

## SAYYEDNA ABDULLAH BADRUDDIN<sup>RA</sup>

1323 – 1333H/1906 – 1915 AD

Urus 10th Rabiul Awwal 1333H (Surat, India)

Sayyedna Abu al-Fadl Abdullah Badruddin b. Sayyedna Abdul-Husain Husamuddin took office as the 50<sup>th</sup> Dai, the first of the eighth *saatra* (septad) of Dai Mutlaqs. He was the 6<sup>th</sup> Dai of the Jeevan-ji family in the *nasal* of Raja Tarmal, son and grandson of Dais.

It is related that Sayyedna Badruddin's maternal uncle Miyansaheb Ahmad Ali Hamiduddin had predicted the Daiship for him when he was very young: pointing to a beauty spot (*til*) on Sayyedna Badruddin's forehead, he commented that '*aa til aapne paagri pehnause*'. This incident happened in the time of the 47<sup>th</sup> Dai, Sayyedna Abdulqadir Najmuddin. Sayyedna Najmuddin was instructing his son Sayyedna Mohammad Burhanuddin (later the 49<sup>th</sup> Dai) in the haqeeqat kitab '*al-Anwar al-Latifa*', and the Miyansaheb had been granted the honour of sitting in in the sabaq. One of the other *hudud* asked him about the manner in which the Dai taught his son. Miyansaheb Ahmad Ali replied, 'As one who hopes to make him his like, and pass on to him the legacy of his *fazal*. Sayyedna Burhanuddin is his equal in noble qualities and shall one day take his place.' His gaze then fell on Sayyedna Badruddin, and upon a *til* on his forehead. He remarked, 'Allah distinguishes whom He chooses with his mercy. If my conjecture (*zann*) is true – and my conjecture is as good as my conviction – then this Mawla of ours will also attain a high status, and be crowned with the crown of '*itlaq*' [the rutba of Dai Mutlaq].'

Sayyedna Badruddin had been born during the Daiship of his uncle Sayyedna Najmuddin, and it was he who bestowed *haddiyat* on him. When his father Sayyedna Abdul Husain Husamuddin became Dai, Sayyedna Badruddin and his elder brother the learned Mawla Abdeali bhaisaheb Muhyiddin assisted their father the 48<sup>th</sup> Dai in Dawat matters; both were indispensably involved in its administration during the term of Sayyedna Mohammad Burhanuddin. Sayyedna Badruddin was particularly active – though in a discreet

inconspicuous manner – in the settling of the Dawat debt whose burden had weighed upon the Dais since the time of the 40<sup>th</sup> Dai; largely due to his efforts, full clearance of the inherited debt was achieved in the 49<sup>th</sup> Dai's time.

Sayyedna Muhammad Burhanuddin conferred nass on Sayyedna Badruddin in the utmost secrecy. He asked his son Sayyedna Taher Saifuddin to call Sayyedna Badruddin to his presence. Sayyedna Taher Saifuddin relates that when he looked out of the window – in Zaini Bungalow, Surat, where the Dai was in residence – to call for Sayyedna Badruddin, Sayyedna Badruddin was doing zabihat in the garden below; he took that (considering the taweel, inner meaning of zabihat) as a most auspicious omen. The name of Sayyedna Burhanuddin's successor was only revealed after his demise. The witnesses of the secret nass – Sayyedi Abdeali bhaisaheb Muhyiddin, Sayyedi Tayyeb bhaisaheb Zainuddin, Sayyedna Taher Saifuddin and Shaikh Tayyeb bhai – went to the eminent Mazoon Sayyidi Ismailji bhaisaheb Badruddin and informed him of the nass. Sayyedi Ismailji bhaisaheb proclaimed in a loud voice among the hudud and mumeneen gathered at the Dai's residence that Sayyedna Abdullah Badruddin was the next Dai after Sayyedna Mohammad Burhanuddin.

Sayyedna Badruddin, more than 50 years old, had never delivered a waaz in his life till that time. The 49<sup>th</sup> Dai passed away on 27<sup>th</sup> Dhilhijja, three days before Ashara Mubarak, when the new Dai would be expected to deliver his first sermons. He did so with aplomb: his learning and oratory amazed his listeners, and manifested again the truth of the Quranic aayat: *اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ*, *God knows best where to place His Message* (i.e. upon whom He confers a rutba in the Dawat).

Sayyedna Badruddin officially ascended the throne of the Dawat (Eid al-Istiwa') on 18<sup>th</sup> Safar 1324 H., forty days after Sayyedna Burhanuddin's wafaat. He affirmed Sayyedi Ismailji bhaisaheb Badruddin in the rank of Mazoon, and Sayyedi Ibrahim Wajihuddin, the eldest of Sayyedna Abdulqadir Najmuddin's remaining children, in the position of Mukasir.

The second year of Sayyedna Badruddin's term brought two enormous, grievous calamities: it saw the demise of both the Mazoon Sayyedi Ismailji bhaisaheb and Sayyedi Abdeali bhaisaheb Muhyiddin. Both are buried in the Izziyya mausoleum in Surat, after the tomb of

Mawla Abdeali Imaduddin. Sayyidi Ismailji bhaisaheb, son of the 45<sup>th</sup> Dai Sayyedna Tayyeb Zainuddin, Mazoon ud Dawat of three Dais since Sayyedna Husamuddin's time, was a bulwark of the faith, a veritable mountain of piety and conviction, and despite the frailty of his great age still active in devotional practice and teaching. Sayyedna Badruddin accorded him immense honour. (Sayyedna Taher Saifuddin relates that Sayyedi Ismailji bhaisaheb used to say from the takhat during waaz: mumeneen, I am your [spiritual] mother, "*manay dhaaavi lo*" – literally, "drink my milk", meaning, take the utmost spiritual benefit from me – and that "*ghanu meethu laagtu tu*", it was/sounded truly charming/ appealing). In Bombay, during the waaz majlis of the Prophet's 'Ascension' on 27 Rajab, Sayyedna Badruddin appointed Sayyedi Ismailji bhaisaheb's son, Sayyedi Dawood bhaisaheb Shihabuddin, as Mazoon. His younger son, Janab Ishaq bhaisaheb, attained the rutba of Mukasir during the 51<sup>st</sup> Dai's time.

Not much later Sayyidi Abdeali bhaisaheb Muhyiddin, Sayyedna Badruddin's elder brother, passed away. It is he who, when asked by an ill-intentioned person, "who is the elder, you or Sayyedna Badruddin?" had replied, "He is the elder, though I was born before him." Sayyedi Abdeali bhaisaheb was a towering figure in the Dawat, possessor of learning and sincerity in abundance, and Sayyedna Taher Saifuddin's revered *mufeed*. Sayyidna Badruddin commended as Sayyidi Muhyiddin's greatest among numerous achievements his 'gilding of these two pure jewels – Tayyib Bhaisaheb Zainuddin and Sayyedna Taher Saifuddin, sons of Sayyedna Mohammad Burhanuddin – with the varnish of the noble esoteric knowledge, and his elevation of them in its lofty grades. They are his 'good deed' (*amal salih*), and his profitable business, that which benefits him in his after-life. Even though he has died without leaving behind any male children, his beautiful memory will stay alive forever because of these two honourable brothers.'

After Sayyedi Muhyiddin's wafaat, the two brothers studied extra time with the Dai himself. Reading Dawat kitabs was Sayyedna Badruddin's constant custom / habit, most of any free time he had would be spent thus. Sayyedna Badruddin used to say that when the brothers are here and we are occupied in reading Dawat kitabs, it is as if we are experiencing the bliss of the gardens of Paradise. The two brothers held an eminent status all through Sayyedna Badruddin's term; their residence/office was known as the 'Chhoti Sarkar' (the Dai's being the 'Badi' Sarkar), and the Dai sought their counsel and came to depend on them greatly in all

matters of the Dawat. Sayyedna Badruddin himself had one son, Sayyedi Fazal bhaisaheb Qutbuddin, who rose to the rank of Mazoon in the time of the 51<sup>st</sup> Dai.

Many masjids and other community buildings were constructed in Sayyedna Badruddin's time. Surat remained the seat of the Dawat, and several of its madrasas and mausoleums were renovated: the Najmiyya and Izziyya Mausoleums, the Masjid al-Saifi al-A'zam (now better known as al-Masjid al-Muazzam), and the Madrasa Saifiyyah or Dars-e Saifi, which was restored to its former glory in the time of Sayyedna Abdeali Saifuddin.

Sayyedna Badruddin travelled to cities and towns all over India, to inaugurate mosques and madrasas for religious learning, and in response to invitations by mumeneen for weddings etc. The Dai visited many times and stayed for long periods in Bombay. In 1331 H., he inaugurated the 'Qamari Masjid' and the 'Mahal al-Azhar al-Badri', built by the *Ra'is* Mhota-bhai and the *Ra'is* Yusuf-Ali. This building came to be known as 'Badri Mahal', and became the official residence of the Dai and the Dawat office in Bombay. When Sayyedna Taher Saifuddin shifted the Dawat headquarters from Surat to Bombay, he chose to make his residence in Saifi Mahal, but Badri Mahal remained the home of '*al-Wazarat al-Saifiyyah*', the administrative and bureaucratic offices of the Dawat. Among the other places he visited were Kaparwanj, towns in the Kathiawar region, Godra, Lunawara, Dohad, Malwa towns, Karachi and other towns in the area in Sind and Multan, Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Shahjahanpur, and Sidhpur. Sayyedna Badruddin also journeyed to places of pilgrimage for *ziyarat* – to Ahmadabad, to Mandvi, and to Galyakot in fulfilment of a *nazar*.

Everywhere the Dai went, he was received with joy and veneration by the mumenin; he looked into and bettered their conditions; he ordained the establishment of madrasas in most of the towns he visited; he revived the customs and rites of the faith. He was also, wherever he went, honoured by political leaders, by governors and kings. Sayyedna Badruddin held an honoured status with the British Government of India, and like his predecessor, he too enjoyed the title of 'Sardar' with its attached privileges.

Constant contact and communication had always been maintained with the mumeneen in Yemen by the Indian Dais, with a regular exchange of correspondence through the 'Naib' appointed in Yemen by the Dai. In Sayyedna Badruddin's time a drought occurred in Yemen, and the Dai sent substantial aid to them from India. There was a battle with the Zaidis in

Haraz in 1329 H. The mumeneen there lived in constant hostility with their Zaidi neighbours. The situation reached a crisis point in that year, when thousands of Zaidis surrounded them to loot and plunder and kill, as had happened frequently before. The muminin all sought refuge near the tomb of Sayyedna Hatim in Hutayb. In the ensuing battle – with the muminin shouting ‘O Imam al-Zaman! O Tayyib!’ – they were able to repel the Zaidis.

Sayyedna Badruddin was afflicted by illness in Ramadan 1332 H. Notwithstanding his ill-health and weakness, the Dai attended all the prescribed prayers at the Masjid-e Saifi every day. After Ramadan he went with his family to a place called Burachha, for a change of air. When Id al-Ghadir arrived (18 Dhilhijja), Sayyedna Badruddin had not yet recovered, but he attended the *majlis* for the renewal of the oath of fealty. He also attended the memorial service on the *urus* of his father Sayyedna Husamuddin and his predecessor Sayyedna Burhanuddin on the 27<sup>th</sup> of the month.

On the first of Muharram 1333H, Sayyedna Badruddin came to the Dars -e Saifi for the ‘*khatm al-Qur’an*’ *majlis*; that was the last *majlis* he attended. Doctors advised against his officiating the Ashara majalis, so the Dai delegated the task to the Mukasir Tayyeb bhaisaheb Zainuddin (who had been made Mukasir upon Sayyedi Ibrahim Wajihuddin’s demise in 1331H). Following Ashara, Sayyedna Badruddin appointed Tayyeb bhaisaheb as his successor in the rank of Dai, but he passed away, suddenly and totally unexpectedly, on 9<sup>th</sup> Safar. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of that month, Sayyedna Badruddin designated as his heir the second son of his predecessor, Sayyedna Taher Saifuddin.

Sayyedna Badruddin died towards morning on the eve of 10 Rabi’ I 1333 H. Sayyedna Tahir Saifuddin organised the preparation of the body and the burial. He led the funeral prayer in the Masjid al-A’zam, and then buried Sayyedna Badruddin beside his predecessor Sayyedna Burhanuddin in the Izziyya mausoleum in Surat. Sayyedna Badruddin’s term as Dai was nine years, two months and fourteen days.