

THE 34TH DAI AL-MUTLAQ
SYEDNA ISMAIL BADRUDDIN ^{RA} (BAWA) BIN MAWLA RAJ
URUS- 23RD JAMADIL UKHRA, 1085 H/1674 AD, JAMNAGAR

This is a brief biographical article of the 34th Dai al-Mutlaq Syedna Ismail Badruddin bin Mulla Raj ^{RA} highlighting his lineage, and his early life and *tarbiyat*. It also touches briefly upon just one of the many glorious aspects of his 20-year Dai-ship: his *shaan* in *ilm* of *Aale Mohammad*, his priceless contribution to Dawat learning, and his *shafaqat* upon *talabat ul ilm*.

The material in this article is derived from Syedna Taher Saifuddin's *Risalat Sharifah* of 1373 H titled *Mafatih ul Yaquta til Hamra'*. In the *Mafatih*, Syedna Taher Saifuddin has written about Syedna Ismail Badruddin's lineage and history in some detail. He cites among his key sources the *Rasa'il* of Syedi Khawj ibn Malak and the *Sirat al-Du'at al-Badriyyin*, which was written by a scholar who transcribed the discourses of Syedna Ismail Badruddin's grandson, the 36th Dai Syedna Abdo-Musa Kalimuddin.

Syedna Taher Saifuddin opens his narrative of Syedna Ismail Badruddin's life with the following glowing description of his luminous qualities:

The noble Dai Syedna Ismail Badruddin was fully worthy of a Dai's high rank (*rutba*). He had attained perfection in all the radiant characteristics which the vicegerents (*na'ib*) of the *mustaqarr* Fatimid Imams must possess. His knowledge and wisdom were outstanding. His piety and pureness were unmatched. He had trained his heart to serve his Imam uz zamaan fully and perfectly. He had refined his soul to such a degree that it had become equal in its spirituality to the angels (*Mafatih*, pp. 259-260).

Syedna Ismail Badruddin was born in Jamnagar, in the Kathiawar Peninsula of the modern Indian state of Gujarat, in 990 H/1582 AD. He was the first Dai al-Mutlaq from the line of the royal Rajput vizier Raja Bharmal, who (along with his brother, Raja Tarmal), had become Muslim and Mumin at the hands of Mawlai Ahmad and Mawlai Abdullah, dais sent to India from Cairo by the 18th Imam Mustansir billah ^{SA}. They had taken *ilm* of Aale Mohammed and trained for this khidmat by Syedna al-Mu'ayyad al-Shirazi, the Bab-ul-Abwab of Mustansir Imam ^{SA}.

His full genealogy (*nasab*) is as follows: Syedna Ismail Badruddin, son of Mawla Raj, son of Mawla Adam, son of Mawla Daud, son of Mawla Raja, son of Mawla Ali, son of Mawla Ishaq, son of Mawla Ya'qub, son of Raja Bharmal. His grandfather, Mawla Adam, had made Jamnagar his home, and his father, Mawla Raj, had established a large trading business there. Previously, Mawla Raja had settled in Morbi, and earlier, his forefathers had lived in Patan. All these mawlas were pious,

learned and godfearing *hudood*, who were actively engaged in establishing Dawat ul Haqq in its earliest phase in the soil of India.

Syedna Ismail Badruddin's father, Mawla Raj, brought him to Ahmedabad, to the presence of his Dai z zaman, the 27th Dai Syedna Daud ibn Qutub-Shah, when he was twelve years old. Tall and well built, he looked fifteen. Syedna Daud asked Mawla Raj about the child, and Mawla Raj replied that he was his fifth son. Syedna Daud at the very first glance discerned in the young boy signs of coming greatness. He said to Mawla Raj, "You have conscientiously offered me a fifth (*khums*) of your wealth, but you have yet to offer me the fifth share of your sons." Mawla Raj was delighted at this request, and happily gave charge of the young Syedna Ismail to Syedna Daud. Syedna Daud personally undertook Syedna Ismail's *tarbiyyat*. For many years thereafter, Syedna Ismail lived for eight months in Ahmedabad and returned to Jamnagar for the remaining four. During his time in Ahmedabad, he diligently imbibed the *ilm* and *adab* imparted to him by his Dai z zaman. Syedna Daud then gave him *raza* for *namaaz* and *tawalli*, and returned him to his father, Mawla Raj, who was elated at his beloved son's lofty *shaan*. (Mawla Raj performed Syedna Ismail's marriage at this time to a pious lady named Boodi bai; she would become the mother of Syedna Ismail Badruddin's son and successor, Syedna Abdut Tayyeb Zakiyuddin.) Even after this time, Syedna Ismail Badruddin travelled regularly to the *hazrat* of his Dai z zaman in Ahmedabad, and continued to partake of the barakaat of the Dai's *tarbiyat*, and particularly *haqa'iq sabaq*. Whenever Syedna Badruddin began a new *kitaab* under the tutelage of his Dai z zaman, he would *araz* valuable gifts and *najwa tush shukr*. In these years, and throughout his life, he devotedly served the Dai as well as his *hudood* with *jaan* and *maal*.

With wholehearted devotion, Syedna Ismail Badruddin served seven Dais (27th to 33rd): Syedna Daud ibn Qutub Shah, Syedna Shaykh-Adam Safiyuddin, Syedna Abdut-Tayyeb Zakiyuddin, Syedna Ali Shamsuddin, Syedna Qasim-Khan Zainuddin, Syedna Qutub-Khan Qutbuddin, and Syedna Fir-Khan Shujauddin. Later, Syedna Ismail Badruddin said to his son and successor Syedna Abdut-Tayyeb Zakiyuddin, "I have served seven Dais and given them my all. With such weighty *khidmat*, even hands of gold and silver would be worn away." *Aap aa shaan si khidmat kidhi to makhdum thai gaya*. One of his great *khidmats* was the repayment of a major loan in the time of Syedna Qasim Khan Zainuddin (this episode is discussed in detail in the *Mafatih*). At the time of a drought in Gujarat, Syedna Badruddin also sent cart loads of rice to the Dai in Ahmedabad for *mumineen*. Over these years, due to the excellence and sincerity of Syedna Ismail Badruddin and the jealousy and scheming of certain people in the Dai's Hazrat, Syedna Badruddin endured a number of serious *imtihaans* and trials. As a result of the scheming, on two occasions, an envoy was sent by the Dai of the time to enquire about the serious and false allegations made against Syedna Ismail Badruddin. Even in the face of such animosity, Syedna Badruddin remained steadfast in his *yaqeen* and *khidmat* of the Dai (these are discussed in detail in the *Mafatih*). Ultimately,

Syedna Fir-Khan Shujauddin appointed him his Mazoon and Mansoos, and upon Syedna Fir-Khan's demise in 1065 H, Syedna Ismail Badruddin became the 34th Dai.

Among the most significant achievements of Syedna Ismail Badruddin's reign was a renaissance in Dawat *ilm*. Syedna Badruddin was himself a great *alim*, and had endured much hardship in his pursuit of *ilm*. He had taken a solemn vow that if he obtained the *azeem nemat* of becoming the Imam's Dai, he would earnestly undertake the *tarbiyat* of the *talabat ul ilm* who sought the learning of Aale Mohammad. He had vowed that he would feed them, house them, and take care of them, that he would smooth their path to knowledge. When Syedna Badruddin became Dai, he fulfilled his pledge, establishing a well-ordered institution of Dawat learning in Jamnagar, the Dars. Students came from far and wide. Syedna Badruddin himself taught these students many Dawat *kitaabs*; he even ate with them and spent time with them, training them in every aspect of Dawat learning.

Syedna Taher Saifuddin writes this about Syedna Ismail Badruddin's daily routine, which was completely focused on *sabaq* and *ibadat, ilm* and *amal*:

Syedna Ismail Badruddin's noble schedule was as follows: He would lead mumineen in imamat for fajr namaaz at first dawn. Then he would continue to sit upon his *musalla* and pray doas until the sun rose. Then he would teach *sabaq* till it was time to eat. After he and the *talabat ul ilm* had all eaten, he would again sit to teach *sabaq*. When an hour remained to *zuhr*, he would rise and sleep. Then he would pray *zuhr-asar* namaaz at zawaal. Then he would teach again until the evening meal, when they would all eat. Then he would pray *maghrib* and *isha* namaaz. After namaaz was completed, he would take some time for other responsibility. When a quarter of the night had passed, he would sleep. Then, at midnight, he would awake and pray *Nisful-layl, Tahajjud, Tasbih* namaaz, and *Shafa'*. (*Mafatih*, pp. 308-309).

Around thirty students came to study full time with Syedna Ismail Badruddin. They came from Ahmedabad, Kaparwanj, Godhra, Udaipur, Rampura, Surat, and a few other towns. Syedna Badruddin would teach them himself during the day, and his son and successor, Syedna Abdut-Tayyeb Zakiyuddin would give them *sabaq* at night.

This tradition was continued by all the Du'at after Syedna Ismail Badruddin. Two centuries later, the 43rd Dai Syedna Abdeali Saifuddin built on Syedna Ismail Badruddin's vision to found the Dars e Saifi in Surat. A hundred years later, the 51st Dai Syedna Taher Saifuddin continued that vision to found the Jamea Saifiyyah in Surat. In furtherance of that vision, the 52nd Dai Syedna Mohammad Burhanuddin expanded the Jamea Saifiyyah establishing campuses in Karachi, Pakistan and Nairobi, Kenya. Today, Syedna Burhanuddin's successor, the 53rd Dai Syedna Khuzaima Qutbuddin, *al-dai al-'allama tun nahrir*, continues the legacy of these *azeem ush shaan* Dais, imparting the true learning of Aale Mohammad to mumineen mukhlesees. May Allah Ta'ala keep him safe in his care till the end of time.

Syedna Ismail Badruddin was seventy-five when he became Dai. Despite his advanced age, he led the Imam's Dawat for 20 years with physical vigor and spiritual dynamism. He passed away on 23 Jumada-l-Ukhra 1085 H/1674 AD at the age of ninety five. He was succeeded by his noble son, Syedna Abdut-Tayyeb Zakiyuddin. May Allah Ta'ala grant Bawa Ismail Badruddin Mola highest place in Imam's Haikal in Heaven.

Syedna Ismail Badruddin is the father of the line of Duat who, along with him, are known as Duat Badriyyin (nine in all): Syedna Ismail Badruddin, Syedna Abdut-Tayyeb Zakiyuddin, Syedna Abdo-Musa Kalimuddin, Syedna Nur-Mohammad Nuruddin, Syedna Ismail Badruddin, Syedna Abdut-Tayyeb Zakiyuddin, Syedna Yusuf Najmuddin, Syedna Abde-Ali Saifuddin, and Syedna Mohammad Badruddin.

Syedna Ismail Badruddin is lovingly called by mumineen 'Syedna Ismail Badruddin Bawa'.

The Qubba Badriyya in Jamnagar is the holy mausoleum where Syedna Ismail Badruddin is buried. His Qubba was built by his successor and later on rebuilt by the 52nd Dai Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin RA. The intricately carved marble Qubba is a truly magnificent and holy mausoleum.

اعلى الله قدسه ورزقنا شفاعته وانسه * بحق سيدنا محمد وآله الطاهرين * صلوات الله عليهم اجمعين *