

## Global Handwashing Day calls for achieving universal hand hygiene

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Global Handwashing Day is observed each year on October 15 to raise awareness and highlight the importance of handwashing as an effective means of disease prevention – this year marks a critical reminder for the world and the Region that this simple, cost-effective practice can save lives.

‘Handwashing has always been one of most effective ways of keeping diseases at bay. It is a simple act that pays in dividends when it comes to keeping ourselves healthy and safe. Handwashing is also one of the key cornerstones of COVID-19 prevention. Now more than ever as we embrace the new normal and live with COVID-19, hand hygiene needs to become an integral part of our daily routine and our lives, as we live through this pandemic, and beyond, to protect us from diseases,’ said Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia Region.

Handwashing after touching common surfaces such as doorknobs or handles, or after one comes back home from visiting a public place will keep ourselves and others around us safe.

This year’s Global Handwashing Day theme is Hand Hygiene for All and calls for all of society to achieve universal hand hygiene. To beat the virus today and ensure better health outcomes beyond the pandemic, handwashing with soap must be a priority now and in the future.