The Imamahahiya Order is better known in Gujarat as the Satpanth (i.e. the true path). Sayyad Imam-ud-Din Abdul-Rahim, better known as Imamshah, the eponymous founder of the Pirana sect descended from Dir Sadr-ud-Din (birth A.H.689/A.D.1290; death A.H.732/A.D.1330), the head of the Ismaili missionaries in India and the tombs of his father and grandfather may still be seen at Uchh near Bhavnagpur. They belonged to the line of the descendants of the seventh Imam, Musa Kazim bin Imam Ja'far. The forefather of Imamshah, Sayyad Shams-ud-Din Sabzawari (birth A.H.560/A.D.1166–death A.H.675/A.D.1277) had migrated to India from the northern part of Adharbaijan and settled at Multan.

1. Miranshahjiv- Manazil-ul-Aqtab (MS)
2. He was so called because he was born in a village named Sabzvar situated near Gazha.
His tomb lies at Ucfcuv. Imamshah was born there on Rabī‘ I 27, A.H.856 (A.D.1432). His father Abū Qalandar Ḥasan Kabīr-ud-Dīn (birth A.H.726/A.D.1326), the son of Fīr Sadr-ud-Dīn died when he was a mere child.

He joined the burial procession and in the very graveyard, he set up a claim to his share in the ancestral property before his brothers. But none paid any heed to his demand. At that time, the boy, Imam-ud-Dīn was by the side of the dead. To the surprise of all who were present, the hand of the dead body with a rosary and some sugar was found raised up and turned to Imam-ud-Dīn to put the same into his hand. On receiving the same, he heard a voice bidding him to go to Persia and to lay a claim to his share of the property before his uncle. After the death ceremony was over, the boy proceeded to Kirmān and met his uncle Sadr-ud-Dīn who gave over to him the
hereditary belonging both earthly and religious without any hesitation. After some time, the uncle advised him to go to Gujarat to preach among the people the tenets of his order and he went to Girmathâ in Gujarat. There he acquired great success with the rural population. He settled at the village of Girmathâ, about nine miles off Ahmadabad. Some time during the early period of the reign of Sultan Mahmud by I Begada (A.D. 1459-1513) and the force of his preaching and his miracles succeeded in obtaining proselytes from the Leuvâ and Kadîa kanbis, the Shekhdâs and other sections of the Hindu agricultural population of those parts.

One of his miracles was the sudden fall of torrential rain as the result of his prayer when people were suffering from hardships on account of the scarcity of water in the area.

1. It is a village near Ahmadâbâd.
Soon after this Sultan Mahmud I Begada (A.D. 1459-1513) happened to be at Girmatha and heard about Imamshah's miraculous powers. He paid a visit to him and was very much pleased with him. After some time some Brahmin pilgrims en route to Kashi made a halt there. The saint while returning from his usual practice of recreation saw them and inquired of them about their destination. They told him that they were going to Kashi for the darshan of the Lord Krishna.

The saint said, "You will be able to fulfil this desire of yours even here." The following night the Brahmins found themselves in their dream take a bath in the Ganges, move in the city of Kashi and have the darshan of Shri Krishna. Early in the morning after they awoke they approached the saint and narrated the whole case. They expressed their desire to accept Islam and became his followers.

The saint then successfully preached the tenets of his order in the villages round about Pirānā. As a result he had a very big number of followers.

Imām-ud-Dīn died in A.H.918 (A.D.1513) and was buried in a fine mausoleum which he is said to have erected at considerable cost during his life time at 2 Pirānā (i.e. the seat of the Fir) as the place came to be called.

Imāmshāh never kept away any money with himself. He distributed among the poor all that he received in charity from his followers. Finding him take out money from beneath his usual one and the same seat, a malignant man thought that there was a treasure there; so he went there at night and searched for it but he was disappointed not to find anything there. Next day, in the evening when the saint distributed money to the poor according to his usual practice, he gave him a

1. There is a legend to the effect that at the foundation was laid a golden brick which Imāmshāh had brought when he visited paradise during his stay in Persia (M.S. Commissariat- A History of Gujarāt, Vol.I, p.135, footnote 2.)
2. Situated at the distance of about nine miles from Ahmadābād.
quantity double of what he gave to others. The latter asked for the reason. The saint said, "You have laboured hard at night and were disappointed". Hearing the words, the fellow fled away at once.

Imāmshāh studied Sanskrit and passed a number of years in company of 'yogis' from whom he learnt the Vedantic philosophy. He was a versatile writer and wrote numerous works like the Jugeshwar Abdunagman on Sufism; the Mur Gavantri on the creation; the Parb Pandawaw containing the story of the Pandawas, the Si Harfi containing thirty precepts of the Vedanta philosophy; the Atharvadī Gavantri on the worship of divinity; the Jannat-pūrī on the description of his travel to Persia; the Satvarni Moti containing miracle-stories; Bavan Gati on Eschatology; the Naklank Gita on incarnations of the Imāms, the Shiksha Patri on religious precepts; the Gorvani and the Yogvani on mysticism.

1. Mawlah Muhmmad Najib-ul-Ghanī- Mādhab-ul-Madhāhib, p.373; Mirânsâhjîl- Manâdhib-ul-Aqṭâb (MS)
IMAMSHĀHĪ TENETS

As regards their fundamental religious doctrines, the Imamshāhis acknowledge the unity of the one supreme Being who is Allah and accept Muḥammad as his apostle and Prophet and this essential creed marks them out as faithful Muslims. They consider their Imam as a divinely inspired leader and participating in the substance of God. The Quran is regarded as Divine revelation and it is allegorically interpreted or explained by the Imams by the method which is known as alanker. These allegories are to be found in their texts written by the early Ṣiras and which are known as gnana, the recitation of which generally takes the place of the reading of the Quran, for the kakas are rarely familiar with the Arabic alphabet.

Imamshāh and his successors deliberately left theological and moral system of their converts undisturbed in order to put as little obstacle as possible in the way of their proselytizing activities. The result has been that the spirit of caste and its regulations still dominate the customs and practically the whole life of the members of the community who are thus in their manners and dress
hardly distinguishable from the Hindus marriage and
other ceremonies are largely regulated by the customs
of the caste to which devotees belong. Among the
Matia's followers the dead are cremated but the bones
which remain are buried. Those who can afford it, pay
large amounts for permission to bury these bones in
the courtyard in front of Imamshah's mausoleum at
Piranā which is paved with scores of small slabs
bearing the names of the deceased in Gujarāti. The
followers who are known as kākās are buried without
2
being cremated.

1. The gnans (from Sanskrit 'gnanam'—knowledge) are
    sacred hymns or versified didactic or ecstatic
treatises written in the form of slokas in various
vernaculars.

2. M. S. Commissariat—History of Gujarāt, p. 139-140.
to the royal court so that an inquiry could be
instituted about his religious beliefs. Shujaatkhān
sent a party of his men to Pirana to produce Shāhji
before him in Ahmadābād. The saint having agreed to
accompany them started but committed suicide by taking
poison on the way after reaching Ahmadābād. Bale
Muhammad Shāh was declared by the followers as his
successor.

The Momnas of the central districts of Gujarat
and Matīās of Khāndesh left their homes in large
numbers and attacked Ahmadābād. While crossing the
Narmada, their passage was blocked by the then Mughal
Officer at Broach and in the skirmish that followed,
he was killed. The insurgents, having crossed the river,
took possession of the fort of Broach and made all
arrangements for its defence.

1. When Shāhji was brought to Ahmadābād, he prayed to God
and said, "You know me better, I prefer to come to
you rather than ask justice from a human being."
With these words, his soul flew away from his body.
His dead body was taken to Pirānā and was buried
there. [Sayyad Abid Ali- Tawārikh-i-Pīrzādā Imāmshāhī,

p.99.]
An attempt made by the Mughal officer-in-charge of Baroda to dislodge them failed. When the matter was reported to Aurangzeb, he despatched Shuja'at Khan, Nazar Ali Khan and Mubāriz Khan Bābī for reinforcements. The fort was invested. The insurgents had no means for warfare. So when some soldiers of the imperial troops scaled the walls at an unguarded spot, and having got in opened the gates, the investing army rushed into it. The Mornās fought bravely but were rendered helpless and many of them were slain. Several of them while fleeing for life threw themselves into the Narmada and 1 were drowned.

Shuja'at Khan then arrested Bāle Muhammad Shāh and sent him to Delhi. In view of his young age, the emperor entrusted him to the Qāżī 'Abdullāh for care. When he attained puberty he was sent with proper escort to Pirānā. But before long he had a quarrel with his

step-mother named Rāje Tāhērā; so he left the place for Gulberg in the Dāccan and settled there. He preached the tenets of his sect amongst the people in the locality and he became very popular.

He died there in A.H. 1046 (A.D. 1637) but his dead body was brought to Pīrānā, the place of his parentage and was buried there.

SAYYAD NUR MUHAMMAD SHAH

Nothing is known about his birth date but he was born at Pirana. His father Sayyad Mustafā had seen in a dream before his birth, Prophet Muḥammad who had informed him that he would get a son who would turn out to be a great saint.

Sayyad Nur Muḥammad Shāh studied various arts and sciences at a very early age under his father. Later on, he attached himself to the Imāmī sect and moved in villages around about his birth place for its propagation. In consequence he had a very big number of followers who were known as Nūrshāhīs.

He died in A.H. 1089 (A.D. 1679) and lies buried at Pirana.

1. Sayyad Ḥabīb Ḥabībī, Tawārīkh-i-Pirzāda Imāmshāhī, p.103.