Global Media and Information Literacy Week 2026 – 24 to 31 October; theme: 'We All Play a Part – MIL for the People'

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News

The UNESCO-led 'Global Media and Information Literacy Week' (Global MIL Week) 2026 is being observed from 24 to 31 October. The 2026 theme is 'We All Play a Part – Media and Information Literacy for the People'. It stresses that policymakers, teachers, journalists and parents all share responsibility for countering false information. Instead of a single feature conference in one city, this year UNESCO offices and partners worldwide are holding regional and thematic events and webinars.

Key facts

Dates	24–31 October every year
2026 theme	'We All Play a Part – MIL for the People'
Led by	UNESCO – celebrated since 2011
UN recognition	UN General Assembly proclaimed the week on 25 March 2021
What MIL means	Skills to access, critically evaluate, and responsibly create and share information and media content
India	PIB Fact Check Unit – Nov 2019 (Ministry of Information & Broadcasting)

Background

- UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization): its Constitution was adopted in London on 16 Nov 1945 and came into force in 1946; HQ Paris (France). It also runs the World Heritage list and the Memory of the World Register.
- Types of false information: 'misinformation' – falsehood spread without intent to harm; 'disinformation' – deliberately spread to cause harm. AI-generated 'deepfake' videos are a new challenge. In India, the PIB Fact Check Unit was set up in November 2019 to check fake news about the Central Government.
- Constitution: freedom of the press is not mentioned separately; it is part of the freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a). Article 19(2) allows reasonable restrictions (sovereignty, public order, defamation etc.).
- Press Council of India (PCI): set up on 16 Nov 1966 under the 1965 Act on the First Press Commission's recommendation; abolished during the Emergency and re-established under the Press Council Act, 1978. A statutory, quasi-judicial body; by convention a retired Supreme Court judge is chairman. 16 Nov is National Press Day.

Tamil Nadu link: G. Subramania Iyer started the Tamil paper 'Swadesamitran' in 1882 – one of the earliest Tamil papers run by Indians; Mahakavi Bharathi worked as its sub-editor from 1904. Iyer, with M. Veeraraghavachariar and others of the 'Triplicane Six', had also founded 'The Hindu' in Madras on 20 Sept 1878. In 'Romesh Thappar v. State of Madras' (1950), one of the earliest cases holding press freedom to be part of Article 19(1)(a), the Supreme Court struck down the Madras Government's ban on the journal 'Cross Roads'.

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