

Rival Syedna's son moves HC, takes forward father's succession fight

Mohua Das & Mohammed Wajiduddin | TNN

Mumbai: Rival Syedna Taher Fakhruddin, claimant to the position of the 54th spiritual leader of the Dawoodi Bohra community, filed a chamber summons in the Bombay High Court last month, taking forward the legal suit filed by his deceased father Khuzaima Qutbuddin in 2014 and challenging Mufaddal Saifuddin's position as the current Syedna. Furthermore, in an open letter to Syedna Saifuddin on Monday, Taher Fakhruddin has raised several points questioning his credentials and condemning his succession. "His Holiness Syedna Taher Fakhruddin TUS, the 54th Dai al-Mutlaq has filed a Chamber Summons on the 27th of June 2016 in the Hon'ble High Court of Bombay to be substituted as plaintiff in the Suit filed by his predecessor His Holiness the Late Syedna Khuzaima Qutbuddin RA, the 53rd Dai al-Mutlaq against Shehzada Mufaddal Saifuddin," read the official statement from Taher Fakhruddin who further pledged to "continue the fight" that his

THE CASE SO FAR

- After Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin, 52nd spiritual head of Dawoodi Bohras, died on January 17, 2014, his half-brother **Khuzaima Qutbuddin** claimed that the late Syedna had appointed him his successor in private in 1965
- Current Syedna **Mufaddal Saifuddin's** supporters rejected Qutbuddin's claim, saying that the late Burhanuddin had appointed Saifuddin his successor in June



2011 at a hospital in the UK

- Qutbuddin challenged Mufaddal Saifuddin's right to be the 53rd Dai in the Bombay high court in April 2014
- However, Qutbuddin died on March 30, 2016
- Qutbuddin's son **Taher Fakhruddin** claimed that his deceased father had anointed him his successor and that he was now the 54th Dai
- On June 27 this year, Taher Fakhruddin filed a Chamber Summons in the Bombay high court to be substituted as plaintiff in the suit filed by his father



father had started, "for truth, justice, and the future and well-being of the Dawoodi Bohra community."
"After 52nd Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin's demise two years ago, my father had written to Syedna Saifuddin to debate and resolve the succession matter privately but the lack of any response prompted him to pursue things in the judiciary," said Abdeall Qutbuddin, brother of Taher Fakhruddin. "Many in the community felt remorse after my father passed away. They had

been my father's students and believed in my father's fight. That is why Taher Fakhruddin renewed the call for debate according to the precedents of the community and in the interests of resolving this matter."
The statement said: "Since Shehzada Mufaddal Saifuddin is unwilling to resolve the matter internally through a debate to establish the truth, we have approached the Hon'ble Court... that will expose the falsehoods being perpetuated by Shehzada Mufaddal Saifuddin."
In the open letter to Mufad-

dal Saifuddin meant to inform Saifuddin of his legal move, invite him to a debate and update community of what has been happening, Taher Fakhruddin says: "I challenge your credentials to be a spiritual leader of our community; I challenge your claim to be a Dawoodi Bohra," with a roster of allegations to back his claims.
When contacted by **TOI** for comments, Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin's office maintained: "We are unaware of any such communication made by the claimant's son."