

# **Jampudeep'na Sultan**

**By Sairab Abu Turabi**

**Bombay, 1982**

**[ Part I ]**

**[1]**

Imam Aga Ali Shah had two sons from his first wife i.e. Aga Nur Shah and Pir Shihabuddin Shah. His second wife Lady Aly Shah had no son. She used to recite *tasbeeh* and kept vows for the fulfillment of her wish. Once Lady Aly Shah had seen that many Ismaili women, who had no children, approached Imam Ali Shah, who at that time held the office of the Pir, at the bungalow of Wadi, Bombay and humbly requested for offsprings. Imam blessed them for the fulfillment of their wishes. These women entered the Imam's room one after another, and lastly Lady Aly Shah appeared before the Imam, who also requested to pray for a son for her. Imam said, "You keep patience. Everything will be done, don't worry." One day, Lady Aly Shah took off her Persian attires and put on the clothes of the women of the Khoja Ismaili community and joined in a row with other women in the *mehamani*. She had covered her face with a view that the Imam would not recognize her by thinking her a Khoja woman. Meanwhile, the Imam approached her and said, "I had told you to keep patience, but you came and sat with my spiritual daughters. These are those women, who have served me too much. Now you also clean my house with a broom, so that your all wishes may be accomplished." Thus, on every night, Lady Aly Shah visited the Hasanabad Jamatkhana to clean it for several months.

In 1877, Imam Aga Ali Shah came in Karachi with his wife and stayed at the Honeymoon Lodge, where was born Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah on 2<sup>nd</sup>

November, 1877. Its news was routed to Imam Hasan Ali Shah in Bombay, who replied in his telegram, “Name him Sultan. He will become a Sultan in the world. In his period, many natural miracles will take place in the world.” Imam Aga Ali Shah and Lady Aly Shah named their son, “Muhammad” and Imam Aga Hasan Ali Shah named “Sultan”, hence he became known as Sultan Muhammad Shah.

## [2]

Imam Aga Ali Shah held the office of the Piratan, when he arrived in Karachi with his wife, Lady Aly Shah in October, 1877 and stayed on the hill, known as the Honeymoon Lodge. On 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 1877, Friday at 5.30 pm., the birth of Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah took place.

The eminent Sufi saint, Naimatullah Shah had forecast before about 800 years in Iran that,

***Jalva’e anwar bashad naubat’e khansa rasd, hadi’e haq ra’h sarvar amad’e sultan bud; Kist sultani, Anch’e midani Muhammad bin Ali, rehbar’e rah’e tariqat pak khaslat pak’tu.***

Means, “There will be the arrival of the Light, the drumming of the magnificent person, and the arrival of Sultan, the Guide of the true path is to take place. Who is the Sultan? He is the son of the Ali and Muhammad. He is the Guide of the Tariqat, and a glorious Lord.”

Pir Sadruddin also said,

***Khelavar’nu shah mor’e rath chadash’e, Ali awa’e jampu deep’no sultan, ked’e ked’e dal ulatash’e ke va’jash’e tambal nisham.***

### [3]

In 1882, Imam Aga Ali Shah once visited Rajkot in India with Lady Aly Shah and his son, Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah. The Imam graced *didar* to the jamat and said, “Look at my son Sultan Muhammad. In case he may feel here loneliness, then you send your sons to play with him. There was one person, called Jivabhai, who had the sons: Devji Jiva, Lalji Jiva, Somji Jiva, Kassim Jiva and Nur Muhammad Jiva. These and other boys daily played with Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah at evening. One day, Nur Muhammad Jiva fell down due to the push of the Imam. He sustained severe pain and wept too much. The Imam caught his hand and took him to a safe side. The Imam said, “You have a little injury and weeping too much. Keep quiet, otherwise I will hit with hand.” Nur Muhammad became silent. Since he has severe pain, he once again began to weep. This time, the Imam calmly said, “If you don’t complain to my mother, I will give you high tidings of the paradise and make hell unlawful to you.” Nur Muhammad said, “I will not complain to anyone.” “Are you sure that you will not tell to my mother and father. Is it your gentleman promise?” He replied, “Not at all.” Then the Imam put his blessed hand on his leg and his pain gone away in a moment.

### [4]

In 1951, Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah visited Dacca, Bangladesh, there some Ismailis said to the Imam, “Mawla, we came here in the Muslim country. Here we Ismaili salute by saying Ya Ali Madad, but the other Muslims displease. Should we salute with the Ismailis Salam instead of Ya Ali Madad?” The Imam said, “If you will not utter Ya Ali Madad, then will you utter Ya Umar Madad?” The Ismailis remained silent.

## [5]

Imam Aga Ali Shah used to take with him his son in every community affairs. In 1883, he brought his son in Kamod in Gujrat, where he declared his son as his successor before the jamat and said to his son, “Your Light shall increase according to your days.”

## [6]

On 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1885, the enthronement ceremony of Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah was celebrated in Darkhana Jamatkhana, Bombay. Aga Jhangi Shah, the uncle of the Imam first addressed the jamat, “O’jamat! I want to tell you about one, who came here i.e., Mawlana Dhani Sarcar Aqa Sultan Muhammad Shah is your Imam for here and hereafter, and the Lord of both worlds, Mawla and Lord. He is the successor of Amir al-Muminin Hazrat Ali. He is the Noor of the Prophet and Hazrat Ali. He is the successor of his father and an everlasting Imam. You jamat now take an oath of allegiance (*bayat*) from him. One who takes his *bayat*, he will be showered with Divine grace, and will get the blessings of the world and the religion. It is the duty of the Mukhi, Kamadia and other leaders of the Darkhana Jamatkhana to come forward and take his *bayat*.”

During the address of Aga Jhangi Shah, the Imam was enjoying with his stick and shifting it from one to another hand. When the Imam looked to the community leaders, he smiled. Meanwhile, Aga Jhangi Shah continued his address, “As we are sitting now with the Imam, we all shall sit with him in hereafter. One who obeys the Imam with loyalty and give his right, he will be recommended in hereafter for its rewards. Don’t consider Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah as small. He is the descendant of the Prophet and the Power of the Prophet. Act what has been imparted in the *ginans* by the Pirs, then *Inshallah*, your souls shall be pure beyond any doubt.”

Then, the whole jamat took oath of allegiance from the Imam. Aga Jhangi Shah again addressed, “Consider today the Eid and eat the food as is taken

during the Eid. Put on well clothes, spray perfume and make outings. Inform the Ismailis in other cities by letters that they also celebrate this day and distribute sweetmeats among the jamats. Make lighting and celebrate this day on every year because the descendant of the Prophet and Hazrat Ali ascended the throne of the Imamate. Being a child, he is your Imam of the Time.”

Then, Sayed Didar Ali, the father of Sayed Mushtaq Ali recited the *Munajat* (Ya Ali Khub Majalis...) and the jamat also joined him.

## [7]

On 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1885 was the day of *Shukarvari Beej* (Friday fast). Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah visited the Bombay Jamatkhana and sat near the *pa't* of the holy water. He took out the holy water and asked the jamat to recite the *dua*. It was followed by the recitation of the *ginan*. Then, the Imam made the *farman* to the jamat. Imam then asked the jamat to drink the holy water. The jamatkhana was jam-packed with the followers, making the disturbance with the sounds. One leader appealed the jamat as saying, “Please keep quiet and don’t make noise. Agho is small. He is a small child and will fear due to your noise. Drink holy water patiently.” Hearing this, the Imam looked at the leader, but remained busy in giving the holy water to the jamat. In the meantime, one another leader appealed the jamat, “Please don’t make noise and drink holy water quietly. Agho is small. He is a small child and will fear.” This time, the Imam came into the action, “Who is the man calling Ali small? Don’t consider Ali as small. Don’t consider Ali small, he is greater than the great. You called me fearing child. Ali does not fear with anyone. Is there any person who may recite those stanzas of the *ginan*, in which the Pir has glorified the dignity of the Imam?” Hearing this, the jamat became quiet. One person came forward for reciting the *ginan*. The Imam told him to recite the *ginan*. He recited the *ginan*, “*Eji akash’e dev’nu mastak chh’e....*” The jamat also joined in the *ginan*. Then, the Imam said, “Of course, I am that Ali, who killed the snake in childhood. I don’t fear with anybody.”

## [8]

When Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah was yet in childhood, his mother took his proper care of nourishment. Sometimes, she angered upon him and loved him too. In his childhood, the Imam liked the sour items like the lemon. Once in the winter, the Imam suffered from cold fever, to which the doctor was called for treatment. The doctor checked his pulse and gave medicine and told to Lady Aly Shah, "Don't allow the prince to go outside and also don't let him to eat the sour items, otherwise, it will cause him pneumonia at once." The mother ordered her son not to leave the bed, otherwise she would punish him. The Imam replied her in affirmative. She lovingly kissed him and ordered the house-servant to prepare coffee for him. After drinking coffee, the Imam slept till evening. In the meantime, the mother came in the kitchen, where she saw that her son was sucking lemons. The mother exclaimed, "Muhammad!" Hearing voice of mother, he stood and at once cleaned his mouth and tried to go out, but his mother grasped his hand, and said, "What are you doing here? The doctor told you not to leave the bed and don't touch sour items. In this shivering winter, you are sucking juice of lemon." The face of his mother became red in anger and said, "Tell me. Why you don't reply me? The Imam was frightened and tears burst out of his eyes. The mother said, "I will not leave you and will make you forget sucking of lemon." The mother raised her hand to slap, but one servant came and said, "No, no mother. Don't beat the prince." The mother said, "Who are you to interfere? I will also punish you." He replied, "Don't worry. You punish me, but don't punish the prince." The mother said, "Why you gave him lemon?" He said, "I have not given him lemon. I don't know when the prince came here and sucked lemon. I have just seen here before a moment. Nevertheless, I take his sin on my shoulder. Don't do anything with the prince." The mother said, "It means you favour him." He said, "Bye-God, I don't know." The mother took hand of her son and

climbed on first floor of the bungalow, where she laid her son on the bed and covered his body with a blanket and came out of the room and said, “I have locked the room. You will have to remain tonight in this room. I will now see how you go to suck lemon.” The Imam said, “Mom, I will never go in kitchen, never at all.” But the mother locked the room and kept its key with her.

Due to the anger of the mother, all the servants feared that the prince had been imprisoned. On other side, the mother was performing worship in a separate room, but could not gain concentration and figuring in mind, “My poor son is alone in the room, which is locked. No servant can enter to know his condition. How is my son? What will be his condition? Leave him alone in the room, which will not be unlocked tonight.” Thus, she tried to revert to her worship. The mother did not dine at night, so the servants too. In midnight, the mother told to the servant to bring coffee for her. Suddenly, she saw at the main gate of the bungalow, which itself was opened. The lights at door became off. The mother was surprised to see her son entering the main gate, who came in by playing with his stick in hand and in two fingers. The mother exclaimed loudly, “Muhammad.” The servants awaked with her voice. His son replied, “Yes, Mom.” He climbed on the stair and came before the mother and caught both hands round the waist from back side and embraced, and said, “Mom, I have come.” The mother said, “But I have locked your room. Who opened it, how you came out? Where you have gone and returned in this shivering winter?”

Hearing it, Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah said, “O’ poor Mom! I am an Imam in the same way as my father was the Imam.” Then he continued, “Everything is in the Manifest Imam.”

## [9]

In his childhood, Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah was physically slim. The doctors several times told something different about his life and health. Some doctors also predicted that he would not survive more. His eyes were

weak and felt pain several times. Due to the illness of Lady Aly Shah, the doctor in Karachi has restricted her not to suckle his son. Hence, Ratanbai was selected. She did not suckle her own child and assigned some other woman to suckle, while she reserved her suckling only for the Imam. Whenever, the Imam visited Karachi, he summoned her on the stage. He stood and greeted her. She told, “Ya Mawla, why you are standing? I am a sinful.” The Imam said, “Ratanbai, you are my mother. How my mother be called sinful? I have sucked your milk.”

In 1951, the Imam arrived in Karachi and graced *didar* in the Aga Khan Park in Garden. The Imam went towards Ratanbai and stood before her and said, “Khanavadan, Khanavadan.” When she stood, the Imam said her to sit down. Then the Imam said, “Ratanbai, what is your age?” She said, “Khudavind, I don’t remember it.” Then the Imam said, “Look, I am now 75 years old. You have sucked me your milk when I was an infant. Now, I have become old, but you still look young.” Then, the Imam put his blessed hand on her head and said, “Ratanbai, you are my mother. You are my mother.”

## [10]

In Kathiawar, there is a sign of a stone close to the bank of Ubeann River in Manjevadi. When the famine broke out, the water in the river dried, but where that stone lying beside the river, there is now no famine and water flows in the river throughout the year. The old persons relate that Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah once came here and sat on the stone, and for this reason, the water never dries in the river.

In 1893, Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah came at Manjewadi to grace *didar* to the Ismailis when he was 16 years old. On that occasion, one eminent Indian magician Mohammed Chhel also came to impress the young Imam with his magical arts. When he appeared in front of the stage, the Imam threw his stick on the ground and asked him to pick it. But Mohammad Chhel could not pick it despite applying his different arts. Ultimately, he



put off his long turban and submitted before the Imam in prostration and gone.

There thronged a multitude of the Ismailis from all over India in Manjewadi's darbar on the bank of the Ubeann River. The Imam said, "You the jamat of the Kathiawar came here with your children from remote places, I am much happy. My father had told and I came here, and you jamat also came. When you came here in Manjewadi, there was nothing here except the forest. Now a huge multitude assembled here, in which infants of six to seven days and of a month and the children of eight years will be present here. Even the old person over eighty years will be present. They will be shivering due to cold. Khanavadan."

## [11]

The *didar* program in Manjewadi was for 14 days. One day, the Imam returned with the leaders after gracing *didar* to the Ismailis at evening and said, "Let us walk along the bank of this river." The Imam walked briskly till the place where water flowed by crushing a stone. The Imam stopped here. The leaders who followed saw that the Imam sat on that stone. Then he took off his shoes and stockings and put his legs into the water and calmly observed the natural beauty. The leaders were at a little distance and talked slowly, "What does Imam do?" Another leader replied, "He is a young and plays." The second one said, "Of course, he is a child and plays." The leaders were talking and stood with due respect. During the sunset, the Imam took out his legs from water and put on the shoes and stood and came near the leaders and said to the two leaders who considered him young and child, "Do you know objective of my coming here?" The leaders remained silent. The Imam once again said, "Do you know object of my coming here?" Then the Imam said, "Listen, my father Imam Aga Ali Shah once visited here and sat on that stone and said that it was a beautiful place and promised that he would come here once again." The leaders said that they remembered the words of Imam Aga Ali Shah. Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah said, "My

father had promised to come here second time and I fulfilled his promise today, because I am Aga Ali Shah. I am Mawla Murtza Ali.”

## [12]

In Poona, the Yeravada Palace, the Imam’s bungalow played historical role between 1891 and 1967. It also played important role in the history of the independence of India when Ghandi, his wife Kasturba Ghandi and others were imprisoned here by the British in 1942. Katurba Ghandi and Mahadev Desai were expired here, and their remains are in the Yeravada Palace. In 1967, Mawlana Hazar Imam presented Yeravada Palace to the Indian Government.

In Yeravada Palace, Imam Sultan Muhammad organized the Annual Majalis. He also summoned several meetings of the Ismaili Councils, Institutions and the Panjebhai Clubs over here. The example of such meeting is narrated by Jannat Ali Bhagat of Karachi that once the Imam convened a meeting of the honorary workers of Bombay, Karachi and other cities, in which Chief Missionary Hussaini Pir Muhammad, Kamadia Haji Nazar Ali, Major Macklai and others were present. Jannat Ali Bhagat said, “We were given a time, but we reached before it. It was a winter. We were directed to sit in a room, where we entered and sat on the floor. Meanwhile, Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah entered the room, and we all stood up and recited *Salawat* with folded hands.” The Imam said, “Why you sat on the floor?” Before our reply, the Imam called for the servant, Gulu. He came very soon and the Imam said, “Didn’t you spread carpet for them? Why you made them sat on the floor in such shivering winter? Go and bring carpet immediately.” Gulu and two other servants brought a big wrapped carpet and put on the floor. The two servants picked its two ends. Gulu picked the other one end of the carpet. Two among us helped and picked the 4<sup>th</sup> end of the carpet. Looking it, the Imam said, “You don’t touch because you are my guests. You stop there where were standing.” Thus, the Imam himself caught the 4<sup>th</sup> end of the carpet.” During the narration, tears flowed in the eyes of Jannat Ali Bhagat and continued by sobbing, “Our beloved Imam,

the emperor of the universe spread carpet with his servants for us. When it was spread, the Imam said to us, "Now you come here and sit down on the carpet." When the Imam sat on the sofa, then we sat on the carpet. The Imam asked them to come near him. The Imam talked with all of us in a friendly and jolly mood. In the meantime, the Imam asked to a certain Manjibhai of Kathiawar, "Tell me Manjibhai what you have done in Kathiawar?" He said, "Khudavind, in our village is one a certain Sathwara. I went to see him and I talked with him on the religious matters." Then, the Imam said, "Then?" He continued, "Khudavind, then one day, he took me to his garden, where he picked melon for me. Khudavind, it was a melon which I have never found in life. When it was halved, it was reddish." Hearing it, the Imam enjoyed in his narration and said, "Then?" He said, "He was satisfied and was ready to become Ismaili." Manjibhai of Kathiawar was speaking of Nur Muhammad Sathwara, who became an Ismaili around 1900. He came into the contact of Bhagat Kara Ruda and became a missionary and served the Imam till his last breath.

We now join the thread of our story about the Yeravada Palace. In 1897, a terrible famine broke out in Bombay and Poona, known as the Chhapanio Dugar. It took casualties of thousands of people. The Imam made not a little distinction of cast and creed and distributed grain, money and clothes generously to the affected people. With a view to provide job opportunities and means of livelihood to the famine stricken people, the Imam resolved to build a Palace in Poona on the site of 65 acres, whose construction continued day and night. If one person lifted a stone from one to another place in a day, he was given its wage. Thousands of persons in Poona and around it came here and worked even for a simple work were given double wages from the treasure of the Imam. Even, they were provided clothes and grains as extra allowances. In other word, the construction of the Yeravada Palace was a physical work, but its real objective was to give jobs to the afflicted persons. Eventually, the work started in 1897 and was prolonged and completed in 1900. It cost over twelve lac rupees. It was looked after by Lady Aly Shah.

### [13]

Yeravada Palace, also known as the Aga Khan Palace was constructed on the ancient Persian design. The precious carpets were spread on the floors. The invaluable chandeliers were hanged. The paintings showing Ismaili history were exhibited on the walls. The significant item was a big bed of Burma-teak, on which about 20 persons could take rest. A special ladder was made for this bed. Outside the palace was surrounded by garden having different types of flowers. The plant of the green- rose was an eye-catching, which was only grown in the Yeravada Palace. There were different kinds of vegetation and students of the agriculture used to come here to observe and study.

### [14]

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah mostly resided in London, but in his physical absence, the Yeravada Palace was never closed. The eminent Indian emperors, kings and Nawabs used to come here as guests. In 1954, Mawlana Hazar Imam and Prince Ayn Muhammad came in Poona and resided in the Yeravada Palace. Earlier, Prince Aly Khan visited India with his mother Princess Theresa at the age of 10 years in 1923. During their stay in India for 15 days in Bombay and Poona, they also visited the Yeravada Palace and stayed there for few days. Later, Prince Aly Khan visited India several times and resided in Yeravada Palace. It may be noted that before about 50 years, there cooked foods daily for 700 to 800 persons.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 1969, Mawlana Hazar Imam visited Poona and on that occasion said, "In 1897, my beloved grandfather had built this grand palace. My grandfather liked it too much. He had passed his childhood with his mother, Lady Aly Shah. Later, my grandfather presented this palace to my beloved father, Prince Aly Khan. After his death, this palace became my heritage along with my brother Prince Ayn Muhammad and sister

Princess Yasmin. Hence, this Palace is attached the remembrance of our four generations.”

In 1942, the British India arrested Ghandi, his wife Kasturba and the Secretary, Mahadev Desai and made their house-custody in the Yeravada Palace with the permission of Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah. Since then, it gained much popularity. Kasturba and Mahade Desai died here whose *samadis* were preserved in its compound, which was built with the marble on the expenses of Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah.

Mawlana Hazar also said in his above speech that I and my brother and sister feel immense happiness to present this palace to the Indian government.

The Yeravada Palace has been handed over to the Indian Government on Saturday, February 22, 1969 as a national memorial to Mahatma Gandhi in presence of Mawlana Hazar Imam. During the handing over ceremony, the Imam said in his speech that, "It was 1897 that my great grand-mother took in hand the construction of this palace and since then the property has been intimately connected with my family so much so that until very recently, close relations have been living here. My grandfather was deeply attached to this property having spent much of his childhood with his mother here, and it was late in the eve of his life that he decided to give the property to my late father. From him the palace has passed to my sister, my brother and myself and it has therefore been in the family for four generations. The palace might well have remained in the family for many more years as a much loved home had it not been for the events in 1942 for it was then that Mahatama Gandhi, his wife Kasturba and his Secretary, Mahadev Desai, were sent here to be kept in house custody. Thus the course of history transformed this property from a treasured family possession to one of National Significance....The members of the Ismaili community in India, my brother and I are sincerely happy on the occasion of the handing over to the Government of India of what is to become a National Monument to the Father of the Nation, and we hope that his memory and the noble and profoundly human ideas for which he lived and died will not only be

remembered, by practiced by all those who will visit this palace in the future."

Finally, it was turned into a National Monument on the occasion of the silver jubilee independence of India on August 15, 1972.

## [15]

Aga Jhangi Shah, the uncle of Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah went on pilgrimage with his family, and during his homeland journey, some unknown persons killed him and his son. Who were the killers? It remained in veil and nobody knew its clues. This sad incident shocked the Imam, resulting his illness. Soon after recovery, he went on outing in India and visited Agra to see Taj Mahel, the Red Fort of Delhi, Juma Mosque etc. On his way, he also visited the Anglo Muslim College in Aligadh. He met Sir Sayed Ahamed Khan and Nawab Mosin al-Mulk. During his conversation, the Imam revealed his plan to make Anglo Muslim College as the Aligadh University.

On his return to Bombay in 1897, when the age of the Imam was 20 years, his marriage took place in Poona with Shazadi Begum, the daughter of Aga Jhangi Shah. The news of the first marriage of the Imam was already announced 15 days ago in all over India, East Africa, Central Asia, Syria, Burma, Sri Lanka etc. The concourse of the Ismailis thronged at Poona, and they lodged in the Yeravada Palace and the Imam's gardens in Poona. The Ismailis in jubilation celebrated the occasion for 14 days. The Imam's kitchens provided breakfast, lunch and dinner including soft drinks to the guests. There was a huge performance of the traditional *dandia ra's*, *rasuda*, etc.

## [16]

Soon after the marriage, the Imam came in Bombay and attended the *mehmanis*. One Ismaili urged, "Ya Mawla! I am too much sinful. You

forgive my sins. I have committed major sins. What will happen with me if you will not forgive my sins.” The Imam said, “I have forgiven your all sins before many days.” He said, “Khudavind! Are you sure.” What type of stupid he was to reply the Imam in surprising words? When he realized, he clapped to his both cheeks and sought forgiveness and said in heart, “How stupid I am? Whether such point may be said to the Imam? On the other hand Imam looked him and said, “I have forgiven your all sins during my marriage.” He once again thought, “But I didn’t attend the marriage and celebrated the occasion in Gwadar.” Meanwhile, the Imam said, “I know that you played *dandia ra’s* on the occasion of my wedding and danced whole night. I was looking all these. But in view of your love with the Imam, I have forgiven your all sins. You continued your services and love.”

## [17]

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah said, “As Pir Sadruddin came here from Iran for the Ismaili mission, similarly Alijah Datoos Meru went Iran from here and spread the light of the religion.”

Alas, we don’t have adequate information of Alijah Datoos and the detail of his journey from India to Iran. We have information gathered from his relatives and friends.

Alijah Datoos Meru was an eminent missionary and a pious person in Gwadar. He could speak Persian and was well rooted in the *ginans*. He also attended the wedding of the Imam in Poona. After the marriage, he approached the Imam for his departure. The Imam said, “You have to go Iran.” He said in affirmative. The Imam said, “You know Persian. When you has been in Iran.” He said, “I know the Persian. I had gone to Iran for two times for business purpose and toured till Port Abbas.” The Imam said, “Good, now you start your journey and go to Tehran.”

“You depart on today. Is there any work in Gwadar?” asked the Imam. He said, “There is no any special work in Gwadar.” The Imam said, “You go to Bombay from here and sit in the ship. Today is Tuesday. The ship will

depart from Bombay on Wednesday. Do you follow me?" He replied in affirmative. The Imam said, "The ship will reach Port Abbas latest on Thursday morning. Then you will need to find from there the ride for Tehran, and will reach Tehran on Friday at about 10.00 am." The Imam also said, "There in Tehran, you have to go in the Jam'e Mosque." Alijah Datoos reverently replied the Imam in affirmative all the times. The next instructions of the Imam surprised him. The Imam said, "You have to offer Namaz in the Jam'e Mosque of Tehran, then you see the Pesh-imam and tell him that Mawlana Hazar Imam has sent you to meet you." He said, "Khudavind! May I say like you have told me and that too an Ithna Ashari and that too their great scholar and say that Hazar Imam has sent me?" The Imam said, "Of course, you have to tell him what I have told you. Then, you in Iran collect the details of the Ismailis, how they live? What is their quantity, what they are doing? You will get there its information." He said, "But, Khudavind!" The Imam said, "Don't utter 'But' Do what I have told you and conquer your journey. Don't worry. I will be with you."

There was nothing anything to ask, but he thought that the Imam intended him to go Iran and acquire the grade of the martyr. He resolved to go as per Imam's kind instructions.

Alijah Datoos Meru left Poona and reached Bombay by car. He embarked in the ship on Wednesday and reached Port Abbas at evening on Thursday. It was the time to offer Dua, he sat on the foot-path of the main market and offered Dua. When he utter at the end, *Hai Zinda-Qaim Paya* and prostrated, he opened his eyes and saw a huge crowd around him. Without any fear, he stood up and people asked what he was doing. He said in Persian, "I was offering my *Salat* according to my *tariqah*." He was asked, "Of which *tariqah* you are the Muslim?" He replied, "I am a Muslim of the Ismaili *tariqah*." They said, "Anyhow, are you the Muslim?" He said, "Praise to God. I am absolutely a Muslim and a slave of Mawla Murtza Ali. I believe him as my Lord." They asked, "But we have never heard a man of such *tariqah* ever before." Alijah Datoos Meru told them in brief, "We are the believers of the Imamate of Ismail, the son of Imam Jafar Sadik. It is our belief that the series of the Imamate is not ended."



He then proceeded but the crowd followed him because it was not a simple matter to convince them because they were the Ithna Asharis. He thought, “It is curious how I could speak before them like this? How these persons became silent and none of them opposed?” I heard voice in the inner heart of the Imam that, “I will be with you. Don’t worry.”

In Port Abbas, he stayed with one known person. He embarked from Port Abbas in a car for Tehran, where he reached in midday. He visited the Jam’e Mosque, where he offered with others the Friday Namaz. Soon after the Namaz, the people scattered. He came before the Pesh imam, clad with robe having a turban on head. He saw Alijah Datoos with utter surprise. Alijah Datoos on the other hand thought that he would order to kill me in a single order, but I have to meet him as per Imam’s instructions. With courage, he told him in Persian, “*man amadan az khidmat’e Khudavand Hazar Imam.*” (I have come from the holy presence of Khudavind Hazar Imam). Hearing it, the Pesh imam was astonished, looking him from head to feet to ascertain. He told him slowly, “Wherefrom you came?” He replied also slowly that he came from Poona. He asked his name. He said, “Alijah Datoos Merali.” He asked, “Are you from Gwadar?” He replied in affirmative. Hearing it, the Pesh imam came forward and embraced him. He noted that the Pesh imam was sobbing and weeping.

The Pesh imam took him to his residence and was asking, “Is the Imam well? Does he forget the sinful person like me?. I have come to know that the wedding of the Imam took place. Is it correct?” Alijah said, “I have attended the marriage in Poona, and from there I have come here directly.” Alijah asked, “How you know that I belong to Gwadar?” He said, “This is the great dignity of the Imam, I have inspired last night that a certain Datoos Meru of Gwadar, the Imam’s representative would come and see me after Friday Namaz.” Then, the Pesh imam said, “I am an Ismaili. My forefathers were the Ismailis. My wife and children are the Ismailis. Physically, we follow path of Ithna Ashari, but are the Ismailis in *batin*.”

They reached at his residence and he met his family members and took lunch and then talked and talked. The Pesh imam said about the Ismailis in Iran that, “The Ismailis reside in different scattered villages. Their huge

population is in Daylam, Mahallat, Kahek etc. They do not mind over their poverty, but their physical separation with the Imam is painful. They are anxious to see the Imam.”

Alijah Dattoo Meru then visited different Ismaili villages and conveyed them the Imam’s message. He completed his tour of three months and returned to Bombay and submitted his report to the Imam.

## [18]

The first marriage of the Imam did not last longer due to some reasons. Thus, the Imam could devote his time in other Muslim problems. The first task was to convert the Aligadh Muslim College into Aligadh University. He needed huge funds for it. He toured from one to another corner of India and met the Muslim leaders and rulers and asked for the donation.

One bitter enemy of the Imam, who spoke ill words for Imam and also published his malicious articles in the newspapers. The Imam came to his office and said to him, “I have not come for personal work, but for the cause of Islam. You should share your donation for the Aligadh University.” The person was surprised and fell into dilemma and could not understand what to reply? Finally, he took out his cheque book from the drawer and took out one cheque, signed and handed over to the Imam, and said, “You fill the amount whatever you like.” He also said the Imam to sit on the chair, why he was standing? The Imam said, “I will not do it. You fill the amount as per your wish.” After a long discussion, the person wrote a handsome amount in the cheque and handed over to the Imam. Then, the Imam took his hat from head and said, “Now you put something in it for the Muslims who are destitute, orphan.” Hearing this, tears came down from his eyes and gave one another cheque to the Imam and said, “Please put the hat on your head. Don’t make me sinful and shameful. You are certainly a great person. You are an angel and the descendant of the Holy Prophet.” The Imam expressed his thanks. The person said, “Sir, Listen to me. I have spoken ill words and defamed you. Please forgive me.” The Imam said, “I

don't remember it and never remember it. In my door, the forgiveness is for all. Don't take it in your heart. The patience is our asset. Forgiveness is our garment. These all I have inherited from our paternal grandfather. The Prophet and the grandfather, Hazrat Ali." Then the Imam departed.

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah thus collected 30 lac rupees, in which his contribution was one lac rupees. He travelled in the train and delivered sermons on every platform. Maula Shaukat Ali became his honorary Secretary in this campaign.

## [19]

On 11<sup>th</sup> August, 1893, a riot broke out between the Muslims and Hindus. Before its flame spread in other parts of India, the Imam made untiring efforts to restore peace and compromised the dispute.

In 1897, a famine broke out everywhere in India, resulting miserable condition of the people. The Imam provided them grains and clothes irrespective of cast and creed. In Hasanabad, Bombay and Poona, the foods were prepared for the afflicted ones for several months. Besides, the Imam gave handsome amount in the Famine Relief Fund.

The people of Bombay resolved to hold a fair and dinner in view of the services of the Imam. When its news reached to the Imam, he told to the Secretary of the Committee arranging the above program, "It is not possible for me to attend your program when thousands of people are suffering from affliction. It is my wish not to use your huge money in my mammoth welcome and in delicious dish. You save the money and donate in the Relief Funds.

In view of the Imam's services, Queen Victoria granted him the honorific title of Knight Commander of Indian Empire (K.C.I.E.). The British government also awarded him on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 1902 the title of Grand Cross of the Indian Empire (G.C.I.E.)

At the end of 1897, a horrible plague broke out in Bombay. Dr. Hafqin invented anti-plague injection in England and came in India for the treatment of the patients. But the people did not take its benefit, rumouring that the plague was a natural disaster. When it broke out, it was incurable. Thus, the plague began to spread in other parts of India. The government arranged for his residence near the Aga Hall in Bombay. When he got no response from the people, he came in Aga Hall to see Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah with a view to get his support. The Imam asked, what kind of support he wanted from him. He said, "Lord, you have thousands of followers whom you order to take anti-plague injection. Looking them, the other people will also join." Hence, Dr. Hafqin arranged a grand gathering near Aga Hall and invited the people. Dr. Hafqin first addressed the gathering, and outlined the risk of the disease of plague and said, "This is not a heavenly calamity which we cannot restrict. But it can be cured, to which I have invented an injection. One who will take, plague never came near him till death. Now let me know who is first ready to take injection." The people looked one another, considering that the British had a plan to wipe out the Indian generations through this injection. When none responded, the Imam came forward and took off his coat and offered the doctor to give him injection at first. The doctor prepared injection. The Ismailis and other people were surprised. Some Ismailis began to weep what happened to their Imam. Someone went to Lady Aly Shah to report it. Meanwhile, the doctor injected the Imam. The Imam smiled and addressed the people, "Look, I have taken injection. It did not harm me. It will also not harm you and rescue you from the risk of the fatal disease." Looking it, the Ismailis came forward, and other people also followed.

The Imam liked horse-racing and said, “The horse and its rider are the symbols of the tradition of our ancestors.” In the Escot’s plain, Zulqar Nain, the friend of the Imam was watching the horse-racing. In the meantime, the Imam came near him and asked, “Are you racing of the tops?” He said, “If your honour will give me satisfactorily tip, then I will take risk of my clothes” (means he will put in biting his own clothes). The Imam laughed and said, “Let your clothes remain with you. It may be the value of the half rule of the first king.” Zulqar Nain asked, “Sir, what does it mean the value of the half rule.”

Then, the Imam related a story: There was a king. He once became sick. He treated from eminent doctors, but it made no difference and the disease increased. The king was faded up. He left all medicine and dismissed the doctors. Meanwhile, one famous doctor came, who said, “If the king may put on the clothes of one who is perfectly happy, then the king will recover his health.”

The king and his attendants became happy on the simple therapy for his treatment. The king’s men wandered around the king’s domain and met with the persons who were perfectly happy and demanded their clothes, but none of them claimed to be happy. They failed to find the desired person. The frustrated king announced in his domain, “One who will give me his clothes who is happy, I will give him my half rule as a gift.” Many days passed away, but no happy man came forward. Once the king’s men saw a person at the end of the city near a pond. Smile appearing all the times on his face. His eyes were brilliant. Happiness was brimful in his body. The king’s men asked him, “Are you happy one?” He said, “I have no displeasure. I have so many happiness.” The king’s men asked, “Will you give us your clothes? You will earn half rule of the king.” Hearing it, the person burst into laughter. The king’s men said, “Why are you laughing? Did we tell you any joke?” He said, “You have told more than a joke. Look at me. Is there any clothe” The king’s men watched minutely that he was a naked.

At the end of the above story, Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah told to his friend Zulqar Nain, “You understand. This is the story of the cloth of the person who is happy.”

## [22]

In 1903, Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah came in Gondal and became the royal guest because Bhojraj Sinh, the heir-apparent was the friend of the Imam. Imam’s friendship with him can be judged from the fact that during the wedding of Bhojraj Sinh, the Imam presented him his own bungalow.

Soon after his meeting with Bhojraj Sinh, the Imam visited the Jamatkhana, where huge Ismailis assembled for the *didar*. Before Imam’s arrival in Gondal, Varas Hirji was expired. The Imam appointed Varas Pirbhai in his place and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and said, “Varas Hirji was much virtuous believer. There will be few like him in the world. He was certainly a virtuous believer.”

On that evening, the Imam with Varas Pirbhai came in the palace of Bhojraj Sinh. There was a big tent erected near the palace, where the Hindus were assembled and the pandits were performing ceremonial ritual. The Imam approached there and stood, then walked on other side with Varas Pirbhai. The Imam said, “Have you seen?” He said that he too had seen. The Imam laughed and said, “My coming over here was due to see the performance of the ceremonial ritual by the pandits. This ritual is not a simple, but God has to come here to witness and thus, I came here. These people did not look at me and were busy in the ritual. Congratulation to you Ismailis that God has given you such vision that you get the *didar* of Murtza Ali and that *didar* is being given to you constantly.” Varas Pirbhai reverently said, “Mawla, you are true, absolutely true.”

The Imam then came in the village of Kotada, where Mukhi Mawjibhai Hirji had built a new Jamatkhana with his own expenses and presented to the Imam.

## [23]

Haji Bibi was the daughter of Aga Jhangi Shah, the uncle of Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah. She filed a case against the Imam, claiming that she had right of property of the Imam. The Imam and his mother Lady Aly Shah were summoned several times in the court. Haji Bibi claimed that the ancestors of the Imam were the Ithna Asharis and there was right of the family whatever the Ismailis offered to the Imam.

The court deputed their men in Asian and African countries to collect details of the properties of the Imam. The Ismailis came forward in Bombay court and gave their statements solemnly that they had been converted by Pir Sadruddin who was sent by Imam Islam Shah in India. They were the Ismailis and nothing to do with the Ithna Asharis; and whatever the Ismailis offered voluntarily to the Imam, the Imam is its sole owner and there was no right of his relatives in it.

This case was known as the Haji Bibi Case of 1908 (Case no. 729/1905). The court asked following questions to the Imam:

**Q.** Have you found any new religion for your followers?

**A.** Not at all. This is absolutely wrong.

**Q.** Have you compiled the Gujrati Dua?

**A.** Not at all.

**Q.** Any other type of worship?

**A.** Not a single word.

**Q.** Are your grandfather, father and yourself considered as the Pesh-imam?

**A.** It is wrong. There are thousands of Pesh-imam in the world, who get salary of 20 to 30 rupees.

**Q.** Will you give evidence that Aga Hasan Ali Shah was the Ismaili Imam?

**A.** Firstly, in the Aga Khan Case of 1866, Mr. Harward confirmed him the

Ismaili Imam. Secondly, in 1850, during the Aga Khan Case, Aga Hasan Ali Shah declared himself as the Imam and the Imami Ismailis to his followers. He declared his religion as an old and joined with Imam Hasan Ala Zikrihis-Salam, who was a famous Ismaili Imam in the history. Thirdly, Justice Joseph Arnold in his verdict of the Aga Khan Case-1866 declared him as an Ismaili Imam. Fourthly, in the books, such As “**History of Persia**” by Watson, “**Marco Polo**” by Dr. Youls Knotes, “**Rose of Calcutta,**” “**Tarikh-i Rashidi**” “**Nasikhu Tawarikh,**” “**Rautu Safa,**” “**National Dictionary of Ibn Khalikan**” etc. have confirm our religion as the Ismailis. Fifthly, my grandfather arrived in India in 1840. Thousands his *gupti* followers, who resided in Gujrat and Punjab, who performed physically as the Hindus and according to the Ithna Asharis, such people go to hell, but my grandfather advised them to retain their Hindu way of living physically and performed Ismailism secretly. This is the evidence that my grandfather was not the Ithna Ashari. Sixthly, in the period of my grandfather, the Dua was recited by the Ismailis, which will never be performed by the Ithna Asharis. Seventhly, when my father handed over me the “Noor,” he told me that he was himself an Imam including his father since the time of Hazrat Ali. The Ithna Asharis never act on such faith. Eighthly, in the Jamatkhana, there were some rituals since the time of my grandfather, which the Ithna Asharis never do it.

Finally, the Justice gave his verdict in favour of Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah. On 4<sup>th</sup> January, 1912, the Imam said in Karachi, “During a last decade, much cleanliness has been done in your religion. The cases you have heard and seen, which resulted your religion famous.”

## [24]

Being disappointed in the Haji Bibi Case, the Ithna Asharis, they applied many arrows to hit our Imam and the Ismailis through newspapers and booklets. These Ithna Asharis henceforward became known as the Khoja Ithna Asharis because they left Ismaili community and joined with Haji



Bibi. This anti-group also excited the Sunnis against the Ismailis. Since they knew the *ginans* and published following *ginan* in the newspapers to arouse the Sunnis in their campaign:

***Rov'e rov'e kuda sunni sagh sach'e shah na sibhanna;***

Means, "The liar Sunnis will weep, who are the dogs, who don't know the true Imam."

The Khoja Ithna Asharis excited the Sunnis that the Ismaili Pir had branded them liars and dogs. The Sunnis approached the Ismaili leaders to clarify it. The leaders were puzzled and went to the bungalow of the Imam to solve the problem. The Imam told the leaders, "Go and inform the Sunnis that our Pir had told dogs only to the liar Sunnis. If you are not liars and true, then it does not apply you."

The leaders informed the Sunnis that their enemies have aroused them against us. Our Pir has told dogs to those Sunnis who were liars. Let us know either you are liars or true. They said that they were true. The leaders told them that then the *ginan* did not apply to you.

## [25]

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah visited Gwadar for three times during his Imamate. His first visit was in December, 1894 when the Imam went to the Persian Gulf by sea, he took an opportunity to see his followers in Gwadar. In Gwadar, the Ismailis spread a rumour that the Imam intended to visit Kerbala.

The old persons relate that once in Hasanabad, Bombay, the Imam was dressed in black suit during the 10<sup>th</sup> Moharram. On one side of the Imam stood Chief Missionary Hussaini Pir Mohammad and on other side was Bawa Safdar Ali. In those days, the procession of the Moharram was arranged by Lady Aly Shah in Hasanabad. The people were beating their breasts and the Imam also slowly was putting his hand at his breast. Looking it, the Chief Missionary Hussaini became surprised and asked,

“Mawla, why you are doing so?” The Imam said, “Look at the compound at downward, where the people are exclaiming ‘Ya Hussain, ‘Ya Hussain’ I also put my hand on my breast by telling them, I am Hussain, I am Hussain.” Then the Imam said, “Hussain is alive and shall remain alive.”

Coming back to our topic, Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah said in Gwadar on 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1894 that, “You don’t interfere in the secrecy of God. I have to do many works. I will not reside all the times in India. I am a darwish. I will visit everywhere.” On those days, the age of the Imam was 17 years. The Ismailis in Gwadar considered that the Imam intended to visit Kerbala. The Imam said, “I will not go to Kerbala. Do you think that the Imam is going to Kerbala? Whose *ziarat* I may do there? Imam Hussain is omnipresent everywhere and is present before you. I don’t want to go Kerbala, but will go to Basra for change of climate. Besides, I have to work for the jamat. As the craftsman builds house, he makes everything ready, and similarly, I will perform all the works of the jamat.”

In those days, the story of the Moharram was read in the jamat. The *marsiya* was also recited, even the *minbar* of Hazrat Abbas was in many Jamatkhana. All these were according to the time when there was the British rule in India – a secular state. These were gradually removed in the jamat. In his first visit to Gwadar, when the Imam came in the compound of the Jamatkhana, there was a flag on a pole. The Imam asked, “What is this?” He was told that it was the flag of Hazrat Abbas. The Imam said, “All right. Now you remove it even its pole.”

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah arrived in Gwadar for the second time in 1905. The sea port of Gwadar was shallow, where the steamer could not be anchored. It has to stay about two miles away from the shore. The people of the steamer had to disembark in the steam boats, which could come at the shore. The jamat assembled at the shore to welcome the Imam. The governor of Gwadar being appointed by the Sultan of Muscat was a Sunni, but he too came to receive the Imam. The young Ismailis walked into the sea to receive the Imam. The steam boat could not move on due to shallow water, therefore, a chair for the Imam was arranged. The Imam sat on the

chair and the Ismailis took the chair on their shoulders and walked into water towards the shore, which was about a furlong away. The Imam was in good mood and told the Ismailis to lift his chair in the same way towards the Jamatkhana. There the governor received the Imam. The Imam talked with him in Arabic, to which he was highly astonished.

The Imam stayed in Gwadar between 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 1905 and 5<sup>th</sup> April, 1905.

## [26]

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah made his first East African journey in 1899. He went to see his mother to take permission, but his mother, Lady Aly Shah did not give permission. The Imam said, "It is necessary for me to go Africa, where my jamat reside. In order to give them *didar*, blessings and guidance, my visit to Africa is necessary." Lady Aly Shah finally agreed and put two conditions and said, "I heard that there is an insect, called Dudu. It enters the body through the bottom of legs, therefore, you have to clean your legs for two times. You also do not eat mango, because in Africa, the mango contains gems, resulting pain in the legs. You promise that you will follow my instructions in Africa."

It must be noted that the Imam continued to follow his mother's advice throughout his life. During the Diamond Jubilee in Africa in 1946, someone sent best quality of mangoes to the Imam, but the Imam refused to take it by saying, "I have given my words to my late mother that I would never eat mango in Africa."

The Imam arrived in Zanzibar on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 1899, where he stayed till 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1899 means his stayed for 3 months and 20 days. Shivji Haji invited the Imam in his bungalow lying at sea-shore. The Imam visited and Shivji Haji presented it to the Imam, which was accepted. The Imam came at its first floor and saw the sea-side. Varas Rehmatullah Hemani said, "Mawla, this bungalow is built on the sea-shore and one can see the ships and steamers from here." The Imam said, "When I arrived in Zanzibar by

sea, I first saw this bungalow from my steamer. I was thinking that how nice it was. There was a French tourist with me in the steamer, who said, “This bungalow belongs to the Sultan.”

Rahim Lilani said, “Ya Mawla, this bungalow does not belong to the Sultan, but it is yours because you are the Sultan of the Sultans.” The Imam laughed to hear it.

## [27]

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah has noted that the trade and services of the Ismailis were satisfactorily, but their health was not good because the living in Zanzibar was based on old style and also the shortfall of clean air was responsible for their ailing condition. Hence, the Imam allotted his big bungalow to the jamat to be used as the Club and said, “You have known that I have given you for sports to the young Panjebhai, which is not only for the sports, but it has thousands of other advantages. The patients should go there for having clean air and walk in the garden for their health. If you play and exercise, you will be physically strong and will create good friendship among you.”

The Imam also said, “If you will sit at leisure, the children will trouble you. The time of the evening is not for the trade. If you will sit at leisure, your thoughts will wander in the world. If you will participate at evening in the sports, you will forget the fake thoughts in mind. If you all rich and poor will play together, you will become one and friends. The wind of the wealth in the mind of the rich will be shunned and inferiority in the mind of the poor will go away. You all are one *momin*.”

The Imam then came in the gallery, while the jamat was at down side. The Imam said, “The foundation of your religion is like an iron, while other religions’ foundation is like the wood, which will become weak, but your religion will be strong. The example of your religion is also like a fort. If you will remain in your fort, nobody will cheat you. You have love for me,

therefore, I am much happy with you and Mawla Murtza Ali will grant you its reward here and hereafter.”

One person on that occasion asked the Imam, “Ya Mawla, I have taken a vow to visit Kerbala, but I could not go. You please forgive me.” The Imam said, “One whose heart is pure, it means he is in the Kerbala day and night. If one’s heart is impure and visits Kerbala throughout his life, it will procure no benefit.”

The Imam then forgave his vow and said to the jamat, “You must get your vows forgiven in the Jamatkhana. Close all the vows other than the Jamatkhana and continue to cling with the house of Mawla Ali, Khanavadan.

## [28]

When Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah reached the age of 20 years, he resolved to visit England. He came before his mother for permission and said, “Mom, my intention is to visit Wilayat.” She asked, “What means by Wilayat? I ask to know where Wilayat is?” The Imam said, “England” Hearing it, she began to think for two minutes and said, “Is it necessary to go there?” The Imam said, “Yes, it is necessary. You know that I am the Imam of the age and have to do many works.” She said, “Look at my age. I am like a dropping leave. In case, anything may happen when you are in the Wilayat, then in my last moment...” The Imam said, “Your last moment will be excellent, which has yet many years. When you close your eyes, I assure that I and your grandson will be present. Don’t worry about that moment. At that time, there will be two cradles in the house of your grandson.” At last, she accorded permission to her son to go England with tearful eyes.

Imam hence arrived in London. Queen Victoria welcomed him and gave him a seat beside her on the chair of Jesus Christ. The English newspaper, “**Saint Gazette**” published following report on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 1898:-

“In the great church of Saint Paul, an auspicious levy was held by Her Majesty Queen Victoria which was attended by Consels of all the countries and H.H. The Aga Khan was also invited at the occasion when the Aga Khan went there, the Queen herself went to receive him at the door and welcomed him with great respect and made him sit on the throne of the Jesus Christ. As soon as the Aga Khan sat on the throne, the Queen said to all the Consels, “What is the reason of your surprise and what you all are thinking of?”

The Consels replied that upto now many Indian kings have come to Europe but you have given more honour to the Aga Khan and even made him sit on the throne of our Lord Jesus. What is the reason of this?” The Queen in reply said that you are all wise, prudent and learned and that you know better than me the reason of this. In short, I must tell you that we have never seen our religious leader Jesus Christ and that without doubt, the Aga Khan is our same leader considering this, I have made him sit on our Pope’s throne.”

On hearing this, all Consels were highly surprised and wired to their respective countries about the above fact. Consequently, the rulers of France, Germany, Italy, Belgium etc. sent telegrams to the Aga Khan requesting him to give them honour of visiting their countries, which the Aga Khan accepted.

Then, the Imam visited different countries of Europe. On that occasion, the Sultan of Zanzibar awarded the Imam, the title of “Brilliant Star of Zanzibar.” The Iranian emperor awarded the title of “Shams al-Humayun” or the “Star of Persia.”

The Imam first came in Germany, whose emperor, Abdul Hamid awarded the title of “First Class Prusian of the Royal Crown.” In 1900, the Imam arrived at Turkey where he was accorded warm welcome and honoured the Imam with the title of “Star of Turkey.”

## [29]

On 16<sup>th</sup> November, 1903, Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah made his first tour of Kutchh. It was the time of Varas Moledina Megji in Kutchh, an eminent Ismaili leader. With his untiring efforts, he managed to bring Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah in Kutchh. The Imam visited Kutchh for 17 days, in which he granted *didar* in four cities, i.e., Mundra, Bhadresar, Nagalpur and Kera.

In Mundra, one bhagat eagerly wished to recite the *ginan* on the stage during the *didar*. He requested the Kamadia, which was denied. Then, when the Imam came in Bhadresar, he too came there and requested the leader to allow him to recite a stanza of the *ginan* before the Imam, but failed to get the chance. The Imam then arrived in Nagalpur, where this bhagat also came and requested the leader for the recitation of the *ginan* before the Imam. The leader rudely refused him. This time the Imam heard and asked the leader, “What is the matter?” He said, “Khudavind, this bhagat wants to recite the *ginan*,” The Imam said, “He wants to recite a stanza of the *ginan* and you have been refusing him from Mundra.” The leader became to fear, to which the Imam said, “He does not need the title or the shawl, prize or a post in the Council. He only wants recitation of the *ginan* and you restricted him.” Then, the Imam called the bhagat to come on the stage and recite the *ginan*. The bhagat became immensely happy. He began to recite the *ginan*, “*Eji dhan dhan a’ajano dadalo, am’e Ali var paya.*” When he completed the *ginan*, the Imam summoned him near his chair and said, “Are you now happy?” He said, “Khudavind, I am so happy today as if you have granted me the kingdom of whole Kutchh.”

## [30]

It was the month of Moharram during Imam’s visit in Kutchh. Imam found that some Ismailis were observing mourning in the camp. The Imam came before those Ismailis and said, “Don’t mourn. I am the Imam. I am Imam

Hussain.” Then, the Imam further said, “If you will have courage and knowledge, none can deceive you. It is sufficient to shut the mouth of the enemy by asking them only one question, ‘Where is your Imam? Where is he?’ They will reply that their Imam is alive but disappeared. You ask them, why Imam disappears? Does he fear with the people? In the world, it is the main work of the Imam to remain apparent in every time to guide his followers. Do you know how much troubles were upon the Prophet? Even then, he declared that he was the Prophet and did not disappear. Do you know the hardship faced by Imam Hussain in Kerbala, but he did not fear or disappear. If the Imam is not present in the world, everyone will become infidels.”

### [31]

In January, 1929, Rashid Abdullah, the Mukhi of Kera, Kutchh has sent his resignation to the Imam from the post of the Mukhi. Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah did not accept his resignation and deputed Kamadia Kassim Ali Hussain Ali of Bombay Darkhana Jamatkhana in Kera, Kutchh with a message that, “You personally go to Kera and read my *farman* before Mukhi Rashid Abdullah that, “You are a true *momin*. Due to serving real services, I do not accept your resignation and continue to serve the jamat.” When the Mukhi heard it, he withdrew his resignation and served the jamat with more and more enthusiasm and this is the reason that the jamat of Kutchh still remembers him.







