still bottom of their League A group and still without a win under Craig Bellamy (ESPN/BBC; BBC's live report has the scoreline as 2-0 in its headline — ESPN gives 1-0). Separately, Welshman Elfyn Evans claimed the WRC title in dramatic fashion after a crash (WalesOnline).
- **Environment:** Urgent warning to keep dogs out of the water at Beaufort Hill Ponds, Ebbw Vale, after a "significant amount" of toxic algae was detected (WalesOnline).
- **Weather:** Dull, overcast day with drizzle, brisk southwesterly breeze; feeling mild, max 20°C (Met Office via WalesOnline).

? Quick Summary

Area	Headline	Source
Security	US withdraws all 12 B-1 bombers from RAF Fairford over Iran-backed plot	NYT/Telegraph/BBC
Royals/Law	Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor sues Thames Valley Police over Epstein-files arrest	Telegraph
Education	Near-daily child-on-child sexual offences recorded in schools	Guardian
Tories	Badenoch pledges "bonfire of green laws" at Birmingham conference	Times/BBC
Reform	Farage interviewed by standards commissioner over £5m gift	Guardian
Media	BBC morale "bloodletting" — up to 2,000 jobs, BBC Three/Scotland online-only	Guardian
Business	Global dealmaking drops below $1tn for first time since trade war	FT
Spain	Sánchez addresses nation today; snap election speculation after housing defeat	AP/Euronews
Gaza	Five killed in Israeli strike; crossings closed two days from today	Reuters/Al Jazeera

Area	Headline	Source
Morocco	First female PM appointed — Fatima Ezzahra El Mansouri	BBC/Reuters
Wales/Crime	Murder probe after body found in burning van, Prestatyn	WalesOnline
Wales/Politics	Ap Iorwerth demands devolution "new deal" from Burnham	Guardian/C4
Wales/Sport	Wales 1-0 Denmark (Højlund pen); Evans takes WRC title	ESPN/WalesOnline

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