

THE 32ND DAI AL-MUTLAQSYEDNA QUTUB-KHAN QUTBUDDIN^{RA}

URUS- 27 JUMADA-L-UKHRA 1056 H/1646 AD, AHMEDABAD

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This is a brief biographical article about the 32nd Dai al-Mutlaq Syedna Qutub-Khan Qutbuddin al-Shaheed ibn Syedna Daud ibn Qutub-Shah^{RA} highlighting his *paak sirat* and his *shahadat* (martyrdom).

The material in this article is derived from Syedna Taher Saifuddin's *Risalat Sharifah* of 1372H titled *Khaza'in u Imam il Muttaqeen* (خزائن امام المتقين). Syedna Taher Saifuddin begins his narrative of Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed with the following glowing praise:

[After Syedna Qasim-Khan,] the rutba of Dai was occupied by its pole of poles (*Qutub*), who prepared all means for the salvation of his followers from the captivity of this world (*Hayula*). He was the noblest of 'gates' (*Bab*) [for mumineen to enter into] the prophetic presence of the Imam uz zamaan. Along with the honor of being the leader of the Dawat (*siyadat*), Allah Taala had decreed for him the honor singular among all Duat Mutlaqeen of *shahadat*. This was a blazing proof of his great *shaan*. May Allah be pleased with him. He provided abundant bliss for his Dawat children. He raised their stations, giving them a home high in the *darajaat* and welcomed them there. His *shahadat* in the path of God was written in the Preserved Tablet (*Lauh e Mahfuz*) and the secret was known to Allah's Awliya kiraam. "What Allah has willed is written and comes to pass." Syedna Qutbuddin's *shahadat* was similar to the *shahadat* of *Syed ush shuhada* Imam Husain in Karbala on the day of Ashura. (*Khaza'in*, p. 310)

Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed was born in Ahmedabad during the era of the 26th Dai Syedna Daud ibn Ajab-Shah, on the night of 30th Zul-Qada 985 H.

During his youth, he accompanied his father, the 27th Dai Syedna Daud ibn Qutub-Shah to Lahore to the court of the Mughal Emperor Jalaluddin Akbar during the *fitnat* of Sulayman. Akbar had summoned Syedna Daud ibn Qutub-Shah to his court and ultimately issued a royal

farmaan in his favor. Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed continued to serve his father Syedna Daud ibn Qutub-Shah devotedly throughout his era, and the four Dais who came after him. The 28th Dai Syedna Shaykh-Adam Safiyuddin bestowed on Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed the *sharaf* of *haddiyyat*. Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's brother, the 29th Dai Syedna Abdut-Tayyeb Zakiyuddin, kept him always at his side (The 30th Dai Syedna Ali Shamsuddin was based in Yemen, and Syedna Qutbuddin continued to serve him). The 31st Dai, Syedna Qasim-Khan Zainuddin appointed him as his Mazoon, then also his Mansoos. Syedna Qasim-Khan passed away in Shawwal 1054 H, and Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed became the 32nd Dai.

Mumineen—men, women and children—all know Syedna Qutbuddin, and they know him as Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed. He was *shaheed ud duaat* (martyr of the Duaat), *waheed ul hudaat* (unique among the Divine Guides). As Syedna Taher Saifuddin declared, Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's *shahadat* was written in the Preserved Tablet, the *Lawh e mahfuz*. Rasulullah^{SA} had first given this *bisharat*, that “in a thousand years, my Dai will be martyred in India.” Syedna Qasim-Khan, at the time of his *nass* on Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed with the *rutba* of *Ithlaq*, also gave him the *bisharat* of the *rutba* of *shahadat*. Earlier, Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's father, Syedna Daud ibn Qutub-Shah had given the same *bisharat*. During Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's childhood, he became gravely ill. Expecting the end, his mother began to prepare a *namaazi kafan*. When Syedna Daud ibn Qutub-Shah saw this, he disclosed to her that the child would not die but and grow into a Dai of great *shaan*, for whom Allah Taala had decreed the *rutba* of *shahadat*.

Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed was Dai for almost two years, before he was martyred at the age of seventy one on 27 Jumada-l-Ukhra, 1056 H/1646 AD.

For the account of Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's *shahadat*, Syedna Taher Saifuddin cites as his key source the *Kitab al-Tadhkirah* of his ancestor (through the maternal line) Syedi Hasan-ji Badshah ibn Syedi Shamas-Khan, both mawlas of great eminence, *ilm* and *khidmat*, from the line of Syedi Fakhruddin Shaheed (bin Raja Tarmal). Syedi Hasan-ji was present in Ahmedabad at the time of Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's shahaadat, and his eye-witness report is the source of our information.

This is a brief account of the ‘*hadiso*’:

In the month of Jumadal-Ula of the year 1056 H/1646 AD, a group of Dawat enemies ostensibly from inside the fold, *munafeqeen*, made false allegations to a man named Abdul-Qawi (known in Dawat as Abdul-Ghawi)—a high ranking official in the court of the Mughal Prince (later Emperor) Aurangzeb who was then governor of Ahmedabad—that the leader of the Dawoodi Bohra was a “*rafzi*” (= *rafidi*), one who rejects the *sunnat* of Nabi Mohammad, and introduces innovations (*bid’at*) in Islamic religious practice. Abdul-Ghawi was himself a bitter Shia-hater, and he immediately brought the issue to the attention of Aurangzeb, who was roused to anger and ordered a full inquiry. Abdul-Ghawi instructed the Police Commissioner (*kotwal*) of Ahmedabad, a Shia man named Shah-Beg, to arrest Syedna Qutbuddin, and threatened him if he did not comply.

The next morning—28 Jumadal-Ula—Shah-Beg reluctantly set out to arrest Syedna Qutbuddin. Syedna Qutbuddin, as was his habit, was teaching *sabaq* to Dawat *hudoos* in his daughter Ajab-busaheba’s home. When Shah-Beg’s regiment reached the entrance of the Kalupur *mohalla*, a *mumin* hastened to inform Syedna. Syedna Qutbuddin spontaneously exclaimed, “*La hawla wa-la quwwat illa billah il aliyy il azeem.*” (There is no strength or might save Allah’s!) He gave leave to the *hudoos* to return to their homes, and himself sat on his *gaadi* reciting the Quran (he used to recite a full Quran *khatm* daily). Ajab-bu entreated him to hide in her private chamber and lock the door, and he said, “Dearest daughter, there is no escape from death when it comes for you.” Then Shah-Beg arrived with his soldiers and taking Syedna Qutbuddin’s hand, seated him forcefully in a cart surrounded by four horsemen to prevent escape. Shah-Beg also seized and carried away five or six cartloads of Syedna Qutbuddin’s *kitaabs*. In the cart, Syedna Qutbuddin continued to recite the Quran. As the procession passed Syedna Fir-Khan’s *mohalla*, Syedna Qutbuddin called out loudly to him, exclaiming to the right and the left, “Who will inform my brother [Fir-Khan] that Qutbuddin is calling you!” A *mumin* who heard him ran to convey the message to Syedna Fir-Khan, who hastened to Syedna Qutbuddin’s side. Syedna Qutbuddin seated Syedna Fir-Khan with him in the cart. The convoy arrived at the police chowki in the bazaar, where Shah-Beg kept Syedna Qutbuddin, and with him Syedna Fir-Khan, from morning to night. Abdul Ghawi then set a

team of his scholars to read through Syedna Qutbuddin's *kitaabs*, hoping to find in them something incriminating. They found nothing.

When night fell, Aurangzeb sent orders to keep Syedna Qutbuddin in the lock-up. Syedna Qutbuddin knew then with certainty that a release would not be forthcoming. Mumineen had gathered in large numbers in the bazaar around the police chowki. Syedna Qutbuddin instructed them to return home. He said to them, "Abd al-Ghawi wants my head. For the sake of Allah's Dawat, I will endure what needs to be endured. I want you to go home and rest among your wives and children. There is nothing left to do but pray to Allah Ta'ala: Prayer is a believer's weapon (*al-du'a'u silah ul mummin*)."

When the men returned home to their wives and children with the sad news, heart-wrenching cries and wails went up in all corners of the *mohallas* where mumineen resided.

The next morning—29 Jumadal-Ula—Aurangzeb put Abdul Ghawi in full charge of Syedna Qutbuddin's affair. Abdul Ghawi ordered Syedna Qutbuddin to be transferred to the main prison, and shackled with heavy irons. Syedna Fir-Khan stayed with him.

Syedna Qutbuddin spent the next twenty days in prison in this condition. He endured with *sabr* and *tajallud*, and spent his time in prayer and Quran recitation. Meanwhile, Abdul Ghawi was perusing Syedna's *kitaabs*, but he did not understand a word of them. When he (and the other scholars) read Syedna Hamiduddin's *Rahat al-Aql* (Solace of the Intellect), they were so totally confused that they said in frustration "*Rah al aql*", this book has made us "lose our minds." Moreover, seeing the name of Mawla Ali over and over in the *kitaabs*, Abdul Ghawi became even more incensed, and he would show Ali's name in these *kitaabs* to Aurangzeb, spewing poison in Aurangzeb's ears. But he found nothing that he could use as proof that Syedna Qutbuddin was Rafzi.

On 21 Jumada-l-Ukhra, Syedna Qutbuddin was summoned to an audience in front of Aurangzeb. Abdul Ghawi said to Syedna Qutbuddin, "Admit that you are Rafzi, repent of your past sins, and the Prince will let you go." Syedna Qutbuddin roared like a lion, "I am not a Rafzi, my forefathers were not Rafzis. We are true Sunnis—faithful followers of Rasulullah's *sunnat*. I declare that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet. I read the

Quran, I pray namaaz, give zakaat, fast Ramadan, and perform hajj to the Baytullah. I am a Muslim. How is my blood legal for you to shed?” When Abdul Ghawi heard Syedna Qutbuddin’s fiery and utterly logical response, he threatened Syedna Qutbuddin saying, “Admit you are a Rafzi, otherwise the Prince will have you executed!” Syedna Qutbuddin replied spontaneously—and only a true *wali* of Allah could give such a reply—he said, “If you kill me, you will kill my body. You cannot kill my soul.” Abdul Ghawi, afraid that Aurangzeb’s heart would be softened by Syedna Qutbuddin’s magnificent answers, hastily instructed his soldiers to return Syedna Qutbuddin to prison. Mumineen had been waiting in large numbers outside, hopeful that their Mawla would be released. When they saw him appear in chains, they lost all hope.

Unsuccessful in getting a real confession, Abdul Ghawi attempted to gather a group of notables from the city to sign their names to a trumped-up confession (*mehzara*). The majority signed, fearing Abdul Ghawi’s retribution if they did not. One upright judge (*qazi*) refused to sign without evidence. On 26 Jumada-l-Ukhra, Abdul Ghawi played his fatal card: He told two innocent children from Syedna Qutbuddin’s household that if they said what he wanted them to say (about being Rafzi), their Mawla would be released. When the qazi heard their ‘admission’, he signed the edict. The plot was complete.

On the morning of 27 Jumada-l-Ukhra, 1056 H, Aurangzeb approved the execution order. Abdul Ghawi instructed Shah-Beg to carry out the death sentence immediately. Shah-Beg, in tears, approached the prison cell where Syedna Qutbuddin was incarcerated. He called out, “Come, Shaykh, Allah has granted you the honor of *shahadat!*” A certain Shaykh Mohammad was in the cell with Syedna Qutbuddin, and he jumped up, saying, “They are calling the shaykh, I am a shaykh, I will go.” When Shaykh Mohammad came forward, Shah-Beg told him to step aside and let ‘Shaykh Qutbuddin’ come. Syedna Qutbuddin said to him, “Sit down Shaykh Mohammad. I am the one they are calling for.” Syedna Qutbuddin then reconfirmed his Nass on Syedna Fir-Khan, and taking off his turban (*paaghri*), placed it on Syedna Fir-Khan’s head. Then he stepped out to meet his maker.

Shah-Beg escorted Syedna Qutbuddin to the open square in Ahmedabad known as Karanj. There, he instructed his executioner to carry out the deed. Syedna Qutbuddin stopped him,

saying, “Wait. Let me first pray.” Syedna Qutbuddin prayed two *rak’at* namaaz, performed *sajda* to Allah Ta’ala, and did *doa*. Toward the end of his *doa*, he supplicated, “Allah, you are the judge between me and these accursed ones who have challenged your rule and that of your messenger, and who falsely claim that they are on the path of *haqq!*” Then he sat on his *musalla* and said loudly to the people surrounding him, “O Muslims! Bear witness that I am Muslim. I testify to the *kalimat ush shahadat: La ilaha illa Allah, Mohammad un Rasulullah*. This man is killing me without any sin that would justify my killing. I will bring him to justice at the Day of Judgment in front of the Great Judge. God will judge between us!” As Syedna Qutbuddin spoke these words and did *sajda* for the Almighty and prayed for *mumineen*, the *jallaad* (executioner) swung his sword and struck off his head. Syedna Qutbuddin fell to the ground, martyred.

قدس الله روحه ونور ضريحه و لقاء الروح والريحان والرحمة والرضوان

Syedna Taher Saifuddin composed a *marthiya* for Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed, *Ya Qutba Dini Illahi*, similar to his *marthiya* for Husain Imam, *Ya Sayyida sh-shuhada’i*; this is its first bayt:

يا قطب دين الله	يا خير ملك وشاه
عظيم	آه عليك فآه
تترى	آه عليك فآه
يا قطب دين الله	

He also composed a *salaam* for Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed; this is its first bayt:

Salaam to you, Mawla Qutbuddin Shaheed	عَلَيْكَ سَلَامُ اللَّهِ يَا قُطْبَ الْهُدَى
Dai of the Merciful, ocean of bounty	وَيَا دَاعِيَ الرَّحْمَنِ يَا خِضْرَ النَّدَى

The Qubba Qutbiyyah in Ahmedabad, the mazaar of Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed, is a place of *barakat* and *nur*. It is a place that angels visit. Syedna Taher Saifuddin built the *shaandaar*

Qubba, and his successor, the 52nd Dai Syedna Mohammad Burhanuddin performed its inauguration. Syedna Taher Saifuddin traveled to Ahmedabad for Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's *urus mubarak* nearly every year. He recounts in the *Khaza'in* that mumineen take *mannat* of Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's *ziyarat* for *shifa*. When he himself was a child, he was taken very ill, and his father, the 49th Dai Syedna Mohammad Burhanuddin took *mannat* of Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's *ziyarat*. Syedna Taher Saifuddin was healed, and his father Syedna Mohammad Burhanuddin took him to Ahmedabad to fulfill the *mannat*. May Allah Ta'ala grant us in the near future the shining *naseeb* of Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's *ziyarat*, indeed, also Syedna Taher Saifuddin's and Syedna Mohammad Burhanuddin's *ziyarat*.

May Allah Ta'ala raise Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed to the highest *darajaat* in Jannaat un Naeem. May He burn Aurangzeb, Abdul Ghawi, and the munafeqeen who plotted against him in the lowest pits of Jaheem. May He keep Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's Dawat, Allah Ta'ala's own Dawat, in his care and protection, he is Rahman and Raheem. May He grant Syedna Qutbuddin Shaheed's waris, heir, and *ham-laqab*, Syedna Khuzaima Qutbuddin, longest life till Roz-e-Qiyamat and *fath-e mubeen*. *Aameen ya rabb al alameen*.