Access Audit Report of Matri Mandir

Observations and Recommendations to make it Inclusive for ‘All’
To say “it is impossible to include this thing” simply means that its true place has not been found.

The Mother (26.08.1971)
Acknowledgements

- Samarthyam’s Access Resource Group access audited Matri Mandir, an architectural marvel, which already has some access features.
- We extend our gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the following people who arranged for the visit and participated in access audit of Matri Mandir:
  - John
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  - Pino
  - Rajan
  - Alan
  - Susmita, Barbara, Norma, Sebastian, Rosalva & others of New Abilities Link
Accessible path

- Existing approach have loose sand and is difficult to maneuver mobility aids especially when wet.
- Paved path from the parking to the main gate is preferred, as it allow independent movement of persons using mobility aids such as wheelchairs, crutches, calipers, walking stick, etc.
Good example of paving
Security/Reception

- Counter is fairly accessible.
- Receptionist/security person to guide/orient persons with disabilities about the accessible paths to Matri Mandir and Auditorium.
- If requested, assistance be provided to the persons with disabilities.
Accessible vehicle

- Good facility provided for children, senior citizens and others.
- Requires adaptation to carry persons with disabilities including wheelchair users.
- Can easily be retrofitted with a ramp at the back to take a wheelchair.
Good example
Resting spaces

Difficult to move wheelchair/walk with mobility aid
• Paved path with leveled surface should be provided to reach the seating area
Connecting paths

- Paths leading to the Mandir are narrow (1.5m)
- Only one wheelchair can move at one time
- Accessible entrance to Matri Mandir - both to the Lotus pond and Chamber to be demarcated and information board to be displayed with wheelchair symbol to orient new visitors.
Steeple(s)

- Various steep slopes lead to the Lotus pond.
- However, assistance of more than two persons are required to move the wheelchair up/down.
- Old people and people with medical conditions will also require assistance.
All slopes to have handrails on both sides of the wall, so that persons with reduced mobility can take support.
- At least one slope to have platform/ stair lift provision to carry wheelchair users/ old people.
Reference for wheelchair lifts:

Regional Center for Assistive di Bologna

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Access to meditation rooms can be provided by means of portable ramps stored in each room and made available for wheelchair users.

Ramp to be designed to merge the horizontal and vertical gap between the step and slope.
Meditation rooms - Internal
There are two steps:
Portable ramps be provided to access the rooms.
Way to Inner Chamber
Way to Inner Chamber

- A steep slope and a flight of steps mark the entrance to the Chamber.
- ‘People Mover’- vehicle is available to drop visitors till the steps.
- Lifting chairs are available for wheelchair users to be lifted manually on the steps. However, the process of transfer, lifting on the steps and then further transfers on the way to Inner Chamber is cumbersome and could be painful to not only persons with disabilities but also to the carers/attendants.
Existing lifting chair
Persons with severe disabilities find it difficult to balance/adjust in the narrow lifting chair.
It is unsafe and difficult to lift the chair with the person with disability in the spiral staircase.
• A stair lift is the best possible solution.
Motorized wheelchairs have been provided, which is an excellent example for accessing the Inner Chamber with safety and confidence.
Banyan tree
Approach paths (1.8m wide) with paved (firm & leveled) surface to be provided, leading to the Banyan tree for persons with disabilities.

It benefits everyone.
Auditorium
Leveled access to be provided

Ramp to be provided on the side slopes.

Level differences at the beginning and end of the slopes to be merged, to provide unhindered access to wheelchair users.
Accessible toilet to be provided
Accessible toilet

Dimensions:
- Overall width: 2000 mm
- Depth: 1750 mm
- Accessible toilet height: 700-750 mm
- Mirror height: 1800 mm to 1900 mm
- Paper holder height: 1600 mm to 1700 mm
- Basin height: 400 mm to 450 mm
- Clear floor space: 900 mm
- Door width: 750 mm

Note: Dimensions are approximate and may vary.
Universal Access

Samarthyam’s Access Resource Group

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Equality in the face of all circumstances is the chief aim to be attained in order to live in Auroville.

The Mother (18-09-1969)