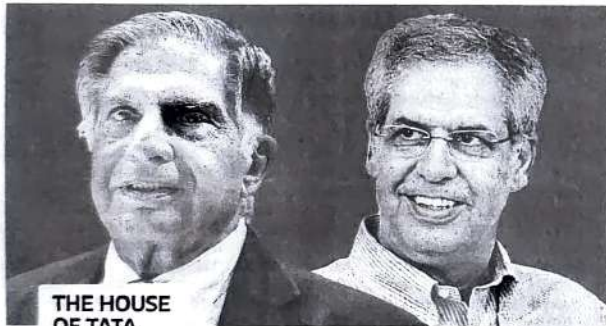


# Ratan, Noel Related to Tata Group Founder, says New Book

Naval Tata's father's lineage was previously shrouded, although it was known that his mother was a niece of Jamsetji Tata's wife



**THE HOUSE OF TATA**

Ratan and Noel Tata's father Naval Hormusji Tata and group founder Jamsetji Tata have a common ancestor in Bhikha Tata

**Kala Vijayraghavan & Sagar Malviya**

**Mumbai:** The late Tata Group chairman Ratan Tata and his successor and half-brother Noel Tata share a direct bloodline with the group founder Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, according to a new biography of Ratan Tata.

Retired bureaucrat Thomas Mathew, in his *Ratan Tata: A Life*, claims that historical records show Ratan and Noel Tata's father Naval Hormusji Tata—adopted from the extended family—shares a common ancestor with the Tata group founder.

Naval Tata's association with Jamsetji's family through his

mother (a niece of the founder's wife) is known but a direct bloodline between him and Jamsetji has not previously been documented.

Opinion, however, is divided on whether the new revelation has a

**Info on Naval Tata's blood lineage came from records kept by Parsi priests in Navsari**

material impact on the affairs or succession planning at the sprawling industrial group.

Ratan Tata, 86, former chairman of Tata Trusts and the group, passed away early in October. Noel Tata, 67, succeeded him as the chairman of Tata Trusts, which owns 66% stake in group holding company Tata Sons. Ratan and brother Jimmy were born to Naval Tata's

first wife Sooni Commissariat, while Noel is Naval's son from his second wife Simone Dunoyer.

The biography claims that the information that Naval was related to the founder by blood relationship emerged while examining certain historical records in the custody of Parsi priests in Navsari, Gujarat.

Naval was adopted by Navajbai Tata, after the passing away of her husband Sir Ratan Tata, the second son of Tata Group founder Jamsetji. It also so happened that Naval's mother Ratanbai was the favourite cousin of Navajbai's late husband. Ratanbai was the daughter of Cooverbai, sister of Jamsetji Tata's wife.

**Important in Family-promoted Biz** ►► 7



# Issue Important in Family-promoted Biz

## ►► From Page 1

However, the lineage of Naval's father Hormusji had remained unclear. Naval had prepared a document titled 'My Branch of Tata Family', in which he claimed that his great-grandfather Navroji Tata was the second cousin of the founder Jamsetji. But he was unable to establish the claim.

The book says that RP Narla, archivist of the Tata Archives, Pune, has confirmed that the document was prepared by Naval Tata but said that beyond Naval's father, the Tata Archives had no 'reference' to his ancestry.

"While writing this book, we thought that it would be interesting to dive deep and see where it would lead us, especially because there were many satraps who had tried to run Ratan down in the initial days saying that he was not even a Tata," Mathew told ET. "Finally, after a lot of perseverance and pleading, we were able to unearth the ancestry and establish that both Jamsetji and Naval Tata have a common ancestor in Bhikha Tata."

According to the book, the "original records of the 'genealogy' of the Tata family, which are with the 'Bhagar-sath' section of the Parsi pri-

ests at the Navsari Atashbehram and Vadi Daremeher Fund, reveal that Bhikha Tata was the common ancestor of both Jamsetji and Naval Tata. In a manner, this relationship makes Ratan the only chairman of Tata Sons who is related to the founder through blood (paternally) and association (maternally)." "In other words, they have the same blood line, something that is important in family-promoted conglomerates or companies," Mathew said.

It is an observation Homi Ranina, ex-trustee of Parsi Panchayat and late jurist Nani Palkhivala's nephew, shares. "A clear Tata lineage matters for the Parsi community which takes great pride in the Tata name," he told ET. "Earlier, Parsis would have eight to ten children, unlike today. The Tata family is from Navsari and Naval was adopted because he shared the same bloodline with Tatas. Both JRD and Ratan did not have children, but Noel and his family will keep the name and values going."

Noel Tata's three children—Leah, Neville, and Maya—were appointed to the boards of five philanthropic organisations of Tata Trusts in May. Bachi Karkaria, prominent columnist and member of the Parsi community, said that Parsis have always felt a deep, emotional connection with the Tata family.