

45<sup>TH</sup> DAI AL-MUTLAQ  
SYEDNA TAYYIB ZAINUDDIN <sup>RA</sup>  
URUS 15<sup>TH</sup> ZIL QA'DA 1252H (1837), SURAT, INDIA

### Introduction

Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin b. Sayyidi Jeevan-ji <sup>RA</sup> succeeded his brother Syedna Mohammed Izzuddin <sup>RA</sup> as the 45<sup>th</sup> Dai. They had arrived in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Dai of Syedna Abdeali Saifuddin's <sup>RA</sup> presence together, and both received the benefits of his guidance in matters of religious study and Dawat administration. He was the elder by five years,<sup>1</sup> and was ranked eighth in the hierarchy of *hudud* during Syedna Abdeali Saifuddin's time, while his brother was fifteenth. Though it was Syedna Mohammed Izzuddin that Syedna Abdeali Saifuddin had given his primary attention to in preparing for the Dai-ship, he had Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin in mind for the role as well. Dawat tradition says that one of the reasons the Dai chose the younger brother before the elder was his foresight of the fact that the former would die first. Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin served his brother with great humility and obedience when Syedna Mohammed Izzuddin became Dai.<sup>2</sup>

Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin's reign is known as one of felicity. Indeed, it is described as containing intimations of a time when the Imam reigned among the people. The Dai himself was renowned for his kindness and his generosity. Study of religious sciences and particularly the Shari'at proliferated. Outstanding scholars and jurists such as Shaykh Abdul-Ali b. Sh. Abdul-Qadir, Shaykh Isa-bhai Dohadi, and Shaykh Wali-bhai b. Shaykh Habibullah Rampuri rose to prominence. The increasing fame and influence of the Dai, the growing prosperity, well-being, and good fortune of the Dawat and the mumineen evoked the jealousy of the Dawat's enemies. Incidents and clashes occurred in which decisive victories were obtained by Dawat. The friendly relations Syedna Abdeali Saifuddin had established with the the British – now in place as overlords in many parts of India – firmly established them as allies of the Dai.

### Flood of 1237H

The Tapti river in Surat overflowed its banks towards the end of the year 1237H. The flood that swept through the streets of the town took the lives of many animals and people, destroyed numerous houses, and caused incalculable loss of capital and property. Surat remained under water for five days and four nights. People saved their lives by clinging to heights and trees. Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin saved thousands of destitute people by sending them food by means of boats.

### Facilities for Students of Knowledge

Another of Syedna Abdeali Saifuddin's legacies that Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin vitalized and continued with great vigor was that of religious education. Particularly after his return from his trip to Malwa in 1241H, the Dawat being

<sup>1</sup> He was born on 16 Dhu al-Hijja 1198 H.

<sup>2</sup> It is related that when Syedna Izzuddin took off his shoes to walk – as is the custom – barefoot behind his predecessor's coffin, Syedna Zainuddin took and carried his brother's shoes in his own hands.

stable and the mischief-makers all quiet, he devoted his attention to the seminary, the 'Dars-e Saify'. 'He opened the doors of knowledge and wisdom for all the aspiring,' says one historian, and 'to the seeker of one he gave a thousand.'<sup>3</sup> The level of the institute's excellence began to rise, and students came in great numbers to Surat. They received deluxe treatment: the best quality of food was prepared for them; paper, ink and pens, clothes, even pocket-money was provided from the official Dawat treasury ('*kothar*'); and the Dai himself kept an eye on their meals and all other needs. Each Friday, arrangements were made for a picnic. Rich or poor, the students found a hearing for every want. Even during the days that celebrations for the wedding of the 46<sup>th</sup> Dai, Syedna Muhammad Badruddin and other members of the Dai's family permeated the whole of Surat, the teaching and study remained in progress. Afterwards, the work was resumed with greater zeal, and the Dai consistently urged and encouraged both teachers and students.

Another very significant task that Syedna Zainuddin accomplished was to transcribe the classification and organization of the regular curriculum and the canonical books of the Dawat's literary heritage into a graded order, i.e. the sequence in which they were to be read and studied. This order is basically the one followed till this day.

### *Trip to Malwa – Trouble in Mandasor and Ujjain*

Syedna Mohammed Izzuddin was unable to make visits to the lands of the mumineen. When the eminent Shaykh, Shaykh-Adam b. Shaykh Sultan b. Mulla Muhammad-bhai b. Mulla Khan, accompanied by a group of community leaders, came from Malwa to the Dai's Presence, Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin accepted their invitation. On the eve of 4<sup>th</sup> Sha'ban 1239H, the Dai set forth from Surat for Malwa. He was accompanied by his family and children, the '*dawlat-khana*' of his predecessor, Syedna Mohammed Badruddin, a company of *hudud*, leading men and dignitaries of the community, and groups of students.

From Surat, Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin went via Khambaat to Ahmadabad, and visited the tombs of the Dais buried there. He then proceeded to Kaparwanj, where he remained until the monsoon had passed. On 28 Muharram of the next year, 1240H, a start was made to proceed to Malwa. Stopping in Dohad for a little more than a month, he came through Ratlam to Mandasor.

### **Mandasor**

On 29 Jumada I, sparked by the arrival of a popular Maulvi, an open discord broke out. The Maulvi was resident in a mosque near the *muhallas* of the mumineen. An argument broke out between his retainers and a mumin passing by. Verbal abuse quickly developed into armed fighting, and others too joined the fray. The violence escalated and there was an attempted assassination on Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin, who was staying in the house of the 'Ra'is' Mulla Hibatullah-ji. One bullet coming through the window passed right in front of the Dai to embed itself in the wall. They even stacked wood around the house and lit it in an attempt to burn it down, but were unsuccessful. While

---

<sup>3</sup> *Mausam* p. 686.

there were casualties among the mumineen during this conflict,<sup>4</sup> Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin, his family and *hudud*, all remained unharmed. On 1 Jumada II, a British contingent consisting of three hundred mounted soldiers swept down on Mandasor from Chhawani for protection of Syedna Tayyib. The British contingent remained in Mandasor for the Dai's security until 10 Rajab, when the British cavalry contingent arrived from Indore for Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin's aid and to escort him to Indore. The Grand Wazir of the Maharaja Taatia saheb with his entire army came three miles outside the city to receive Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin. The Dai was escorted into the city with great pomp.

## Ujjain

Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin had intended to go directly to Rampura (commonly called 'Islampur' in the Dawat) from Indore. But Shaykh Abdul-Qadir b. Shaykh Yusuf-bhai b. Fayzullah-bhai b. Mawla Hakimuddin arrived from Ujjain with several leaders of the community, with the petition that the mumineen of that city were extremely eager to receive him. The Dai was persuaded to accept their invitation, and he left Indore to arrive in Ujjain on 21 Shawwal. The embers of the Mandasor incident burst into flame once more in Ujjain. Before dawn, seven regiments of *ghaarat garoon* surrounded the *muhallas* of the mumineen. They quickly grasped control of the entire city, and the governor himself was rendered totally helpless to ensure any form of law and order, or protection. People began to flee from the city to its suburbs and outskirts. Loot and plunder were rampant, and the markets closed down. Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin and the mumineen remained locked in their homes. Eventually the governor sent his messengers to Chhaawni (British camp). A troop of soldiers immediately set off for Ujjain, to help the governor successfully restore law and order, and to protect Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin and his followers.

Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin remained in Ujjain for almost a year before setting forth for Islampur (Rampur), on 7 Ramadan 1241 H. Mumineen from the surrounding villages gathered there. Shaykh Shaykhadam and his brother Shaykh Abdullah-bhai remained in constant attendance with the Dai. Islampur was one of the two cities particularly distinguished for their *khidmat* of Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin during this trip, the other being Kaparwanj. Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin left Islampur on 25 Shawwal. After a few days in Ratlam, he returned to Surat, arriving home on 11 Dhu al-Hijja 1241H.

## Visit to Nagar & Mandvi

Syedna Abdeali Saifuddin had made a behest that the Dai visit the Nagar lands and the graves of Syedna Abdeali Saifuddin's forefathers, the Badri Dais. In 1247 H. Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin decided to make the trip. Preparations for the journey began in Muharram, and on 19 Sha'ban Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin was able to set forth from Surat. Syedna Mohammed Badruddin (46<sup>th</sup> Dai) accompanied him, while Syedna Abdul-Qadir Najmuddin (47<sup>th</sup> Dai) remained as *wali* in Surat. They spent about two months in Kaparwanj, then, stopping at Ahmadabad on the way, proceeded to Sidhpur. Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin remained for a time in Sidhpur. The climate there was beneficial to his health, and the mumineen were also eager to serve him. On 15 Muharram 1248 H., the Dai proceeded from Sidhpur to Nagar.

After a long stay in Nagar, Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin went to visit the grave of Syedna Noor Mohammed Nuruddin (37<sup>th</sup> Dai) in Mandvi. Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin returned to Surat from Mandvi on the eve of 14 Jumada II 1248 H.

Also, during Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin's era, people of Mehdpur, followers of Majdu' who had seceded from the mainstream Bohra community during the time of the 40<sup>th</sup> Dai Syedna al-Mu'ayyad, repented and returned to the fold of the Dawat.

### *Nass & Wafaat*

Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin made a public nomination (*nass jali*) of his successor Syedna Muhammad Badruddin. In Dhu al-qa'da 1252H, after remaining ill for about ten days, Syedna Tayyib Zainuddin died towards the end of the eve of the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. His term as Dai was 16 years and some days. He is buried in Surat beside his brother, Syedna Mohammed Izzuddin, in the Qubba Izziyya.

***Authored by Shehzadi Dr. Bazat Saifiyah baisesha***