

HE FOR HER –THE MOVEMENT FOR GENDER PARITY



On the occasion of International Women’s Day on 8th march 2016 the Dept of Posts and UN postal Administration released a set of two stamps and a miniature sheet on the India-UN Women **He For She** campaign .The stamp which depicts a face which is half male and half female illustrates the fact that the female gender is half of humanity and indicates gender equality and parity .

The **He For She** is a solidarity movement, created by UN Women, the United Nations entity which was set up by the UN to end violence against women in the world. The movement was formerly launched on 20th September 2014, at the United Nations by UN Secretary General Ban ki Moon and the UN Women Global Goodwill Ambassador Emma Watson .At the launch Emma Watson extended a ‘formal’ invitation to men to participate in the conversation about gender equality. “Gender equality is your issue too,” She said.

At the same event ,UN Women made a call to mobilize 100,000 men in the campaign and this was achieved within just three days and included such luminaries as the US President Barack Obama , the actor Matt Damon and the UN Secretary General Ban ki Moon Since then the movement has been gaining momentum as recorded on its website and Face book :it has been the subject of more than 2 billion conversations on social media ,with offline activities reaching every corner of the globe . The movement aims to mobilise **One billion** men to accelerate the achievement of gender equality by using on line, offline and mobile phone technology to identify and activate men in every city, community and village around the world.

The UN Women initiative **He For She** is grounded on the belief that gender equality is an issue which affects all people –socially , economically and politically and to achieve it , it is necessary to create a systemic approach and targeted platform on which men and boys can engage and become change agents .The movement therefore recognises the important role played by men and boys and seeks to involve them in a movement which was originally conceived as “a struggle for women by woman .”

To celebrate the movement UN-Women **He For She** Arts Week was organised from 8th to 15th throughout New York with 30 partners - theatre , ballad ,opera shows ,music concerts , cinemas , museum shows etc to highlight the efforts of gender equality The Empire State Building was illuminated magenta on 8th march in honour of UN Women .

The Stamp released by the Department of Post and the UN Postal administration emphasises the Indian Government's commitment to the movement.

It is also important to note that an Indian Actor Farhan Akhtar became the first male Goodwill Ambassador for UN women in South Asia in November 2014 .Farhan Akhtar as is well known is founder of MARD (Men Against Rape and Discrimination) which has been very active in fighting violence against women .

Though the movement has garnered considerable support there are also dissident voices which feel that the movement for equality will be incomplete if feminism does not recognise the discrimination against men also .Cathy Young , a contributor at Reason magazine is of the view that the campaign instead of being **He For She** , should be '**She and he for Us .**'

Well as the world strives for gender equality one can ponder over Cathy Young's suggestion.