UK Headlines — 08 Oct 2026

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? Top Story

Badenoch closes Tory conference with inheritance tax pledge and "battle for the soul of the nation"

Kemi Badenoch used her keynote at Conservative Party Conference in Birmingham to pledge that a Conservative government would **abolish inheritance tax on family homes** and raise the tax-free threshold couples can pass on to **£1m** (individual threshold to £500,000). She said the measures would cut "every inheritance tax bill" and more than halve the number of families paying IHT. Framing the next election as a "battle for the soul of the nation" and a "battle of ideas", she also launched a **furious attack on Reform UK**, mocking senior figures in the party. The Telegraph's expert panel called the speech "a significant step towards No 10"; the Guardian reported the party "riding high on Kemi Badenoch's wave of popularity" ("People are scared of her, to be honest"). Critics — including the Guardian's editorial — accused the Tories of prioritising rich voters and struggling "to break out of the comfort zone".

?? UK Politics

Reform UK clears itself over donations sting

Reform UK published a 27-page internal investigation clearing senior officials **Dan Jukes** and **James Orr** of breaking foreign-donation laws after the Channel 4/Verbatim undercover sting recorded them discussing a £500,000 gift from a purported foreign donor. The report — authored by the party itself — found Jukes commissioned three opinion polls "personally" as a contractor, not

on the party's behalf: "A contractor who is also a supporter is still a contractor." The matter **remains under police investigation**; critics note the party effectively judged itself.

PM Andy Burnham in Berlin for security partnership

Prime Minister **Andy Burnham** travels to Berlin today for his first face-to-face meeting with Chancellor **Friedrich Merz**, launching a **UK–Germany joint security partnership** to counter sabotage, cyber attacks and hybrid threats — aimed squarely at Russia. The visit comes days after Burnham told Labour conference he wanted to set out options on closer European defence ties. Downing Street says the partnership will share intelligence and co-ordinate action to monitor, deter and disrupt threats.

Greens investigate member behind Zionism motion

The Green Party is investigating member **Lubna Speitan**, who tabled the conference motion declaring Zionism a form of racism (passed 1,022–813). Court documents named her a "close friend" of a man jailed over an alleged Heathrow suicide-bomb plot — she gave evidence on his behalf. Former leader Adrian Ramsay called the motion an "unhelpful distraction" and "wrong in principle".

UK–Israel consulate row reaches deadline

Israel's 30-day deadline for the UK to close its **consulate general in East Jerusalem** expires today. Middle East Eye reports the British consul-general is set to leave Jerusalem in compliance; Reuters saw workers removing the consulate's signage. Former attorney general Dominic Grieve has advised the Foreign Office that Israel has **no legal right** to close the 180-year-old mission. A major diplomatic rupture between ostensible allies.

? World

Russia slams Ukraine on Putin's 74th birthday — at least 28 dead

Russia launched a "massive" overnight attack on Ukraine — **130 drones, 48 cruise missiles and ballistic missiles** per Ukraine's air force — killing at least **28 people including 5 children** (Kyiv

Independent/Ukrainska Pravda), with 29 rescued from rubble. Russia's defence ministry said it struck military-industrial targets. The attack landed on Putin's birthday. Ukraine's intelligence service has logged 256 Russian strikes on energy facilities this year (94 thermal plants, 151 substations, 11 hydro).

Three years since 7 October — one year of the Trump Gaza plan

Israelis marked three years since the Hamas attack with no hostages remaining in Gaza, while analysts note Trump's year-old ceasefire plan has **stalled**: Reuters reports Israel continues near-daily strikes (1,400+ killed since the ceasefire was announced) and Hamas remains undefeated but governing. Trump said the "other side is paying a very big price".

Christa Pike survives botched Tennessee execution

US death-row inmate **Christa Pike**, 50 — who would have been the first woman executed in Tennessee in over 200 years — survived two doses of pentobarbital on 30 September. Her first words on regaining consciousness after days unconscious: "*Where am I and who are you?*" Her attorney reports ongoing cognitive confusion; she remains hospitalised. The case has drawn international attention and reignited the death-penalty debate.

??????? Wales

- **Dafydd Owain wins the £10,000 Welsh Music Prize 2026** for his second album *Ymarfer Byw*, beating 14 shortlisted albums (Gruff Rhys, Skindred, Ani Glass, Gwenifer Raymond among them) at the Wales Millennium Centre on Wednesday.
- **Elfyn Evans** emerges as a contender for BBC Sports Personality of the Year after his World Rally Championship form (Nation.Cymru).
- Wales' **Nations League** campaign makes "tough reading" in the table, per Herald.Wales, though the Independent says England "look like a team reborn".

? Economy

Gas storage near record lows — "what happens if the UK runs out?"

Sky News leads on UK gas storage sitting **near record lows** heading into winter, with Centrica's boss warning of "almost no gas in storage in the UK for the coming winter". National Gas insists the network is "well-placed to respond to demand"; the Ofgem price cap rose £60 in October with another increase expected in January. European stores are at their lowest in 13 years. Also in the money pages: "Revealed: how worse off we are because of high inflation" (Sky).

? Crime & Justice

- **PPE scam fraudster jailed** — multi-million pound pandemic PPE fraud sentencing in Leicestershire (BBC).
- Two men remanded to the **Old Bailey** (23 October hearing) in a case covered by Metro.

? Quick Summary

Story	Status	Key detail
Tory conference closes	Badenoch pledges IHT abolition on family homes + £1m allowance	"Battle for the soul of the nation"
Reform donations sting	Party's own inquiry clears Jukes & Orr	Police investigation continues
UK–Germany pact	Burnham & Merz launch security partnership in Berlin today	Anti-sabotage/cyber, Russia focus
Green Party	Investigating Speitan (Zionism motion)	Court links to jailed terror accused
Jerusalem consulate	Israel's closure deadline expires today	Signage removed; UK says closure unlawful
Ukraine	28+ killed in massive Russian attack on Putin's birthday	130 drones, 48 cruise missiles
Gaza	3 years since 7 Oct; 1 year of stalled Trump plan	1,400+ killed since ceasefire
US	Christa Pike survives botched execution	"Where am I and who are you?"
Energy	UK gas storage near record lows	Cap up £60 in Oct, more in Jan
Wales	Dafydd Owain wins Welsh Music Prize	*Ymarfer Byw*, £10k

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Compiled: Thursday 8 October 2026, 08:00 BST — via SearXNG/web_search sweep (BBC, Guardian, Telegraph, Sky News, Reuters, Al Jazeera, Kyiv Independent, Nation.Cymru, Herald.Wales, Channel 4, Middle East Eye, GOV.UK).

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