

Hand washing reduces incidences of fatal diseases

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The findings of the study was revealed at a press briefing held at the Department of Public Health Engineering auditorium Wednesday, marking Global Hand Washing Day on Thursday.

Bangladesh is observing the day along with 80 countries across the world for the second time. The theme of the day this year is 'My life is in my hands.'

UNICEF programme coordinator Shirin Hossain, referring to the study conducted told the briefing that Bangladesh was one of the 10 top countries in the world in respect of child mortality rate.

As many as 50,800 children under the age of five die in Bangladesh every year, it said.

The mortality rate is on rise for not washing hands properly which is the cause for spreading germs.

DPHE chief engineer Syed Nuruzzaman said: "Over 35 lakh children die in the world every year before they reach the age of five. Of them 85 percent children die in South Asia and Sub-Sahara regions."

Children of more than 80,000 schools and madrasas in the country are participating in the Hand Washing Day programme on Thursday with the assistance of DPHE, UNICEF, Unilever, Save the Children and Plan Bangladesh.

Nuruzzaman said Bangladesh first observed the day last year.

As many as 1.44 crore children attended the day's programme last year which was placed in Greenwich Book of World records.

Mentioning a joint study of DPHE and ICDDR, B, he said only one percent people in Bangladesh wash their hands before eating and 30 percent people wash hands after going to the toilet.

The rate increased by 17 percent in the last one year, but the rate is not satisfactory, the official said, underlining the need for launching a countrywide campaign for making the hand washing practice compulsory for all citizens, specially the children.

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