

# Succession battle in Dawoodi Bohra community enters HC

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The issue of succession over various trusts after the demise of Sayedna Saheb, the head of Dawoodi Bohra community, have turned into a bitter legal battle. After a suit in Bombay High Court (HC), eight petitions have been moved in Gujarat High Court demanding putting aside inclusion of Shehzada Mufaddal Saifuddin's name as sole trustee of numerous public trusts and wakfs.

Hearing the petition, the Gujarat HC has passed an interim order restraining Shehzada Mufaddal Saifuddin, his agents and his servants from alienating, selling, transferring or dealing with in any manner the assets and properties of about 75 public trusts and 261 wakfs till the next returnable date. Khuzaima Qutbuddin claims to be the 53rd Dai al-Mutlaq and head of the Dawoodi Bohra community. He has sought relief against Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, the second son of late Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin. Mohammed Burhanuddin passed away on January 17, 2014 at the age of 102.



## HC stays inclusion of Shehzada Mufaddal as trustee in various trusts and wakfs

Syedna Khuzaima Qutbuddin has alleged that large scale violation of the principles of natural justice on part of several Assistant Charity Commissioners and the Gujarat Wakf Board, who without giving a hearing and without issuing notices to him, passed orders permitting Shehzada Mufaddal Saifuddin's name to be entered as sole trustee of numerous public trusts and wakfs.

He alleged that within two days of the application, the Wakf Board allowed the application of Shehzada to become the trustee. A day after the order, son-in-law of Shehzada signed over 150 Change Reports which were filed in the of-

fices of Assistant Charity Commissioners in about 20 districts on or about January 27, 2014.

In Mehsana and Patan, orders had been passed by Assistant Charity Commissioners in 48 hours, in Amreli and Jamnagar within 15-17 days of Change Reports having been filed and with a similar haste in other places. Such orders have also been passed in Gandhinagar, Bhavnagar, Junagadh, Rajkot, Dahod, Godhra and Valsad.

In the petition the high court has been urged to look into this gross violation and the passing of orders in such a haste without following the due process by these authorities. The orders have been passed without making any inquiry and without giving any reasons. The high court has issued notices to various concerned parties and fixed hearing of the case on April 25.

In Bombay High Court, Khuzaima Qutbuddin has urged the court to declare him as the Syedna and also claimed to have challenged the succession and authority over the trusts and properties of the community at all levels.