

PUBLICATION	The Times of India (Gurgaon)
DATE	5 th May 2016
EDITION	Gurgaon

‘Disabled-friendly’ audit of Gurgaon

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Gurgaon: A childhood accident left Sminu Jindal paralysed from the waist down, but didn’t stop her from embracing life and determinedly working towards making public spaces accessible for the physically challenged.

Beginning May 4, and going on till May 7, Svayam, a not-for-profit that endeavours to promote independence and dignity for people with reduced mobility, will be conducting an audit of 42 sites in Gurgaon. An initiative of the Sminu Jindal Charitable Trust, Svayam advocates an accessible environment for all.

The findings of the audit will be sent to the Prime Minister’s Office for further action. Under the government’s plan, organisations, both public and private, are encouraged to use their corporate social responsibility funds to build accessible infrastructure.

Svayam has been dedicated to making public places accessible to everyone, especially the elderly and the disabled. While highlighting the everyday struggles faced by people with reduced movement, the audit campaign also seeks to urge the public as well as policy makers to come together and provide accessibility solutions.

“Finally, we have a government that is focusing on providing facili-



NOTHING OUT OF REACH: Sminu Jindal

ties not only required for the disabled, but also for senior citizens, children, pregnant women and those injured,” said Jindal, founder and chairperson, Svayam.

Besides carrying out audits, Svayam’s initiative looks to identify problem areas and develop strategies so that Indian cities can be at par with international standards of accessibility and design. Currently, many public spaces in the city fall woefully short when it comes to providing accessible infrastructure, even though India has adopted and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Svayam is also collaborating with the union ministry of tourism in its efforts to promote inclusive tourism, and is part of the central government’s ‘Accessible India’ campaign.