

Report of Access Audit of BAU

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Introduction:

Blind Peoples' Association is extending expertise to various organizations and institutes to create conducive environment for all especially for people with disabilities. BPA is working closely with Babasaheb Ambedkar University (BAU) in the field of distance education. BAU is a proactive educational institute and promotes education for people belongs to diverse communities. In the process of creating barrier free environment for people with disabilities, BAU invited BPA to help audit the campus and recommend required modifications to make the essential services accessible for all.

BPA team visited BAU on and visited required departments and essential services to understand their functions and actual barriers which may create hurdles. Mr. Nigam Pandya was deputed to guide the team and explain the details. The campus is huge, green and Peaceful. Ramps and railings are installed on many places. The team appreciated positive attitude of the staff and their readiness for the change.

The team has visited the essential places and department under the guidance of Mr. Pandya. The team took photographs of the areas which need to be modified. These modifications are divided into 3 types; Red modification (Most Important), Yellow modification (Necessary modifications), and Blue modifications (Can be done to achieve complete Accessibility). This report contains only Red and Yellow essential modifications. You may check our enclosed PPT for further reference along with this report. The team suggests following modifications on campus to achieve accessibility:

Signage:



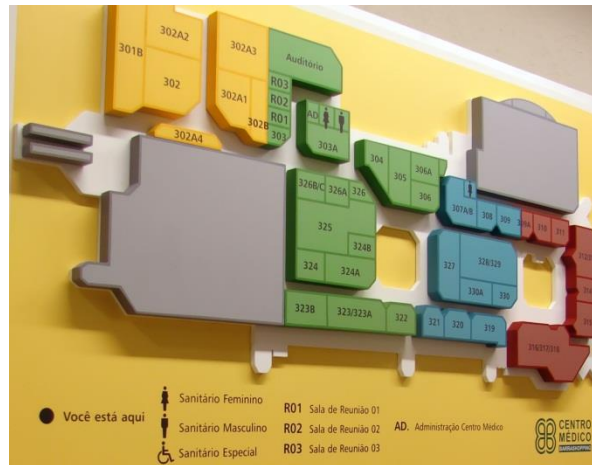
Universal signage need to be developed and installed on each buildings, Services and Amenities on the campus. These signage need to be installed at the eye level in huge fonts. These signage could be developed in dual language along with the pictures to make it accessible. Individual signage such as Conference hall, Admission hall, Drinking Water, Washroom, Kiosks etc need to be given separate signage which includes Braille on the 3.5 feet height from the floor level to touch and feel by people with visual impairment. Accessibility colours (yellow and blue) can be used to develop such signage and installed at visible places.



Moreover, Accessible tactile Maps need to be installed at minimum two places: at the main gate and at the administrative building. This universal map gives the sense of direction and availability of various services on the campus/building through tactile and visual perception. This map is useful for all especially for people with reduced mobility and new comers at the campus.

Here is the sample of tactile map

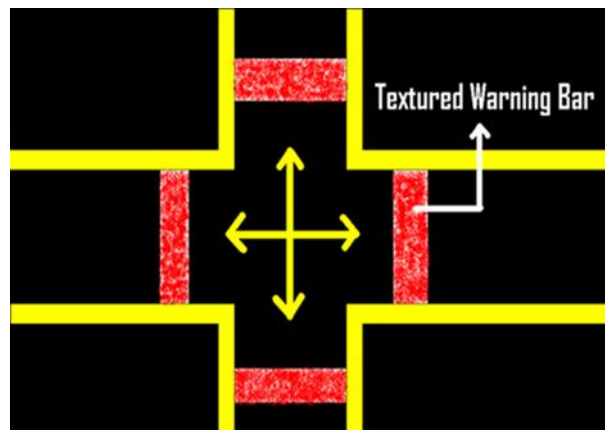




Pathway:

A continuous guiding pathway need to be painted which leads to various services and buildings on the campus. It can be painted in high colour contrast could be in yellow or red depends on the floor. If it is painted, it has to be maintained timely as well. The pathway belt has to be minimum 6 inches wide and constant. We have observed that you have used green grass mat in the administration building keeping the summers in mind. This can be replicated everywhere to maintain the esthetic value of your campus. However, let us not forget that teared and turned mats are equally hazardous!

Here is the sample of the pathway belt and intersection:



Surfaces:

The surfaces/flooring of the walkways need to be made non-hazardous to give safe mobility to all. This includes, filling up the gaps between tiles, removing obstacles such as pots, raised platforms of gutters, gaps between ramps and floor, grown-up plants coming into ramps or walkways, protruding objects of

the walkways, algae or rain water collected on the surfaces which may result into accident need to be addressed as early as possible.

Here are some pictures of surfaces taken during the visit:



Inquiry/information/library/help desk and kiosk:

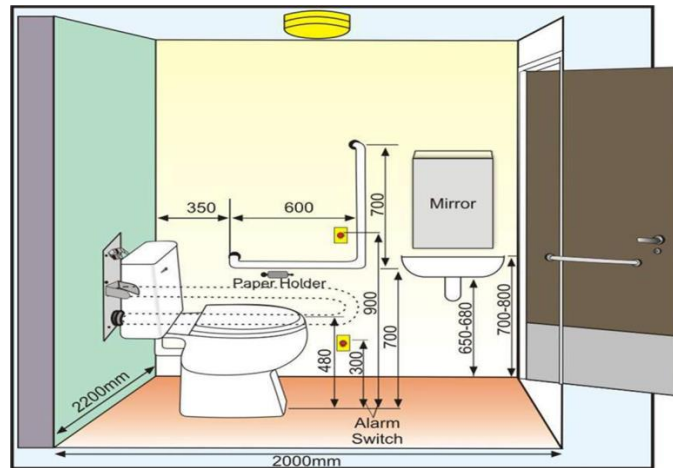
The enquiry/information/help desk need to be design in such a way that it accommodates all. It means, the guiding pathway leads to desk, height of the desk, accessible signage on the walls, enough accessible sitting spaces, height of the kiosk to operate from the wheelchair, voiceover software (NVDA) for people with visual impairment, display of accessible information with pictures, sensitized staff at the desk etc need to be planned. Moreover, bright light and high colour contrast ambience is equally essential while modifications.

Here are few pictures of the desk and kiosks:



Washrooms and drinking water facilities:

Washrooms and drinking water facilities are the basic enmities on the campus. It is mandatory to make this places accessible. A small level difference become hurdle and hazardous to someone having reduced mobility. Man and woman having different disabilities have different needs and based on their needs, a model washroom design is pasted below for the information:

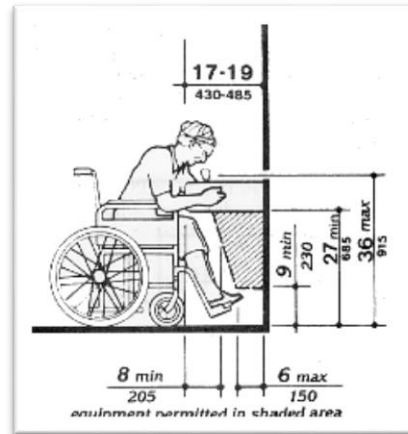


This design need to be replicated specially in the departments for people with disabilities. We are aware that all the washrooms may not be possible to make accessible as per above norms. However, basic components need to be incorporated while retrofitting or modification of the places. The minimum and most important requirement is to remove level differences of the washrooms to give safe access with dignity.

Few pictures of the washrooms having level differences are shown in the PPT...



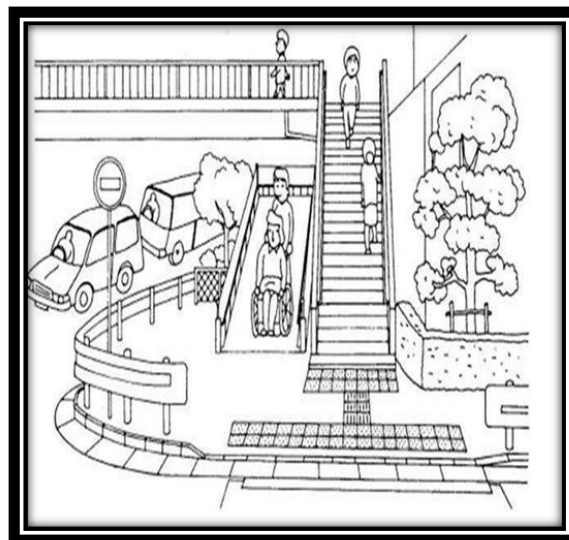
Drinking water facility is given in all the buildings. However, with the little modification it could be made completely accessible. Maintaining it dry, installing accessible tabs, non-slippery tile, signage and highlighted with bright colours will make it accessible for all. An accessible drinking water fountain is pasted below for your information:



Ramps and railings:

Ramps and railings are one of the essential components of accessibility. Ramps without railing and improper slope or width is disastrous. The ideal ramp is 1:20 for self-driven wheelchairs having minimum 900 width to prevent disaster. Moreover, grab bars need to be fixed at both the level; at a regular height and at lower level at 1.5 feet to make it inclusive. If there is a wall attached to the ramp, please make sure that people get enough knuckle space to hold the railing. In case of space crunch, Arrow Bridge can be design.

Here is the ideal picture of the ramp and railing:

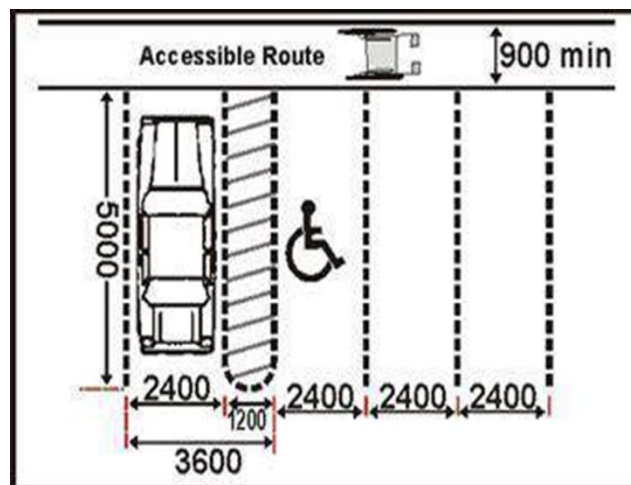


Yellow modification:

Designated parking:

Couple of parking could be designated for people with disabilities. They may arrive by their own vehicles or escorted by someone, they shall park their vehicles nearest ramp of the building for easy access. An accessibility symbol shall be painted on parking to reserve for them. It is also necessary to keep the watchman informed about the same as these designated parking cannot be used by other nondisabled visitors or staff.

Model design of the parking is pasted here for the reference:



Entrance and classroom of Special Learning Support Center (SLSC):

We have suggested a ramp to enter into the SLSC along with the steps at the end of building on its left side which is part of our red modifications. Moreover, the entrance door needs little modification along with the signage. A guided pathway leads to entrance door and then to counselling office and classroom, need to be define. Classroom/Examination room need to be universally designed to accommodate everyone. E. g. a person using wheelchair may access to writing table, a low vision person shall get enough light, a person using crutches can arrange them without restricting others' mobility and a person with hearing impairment gets maximum information through information board and leaflets etc.

Here are some pictures of the SLSC:



Library:

Access to library is equally essential during the study. Access to books, kiosk, braille books, audio books, bright lights, trained staff who understand access to technology and enough walkways with sitting arrangement will make the library an inclusive place of the campus. It is observed that the renovation is still going on and these features would be incorporated to make it more universal. Signage on each aisle, signboards for subjects, and instruction boards can be developed for easy access to library. Such library is not only useful to people with disability but it will also generate awareness and acceptance on the campus.



Offices of administrator, Faculties, Supervisor and Campus incharge need to be made accessible for all especially for people with reduced mobility. E.g. the huge mattresses outside of cabins, sitting spaces with wheelchair, door openings for people using assistive devices, water flowing from A/C, level differences while approaching cabins etc are promoting inclusion.



Website, Educational and IEC materials:

Website, educational and IEC material are called the face of an organization. People having print disabilities shall have equal access to all the information related to organization and courses being offered. It shall be in simple language with clear instruction. Website shall have basic accessibility components such as changing colour contrast, font size, and background and font colours for person using screen reading software's. Accessible IEC material, course information, reading material can be uploaded on the website. Educational book can be transformed in to braille or audio books for the students with print disabilities.

Statue of Babasaheb Ambedkar and the platform:

As a team, we proposed to make the platform of Babasaheb Ambedkar accessible as it is the most prominent and visible place of the campus. The platform itself represent the values and environment of the campus. A ramp can be built at the back side of the platform, so that people with disabilities and people having reduced mobility may pay their tributes to the visionary and participate in the social activities arranged on campus.

Overall, the huge and green campus of BAOU has lots of potential. Variety of courses offered by the university has attracted many people with disabilities and an accessible campus will surely increase footfall of people from diverse communities on campus. Accessible and safe places are ensuring that "we believe in equity and we accept all". Let us have better place to learn and become active citizens of the country.