

Late Syedna's kin agree to quick trial in succession case

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Half-brother and son of late Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin, spiritual head of million-strong Dawoodi Bohra community, mutually agreed before Bombay High Court on Thursday to have an 'expeditious trial' of their dispute over appointment of Dai-al-Mutlaq or spiritual head.

Justice Gautam Patel fixed July 17 for pre-trial directions while acting on a suit filed by late Syedna's half-brother Khuzaima Qutbuddin (73) that contested the appointment of the Syedna's son as his successor.

Qutbuddin, who sought relief including entry to Saifi Manzil, the house of the community leader, has filed a 700-page suit asking the court to restrain Syedna Saifuddin, 70, to act as the Dai-al-Mutlaq.

In reply to the suit, defendant

Syedna Saifuddin filed a detailed 494-page affidavit on April 23, 2014.

The half-brother, in his suit, has claimed he is the real successor as he was the Mazoon (second-in-command) and the late Syedna too was once the Mazoon and become the head of the community after his predecessor's death.

He said after Burhanuddin became the new Syedna, he had publicly appointed his younger brother, Khuzaima Qutbuddin, as his Mazoon and privately anointed him as his successor.

While for majority of the members of the community, there is absolutely no doubt over the succession of Syedna Saifuddin's succession as the next Syedna, the followers of Qutbuddin consider him as the rightful successor. They said that he has been late Syedna's closest aide over the years. The son and half-brother of the late Syedna are locked in a battle of succession soon after the leader's death on January 18.