Office of the 54th Dai al-Mutlaq  
His Holiness Syedna Taher Fakhruddin  
Head of the Dawoodi Bohra Community

Press Statement

His Holiness Syedna Taher Fakhruddin Saheb TUS has always been concerned about the protection of the rights of women and especially girl children in the community. Syedna Fakhruddin Saheb wishes to issue this statement now to clear the confusion caused by misguided statements made by those who have usurped control of the community. They have made statements contrary to the faith limiting the education of the girl child, forcing a glass ceiling on the role women play in society, and undermining the position women have in a marriage. Women in the community have been bringing their plight to Syedna Fakhruddin Saheb, especially a group of women who have recently brought to Syedna Fakhruddin Saheb’s attention the trauma which girl children undergo when circumcision (khafz) is carried out in an irregular and improper fashion for many years.

In view of the trauma that many girls undergo when this procedure is carried out, and in keeping with the law of the land, Syedna Taher Fakhruddin Saheb says that khafz (khatna) of girls should only be allowed after they attain legal adulthood, after which they are free to make their individual decision whether to do the, medically, legally and religiously sanctioned CDH or CHR procedures (analogous to khafz). This is in line with the faith tradition which says that if the procedure is done it should not be done when the girl is a minor. In contrast, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is an un-Islamic and horrific practice that Syedna Fakhruddin Saheb condemns categorically.

His Holiness the late Dr. Syedna Taher Saifuddin Saheb RA, the 51st Dai al-Mutlaq, in the early part of the 1900s, seeing the law of the land and the needs of modern society, clarified several temporal traditions of the faith. For example, he gave clear instructions to the community that men and women should be allowed to marry only after they reach legal adulthood, even though the faith tradition allows them to be married after attaining physical maturity. It goes without saying that these instructions have continued and continue to be given today by Syedna Fakhruddin Saheb.