

# JINDAL SAW LIMITED

*More innovative solutions expected to ensure Accessibility for All*



Unlike an average large industrial undertaking Jindal SAW Ltd though founded by the legendary industrialist & social worker O.P Jindal is presently lead by his granddaughter Sminu Jindal who is well known for her passion for accessibility for the disabled and established herself as a leader in this domain. This also has an impact on the CSR policies and activities of Jindal Saw Ltd. Therefore the story of Jindal SAW Ltd makes an interesting read.



**J**indal SAW Ltd. is a leading global manufacturer and supplier of Iron & Steel pipe products, fittings and accessories with manufacturing facilities in India, USA, Europe and UAE (MENA). Its customers include world's leading oil and gas companies, engineering companies and authorities dealing in irrigation and water resources engaged in construction of oil and gas exploration, transportation, power generation, supply of water for drinking and irrigation purposes and other industrial applications.

Jindal SAW has a unique business model well diversified in terms of strategic locations, markets, products, industries and customers. This business model is built to hedge the organization against various risks which allows it to operate and perform well in difficult economic and geopolitical circumstances. It's domestic and exports markets are well balanced and its businesses operate through four strategic business divisions namely:

- Welded Line Pipes (SAW Pipes)
- Ductile Iron Pipes (DI Pipes)
- Seamless Pipes & Tubes (Seamless Pipes)
- Mining and Pellet Division

Jindal SAW Ltd. is the market leader capacity wise in manufacturing of large diameter submerged Arc Welded (SAW) Pipes using U-O-E, J-C-O and Helical Processes. The SAW Pipes are mainly used in transportation of Oil, Gas, Slurry and Water. The first SAW Pipe mill (UOE) was commissioned in the year 1986 in Kosi Kalan, State of Uttar Pradesh and thus Jindal SAW Ltd. became the 1st Pipe Mill to produce LSAW Pipes in India.

With a vision of establishing Jindal SAW Ltd. as a foremost supplier of Line Pipes globally, 2nd Pipe Mill was commissioned in the year 2000 close to port Mundra- The first major all-weather private port in west coast of India, Kutch District in the state of Gujarat. In order to cater the rising demand, SAW Pipes division continued and now has expanded to Seven (7) Pipe Mills in India and two (2) in the United States.

In addition, the company provides relevant, value-added services by way of specialized internal and external Anti-Corrosion Coatings, Connector Casings and Hot Pulled Induction Bends, hence known as 'TOTAL PIPE SOLUTION COMPANY'.

Jindal started with a single product, single location company in 1984. The company has manufactured and supplied more than 25,000 Kms of Line pipes & exported in excess of 14,000 Kms of Line pipes for On-shore and Off-shore pipeline projects across the world. This division is the Market Leader in its segment in India and has supplied Pipes for major line pipe projects in Middle East, North America, Latin America, Africa, Europe, Australia, CIS and Asia.

**VISION:** Its business vision was, however, focused on the



*Sminu Jindal releasing Hindi Version of an international research on accessible school transport*

future, something that led to its vast array of products and global presence in terms of manufacturing. The company remarkably keeps pace with the greatest constant - change.

**MISSION:** Its mission is to match the expectation of its customers through product development, quality manufacturing and supply chain management. The company has robust systems developed for overall excellence and management to support its customers globally.

**VALUES**

**Integrity:** Conduct all business dealings along transparent lines.

**Respect for Individual:** Recognize individual's contribution in the growth and development of the Company. Treat all Jindalites with respect and dignity.

**Meritocracy:** Foster an environment of excellence in performance.

**Dynamic Thinking:** Demonstrate a winner's attitude with a crystal clear focus to deliver sustained value for all Stakeholders.

**Creativity & Innovation:** Encourage creative experimentation, embrace new ideas and institutionalize



continuous improvement in all aspects of business and performance.

**Social Responsibility:** Dedicate efforts to the social and environmental issues to enrich the quality of life of the communities they serve.

### PRODUCTS OF JINDAL SAW LTD

Jindal SAW's products like Large Diameter Submerged Arc Welded Pipe, Ductile Iron Pipes and Seamless Tubes & Pipes are providing reliable solutions across the globe. Its Ductile Iron Fittings, Pellets and Bends are also the hallmarks of quality today. Jindal SAW is also poised to be a high-quality player in the growing coating services industry with established capacity. Following its legacy of Product Development & Innovation, the company is venturing into products like Clad Pipes and Stainless Steel Pipes with an aspiration to achieve the maximum share in the market. These products are not just solutions; they are thriving examples of Jindal SAW's foresight.

In a fast-paced world that's becoming smaller by the day, diversification is as important as growth. But Jindal

SAW believes that it shouldn't come at the cost of the organization's integrity and legacy.

Towards this, its greatest asset is its focus on transformation and the passion to beat benchmarks in whatever it does without losing out on the one common goal – to build and sustain Jindal SAW as the global leader in total pipe solutions. Its acquisitions, joint ventures and strategic subsidiaries are today strengthening Jindal SAW and helping place it in a position to fuel its ambitions across diverse markets through diverse industries. Some of its product types include:

**DI PIPES & FITTINGS:** In line with the strategic thinking of being a Total Pipe Solutions company and after reining its supremacy in Energy transportation sector, Jindal SAW Ltd. entered in Ductile Iron pipe business to service the fast growing water and waste-water transportation segment. The company has two Blast Furnaces to ensure uninterrupted supply of hot metal. The company's impeccable track record of Quality Assurance and years of experience in pipe industry, places it in a commanding position in the growing water supply and waste-water transportation segment of

the market. The Integrated Greenfield project of Ductile Iron pipes and pig iron is situated at Mundra, Gujarat.

DI Pipe Division has till date manufactured and supplied more than 75,000 Kms of DI Pipe across the globe. This division is the Market Leader in its segment in India and has also supplied Pipes in Middle East, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. DI Pipe and Fittings confirms to ISO 2531, BS EN 545, ISO 7186 & BS EN 598.

The DI Pipe plant was commissioned in the year 2005 and has the largest capacity of DI pipes manufactured at a single location. In order to further support the requirements of its customers, Jindal SAW has set up the largest Ductile Iron Fittings plant in Tembhorni, Solapur, Maharashtra, India. The size range of fittings is DN 80 mm to DN 2200 mm with an annual production capacity of 18000 MT per annum.

**SEAMLESS TUBES AND PIPES:** Jindal SAW is a trusted name when it comes to manufacturing Seamless Tubes and Pipes, and meeting global demands of any scale. Its tubes and pipes are extensively used in several other industries. This division manufactures and markets Seamless Pipes & Tubes. The Pipes are mainly used in Petroleum, Exploration, General Engineering, Power and Automotive.

Seamless division has till date manufactured and supplied approx. 1 Million MT of Pipe across the globe. Besides having strong market presence in India, this division has supplied pipes to Middle East, North America, Latin America, Europe, Asia, CIS and Africa.

The seamless mill was commissioned in the year 1994 started producing Tubes and Pipes with premium quality

finish at a state of the art plant at Sinnar, Nashik which is approx. 205 kms from Mumbai in Maharashtra State, India with latest state of the art technology and equipment's from SMS of Germany, acknowledged world leaders in Seamless Tubes & Technology.

## EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT:

Towards continued building people capability, technical & other trainings whether in-house or external continue to be in focus. Technical training is reemphasized along with behavioral skill to enhance technical skills and leadership qualities.

Job rotations, overseas visits and exposures continue towards building people capability in itself and for the future. Key positions continuity planning has been put in place to ensure a pipeline of quality & talented individuals.

The organization believes that people are one of its major strengths, repository of knowledge, merit oriented & value based.

## JINDAL SAW'S CSR ACTIVITIES:

Jindal SAW is one of the most recognized corporate citizens in India. The organization believes in giving back to the society and creating a sustainable environment for all. Its CSR philosophy entails equitable access of resources to the underprivileged and maintaining a harmonious equation with the ecosystem.

Corporate Social Responsibility is strongly connected with the principles of Sustainability; an organization should make decisions based not only on financial factors, but also on the social and environmental consequences. Therefore, it is the core corporate responsibility of Jindal SAW Ltd. to



Sminu Jindal with Prakash Javadekar, Minister of HRD



*Sminu Jindal receiving the National Tourism Award from Former President of India Mr. Pranab Mukherjee for making Fatehpur Sikri Group of Monuments Accessible*

practice its corporate values through its commitment to grow in a socially and environmentally responsible way, while meeting the interests of its stakeholders.

Jindal SAW Ltd. recognizes that its business activities have wide impact on the societies in which it operates, and therefore an effective practice is required giving due consideration to the interests of its stakeholders including shareholders, customers, employees, suppliers, business partners, local communities and other organizations. The company endeavours to make CSR a key business process for sustainable development. Jindal SAW Ltd. is responsible to continuously enhance shareholders wealth; it is also committed to its other stakeholders to conduct its business in an accountable manner that creates a sustained positive impact on society. The company is committed towards aligning with nature; and has adopted eco-friendly practices.

As a corporate entity, the company is committed towards sustainability. Ongoing dialogues with shareholders provide valuable approach with an objective that each business decision takes into account its social and environmental impacts and plans.

## SVAYAM

Svayam is a CSR initiative of Jindal SAW Ltd founded in 2000 to help make the world accessible and dignified for the people with reduced mobility.

Svayam is India's one of the first 'Accessibility' organisations, dedicated towards informing the people, working with the government and bringing all stakeholders on

a single platform to create a barrier-free and inclusive world. Svayam believes that providing accessible and barrier-free public infrastructure can help people with reduced mobility to live an active, safe and dignified life as contributing members of the nation while enjoying their world.

Svayam's perseverance and dedication to the cause has not only given accessibility the right impetus but also influenced the Government to frame the right policies and laws to meet the rising demand of Accessibility for All.

## SVAYAM'S PHILOSOPHY:

Svayam's motto is 'Accessibility for All'. Everyone is entitled to use this world in the same manner, irrespective of their gender, age, physical limitations or injuries. Svayam believe that it is not the disability of a person but lack of accessibility which limits them to live freely, travel and work like anyone else. When everyone is born as equal, they should enjoy and use the services and infrastructure as equals.

The company also believes that the age-old perception of the people needs to change – "Nazariyabadlenge, tabhinazaarebadlenge". Need to raise more awareness and tell the world that the issue is not people's disabilities, but the lack of accessible environment which is stopping them to move freely and contribute to the society and nation.

Jindal core values are: (1) the dignity and value of all individuals irrespective of their physical abilities (2) freedom to determine their own priorities (3) full participation in the society as equals

Svayam's engagement with the Ministry of Urban

## Pioneering journey of Svayam:

Svayam, in its nearly two-decade long journey, has worked with several ministries, departments and organizations to bring about path-breaking changes in the accessibility landscape in India. Svayam has helped to make many landmark sites and buildings including the Qutub Minar accessible to the people with reduced mobility.

Svayam is also a regular participant at many national and international forums such as TRANSED (International Conference on Mobility and Transport for the Elderly and Disabled Persons), and the International Transport Forum (ITF) and International Accessible Tourism (ICAT) to support the cause of accessibility as well as exchange the best practices and tech innovations in accessibility sector.

Svayam also helps different government departments as well as corporate houses to incorporate accessibility as non-negotiable component in their infrastructure and services. Svayam has contributed to the preparation of many guidelines i.e. the Harmonised Guidelines & Space Standards for Barrier Free Built Environment for Persons with Disability and Elderly Persons, the National Building Code 2016, and the Civil Aviation Requirements for Carriage of Persons with Disabilities by Air, among others.

Svayam is a member of many prestigious bodies/committees in India including the Core Committee on Accessible Tourism (Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India), the Committee on Functional Requirements in Buildings of Bureau of Indian Standards, Govt. of India, and the Core Committee for Harmonized Guidelines on Accessibility. Svayam is also on the RDSO (Railway Board) Panel for Accessibility in Rail Transportation.

On international front, Svayam is a member of the Standing Committee on Accessible Transport & Mobility (ABE60) by the Transport Research Board (TRB) of National Academics, USA. Svayam also hosts the Permanent Secretariat of TRANSED series of conferences, held every three year in different parts of the world under the aegis of TRB. Svayam is a regular participant at the International Transport Forum (ITF), which acts as a think tank for transport policy and organizes the Annual Summit of transport ministers from different countries.

In 2010, 'Svayam Accessibility Award' was instituted to promote and recognize the concept of Accessibility and Universal Design in all spheres of lives to make way for livable communities – in both rural and urban scape.

Svayam is a winner of many prestigious national and international awards including the GAATES Award, 2015; and the National Tourism Award of Excellence (2009), won jointly with the ASI for making the World Heritage Site of the Qutub Minar accessible.

Development: Svayam worked with the Ministry of Urban Development Govt. of India on two major projects: (a) Harmonization of Multiple Guidelines on Barrier Free Environment prevailing in India: Svayam was also invited to be a part of the core committee constituted by the MuD that is working to harmonize multiple guidelines and compile a standard guidelines for India that are wholesome and encompass international best practices in barrier free environment. (b) Svayam conducted access audit of 64 Union of India buildings situated in different cities of India such as Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Kolkata etc and also two buildings each in the approved satellite towns to ensure Accessibility in these Govt. Buildings. After the access audits, the changes suggested were implemented by the CPWD (Central Public Works Department) in GOI buildings- who maintain these GOI buildings while in Satellite towns.

### SVAYAM'S ASSOCIATION WITH THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA

Svayam's first on field contribution started with its association with the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) in 2006. In 2008, Svayam along with the ASI made the Qutub Minar accessible. Post the success of this project, the ASI made Svayam its Access Consultant to ensure that all heritage sites, monuments and protected properties under it were gradually made accessible in a phased manner beginning with the World Heritage Sites and Ticketed Monuments in the order of priority.

### SVAYAM'S CONTRIBUTIONS IN PROMOTING ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

Department of Forest (Eco-Tourism), Uttarakhand: Svayam conducted a Workshop on Accessible Tourism at Dehradun in the year 2008 which set the Department of Forest (Eco-Tourism) in action as major tourist sites in Uttarakhand are in and around the Forest and under the control of Department of Forest. Svayam is working on developing strategies for Jim Corbett Park and other properties in long run to improve their visit ability for people with diversity.





Accessible Houseboat: With the help of Svayam's guidelines, Saroma Holidays, Kerala, had become India's first accessible houseboat. This is marketed under the brand name of Saroma Inclusive Holidays.

### SVAYAM'S CONTRIBUTION IN ACCESSIBLE INDIA CAMPAIGN

In December 2015, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) launched 'Accessible India Campaign' (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) as a nation-wide movement for achieving universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and those living with reduced mobility.

Svayam, which had already become a reputed name in accessibility, was the biggest contributor in this mammoth accessibility audit programme ever conducted by the Government of India. These audits were initiated by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment under the aegis of the Accessible India Campaign (AIC).

### SVAYAM'S ASSOCIATION WITH THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM

Svayam had been closely working with the Ministry of Tourism since 2007 in promoting accessible and Inclusive tourism infrastructure and services that caters to the diversity of visitors especially the elderly, children and the disabled on an equal basis with others

Release of Hindi Version of Research Guide on Accessible School Transportation: "Kadi Jodne Ka Ek Prayas" (released in Nov. 2017) - Svayam translated and released the Hindi Version of an international research, "Bridging the Gap: Your Role in Transporting Children with Disabilities to School in Developing Countries". The English version was prepared by the Access Exchange International (AEI), USA. The HRD Minister of India, Mr. Prakash Javadekar unveiled the Hindi Version, and said the book holds great hope in developing countries like India; it has case studies and examples taken from many countries which can help stakeholders in providing economically feasible, easy and safe accessible school transportation to children with





disabilities.

**Making air travel safe & dignified:** Svayam is working closely with the Civil Aviation Ministry, so that no passenger would face such discrimination and difficulty. Svayam prepared the first revised draft of the Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) on Carriage by Air of Persons with Disabilities (Oct. 2007) after detailed consultations with stakeholders. Svayam provided recommendations for the implementation of the second final draft of CAR in July 2009. It again held a workshop of stakeholders in Nov 2017 to collect inputs from them for the revision of CAR.

**International Exposure:** Svayam is a regular participant at the International Transport Forum (ITF), which is the only global body that covers all transport modes including Road, Rail, Aviation and Maritime. The ITF is administratively integrated with the OECD, yet ITF is politically autonomous.

### **SVAYAM ACCESSIBILITY AWARDS:**

Svayam Accessibility Awards were instituted on 25 October 2010 to promote and recognize the concept of Accessibility & Universal Design in all spheres of lives to make way for liveable communities – in both rural & urban scape. The awards are conferred on the organizations in the TRANSED hosting nation that have shown consistent commitment towards providing accessible infrastructure for all. These

awards play a pivotal role in providing the right impetus to the development of inclusive infrastructure, related policies & practices so that such initiatives are sustainable and meaningful.

### **INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMES:**

To promote accessibility and make young minds accessibility-ready, Svayam collaborated with the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Usha & Lakshmi Mittal Institute of Management (Bulmim), New Delhi, and offered its expertise, guidance and platform to the students. As part of the internship, the students also attended sensitization and awareness workshops on accessibility, and are exposed to the process of conducting access audits of built environment (Govt Schools & Pedestrian infrastructure) from the perspectives of its usability by persons with reduced mobility and making presentations of audit reports of the places visited.

Apart from its main CSR organization - Svayam, Jindal SAW Ltd. is also engaged in lots of charitable activities and helps organizations and individuals under its plant. CSR plan to bring ground level changes in the societies. Some of its projects include:

- Contribution made to District Administration for comprehensive plan for the development of Bellary

**CASE STUDY :** Svayam gives India its first 'Accessible Monument': Svayam's first on field contribution started with its association with the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) in 2006. In 2008, Svayam along with the ASI made the QutubMinar accessible. Post the success of this project, the ASI made Svayam its Access Consultant to ensure that all heritage sites, monuments and protected properties under it were gradually made accessible in a phased manner beginning with the World Heritage Sites and Ticketed Monuments in the order of priority.

**The Process:** The incorporation of accessibility features was done in a phased manner. Svayam started with trainings of those involved in maintaining the world heritage sites— engineers as well as contractors— before undertaking interventions at different sites. These trainings ensured appreciation of user requirements, as opposed to theoretical design prescriptions and guidelines, thereby eliciting an appropriate response followed by required desired action. A host of issues needed to be kept in mind while making a heritage site accessible, right from arrival and site access, entrance and exit gates, change in levels, thresholds, steps, incline of steps, to steep inclines, historic ground surfaces, surface finishes and other physical features, while respecting conservation concerns.

The Svayam team audited each area of the complex which includes the monument's website, parking, ticket counters, information kiosks, toilets, amenities (drinking water facilities, etc.), approach ways and access route to and around the monument and to major attractions within the monument, canteens, eating joints or refreshment areas, souvenir shop, counter, and museum, interpretation centre and libraries.

Other aspects audited include level differences that create barriers for smooth mobility and safety of visitors, directional and informational signage at the entrance, parking and all other areas frequented or likely to be frequented by visitors, mobility equipment (if available) and topography/level changes in the complex.

Svayam team also ensured that the intervention synced well with the overall aesthetics of the monument and did not stand out like a sore thumb. Also, the whole objective was to make the site 'visitable' by a wide range of people without interfering with the nature and architecture of the monument. Thirdly, they also ensured that there was no damage to the monument while implementing the suggestions for improving accessibility. Ramps and other features supplementing the accessibility are temporary structures and not grouted.



District.

- Local Village Primary school teacher being sponsored by Jindal SAW Limited.
- Free power being given to village for water pump and also RO water dispensing unit
- Stationeries to School Children on following occasions like Independence Day & Republic Day.
- Distribution of notebooks bags & shoes and uniforms amongst village school children and donation of some furniture to local schools.
- Donation of sewing machines at Malegoan village panchayat for Sewing Training Centre.
- Solar light distribution, renovation of parks, construction of public toilets.
- Promotion of education, skill development, promotion of preventive healthcare, sanitation and hygiene, and making available safe drinking water.

*The CSR activities of Jindal SAW Ltd is inspired by the highly spirited leadership of Ms. Sminu Jindal who has established herself in a leadership position in the domain of "Accessibility in India" which in itself is a great achievement. However, a holistic approach to CSR may induce by Jindal SAW Ltd to create development assets in other domains of development with long term perspective in order to serve the society in the coming years. ♦*

# There is a widespread lack of awareness about accessibility which benefits all

— SMINU JINDAL, MD, JINDAL SAW LTD.

FOUNDER-CHAIRPERSON, SVAYAM

An indefatigable accessibility crusader, Ms. Sminu Jindal is a visionary entrepreneur who broke the myth that women cannot lead the big business entities. She successfully took the Jindal SAW Limited, a part of the \$18 billion Jindal Group of Industries, to greater heights. In 2000, she founded 'Svayam'- an initiative of the S.J. Charitable Trust, with an aim to make this world, particularly India, accessible and dignified for the people with reduced mobility. Svayam has worked with ministries, departments and organizations to bring about path-breaking changes in the accessibility landscape in India, including making the World Heritage Site QutubMinar accessible to the people with reduced mobility.

**Q** When people hear the word 'Accessibility', they immediately link it with the disabled or disability, while the truth is that accessibility is required by anyone with reduced mobility such as the elderly, expecting mother and the injured. How do you remove this 'Big Confusion' and convince people as well as the policymakers about this everyone's need?

**A** That is very true. Due to lack of awareness, people generally assume that accessibility is only for the disabled. Also, people are either too sympathetic or totally apathetic towards the persons with disabilities. We need to accept that people with disabilities need opportunity, not charity. They are as normal as anyone else, and they don't deserve any less or more dignity. And disability does not mean 'inability'.

I think a greater, sustained and robust awareness is needed to spread the message amongst the people as well as the policymakers and other stakeholders that accessibility is for all; it benefits everyone. Doesn't an accessible toilet help a pregnant



lady, an elderly with reduced mobility or an injured, or a patient who just had an operation? Does a ramp only help a wheelchair user?

**Q** You have already made a name for yourself in the domain of accessibility, but there is lot to be done. What are your priority areas of action in this sector both at the level of policy as well as action?

**A** Raising awareness is our top priority. Today, India's 65% population is under 35, which means we will have the same number of elderly population after 30-40 years. So, we need to plan now. Secondly, as India is 70 per cent rural, accessibility is crucial in remote areas and villages. India can be made accessible only when rural India is accessible. The government should add accessibility as a non-negotiable clause in rural schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Gram AwasYojana, so that a portion of fund is spent on making village infrastructure accessible.

**As India is 70 per cent rural, accessibility is crucial in remote areas and villages. India can be made accessible only when rural India is accessible. The government should add accessibility as a non-negotiable clause in rural schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Gram AwasYojana.**

Accessibility is crucial in huge impact areas such as railways, public infrastructure, various modes of transport, tourism and education, as it benefits a large population. So we focus more on these segments.

**Q** What do you think about the Government's mission, "SarvaSikshaAbhiyan" (Education for All)? Does it help children with disabilities?

**A** The Government's mission, "SarvaSikshaAbhiyan" (Education for All) is a very good idea, but we have to ensure that every child with disabilities get to school. For this, we need accessible school environment, trained and sensitized teachers, awareness, and accessible school transportation. PM's slogan 'SabkaSath, SabkaVikas' epitomizes the ethos of this great nation. But as I said, we need to take along everyone.

Parents of children with disabilities may feel that special schools are better places for their kids to get education, and that their children may face discomfort in regular schools, but they should understand that today's discomfort will make their children face the world bravely when they grow up; they will be better equipped to handle the complexities and diversity of life. It will also sensitize other children towards the needs of the children

**CSR budget is spent on segments like environment protection, skill development, health, girl child education, etc. After the latest amendments in the Companies Act, areas related to accessibility, inclusive education, culture, disability sports have also been added to the list which can be funded under the CSR budget. However, very few companies consider these new areas.**

with disabilities, so that they will appreciate the differences. This is true inclusion.

**Q** What has been your experience of working in the field of accessibility? What are the issues that you come across?

**A** I feel lack of awareness is the main hurdle. That is why accessibility is often much lower on our priority list. Accessibility is also often neglected at the planning stage. If minimum non-negotiable clauses are added at the planning stage itself, we can save a lot of money because retro-fitting, post the completion of a project, costs 25-30% more.

**Q** As per a study conducted by our publication for the Department of Disability Affairs, GOI, awareness about disabilities and accessibility amongst the corporate is insignificant. As per your understanding what needs be done to generate awareness amongst the corporate India to enable them to do justice to their CSR budget by focusing on the disability and accessibility sector?

**A** CSR VISION's findings echo my perception. CEOs are no exceptions; they are not aware about potentials of enabling environment created by accessibility to attract and retain a

committed and diverse manpower. They also look at disability as a charity, as opposed to persons with disabilities as equal rights holders. This charity approach is not sustainable. Time has come that Indian CEOs look at persons with disabilities as potential employees. They need to modify their HR policy to make it more inclusive. Researches also reveal that employees with disabilities are more committed, stay longer with their companies, and are more motivated. Companies only need to provide accessibility, and reasonable accommodation at workplaces. The cost for making offices accessible is negligible as compared to the value these employees add to the company.

We also need to work with persons with disabilities and their families, so as to bring a change in their attitude and perception towards life and work.

Traditionally, CSR budget is spent on segments like environment protection, skill development, health, girl child education, etc. After the latest amendments in the Companies Act, areas related to accessibility, inclusive education, culture, disability sports have also been added to the list which can be funded under the CSR budget. However, very few companies consider these new areas.

**Q** In absence of any committed action by the Government in the development of accessible infrastructure, what initiatives can be taken by the civil society/NGO to ensure the public infrastructure is accessible in the whole country, especially rural areas?

**A** We can't say that the government has no committed plan or action for accessibility. But yes, things might get delayed due to bureaucratic hurdles, or simply due to lack of expertise and awareness. The role of NGOs is crucial in many ways. As I said more actions are needed in rural India, NGOs can help build the right momentum and make it a movement, empower people, raise consensus, and link the cause of accessibility to safety, well being and enhancing the quality of life for all.

**Q** You are known as an accessibility champion; accessibility is closer to your soul. You are also heading Jindal SAW Limited. How do you balance family life and work when your pursuit is so big and the pressure is so tremendous?

**A** Accessibility is about quality of life, and giving opportunity to everyone to contribute to the GDP and the National Happiness Index (NHI). I think everyone should be an accessibility champion as it affects all of us at some point of our lives. Accessibility also ensures that old and disabled people live, and not just breathe.

Yes the work pressure is too much, but when your work is your passion, you don't get tired, bored or detached. I am also fortunate to have a family which shares my passion, and is always there to support me, motivate me and tell me 'never say die'. I am really very thankful to my family. And today after 17 long years, Swayam has lakhs of people to support its mission. "Hum akele hi chale the janib-e-manzilmagar, log saath aate gaye aur karwan banta gaya." ♦