

Ratan's half-brother Noel appointed Tata Trusts chief

Unanimously Chosen Chairman; Gets Indirect Control Of \$165Bn Group

Mumbai: Noel Tata, 67, Ratan Tata's half-brother, has been appointed chairman of the influential Tata Trusts, granting him indirect control over the \$165-billion Tata Group which operates in 100-plus countries, reports Reeba Zachariah.

Ratan, who chaired the Trusts for three decades, did not designate a successor: Noel (in pic), who is half-French and an Irish citizen, was already a trustee of Tata Trusts. His appointment, effective im-



► **Trent-setter at Tata Trusts, P 25**

mediately, was unanimously decided during a meeting in Mumbai. Noel said his goal will be "carrying on the legacy of Ratan Tata and founders of the Tata Group". TOI had reported in its Oct 10 edition that Noel was most likely to helm Tata Trusts.

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TATA AND SONS: Ratan Tata accepts condolences at his father Naval's cremation at Mumbai's Chandanwadi on May 5, 1989. Naval Tata was deputy chairman of Tata Sons, besides chairing several large group companies. His wife and Ratan's stepmother Simone Tata is seated in the front row (2nd from left) along with half-brother Noel. On the extreme right is then group chairman JRD Tata

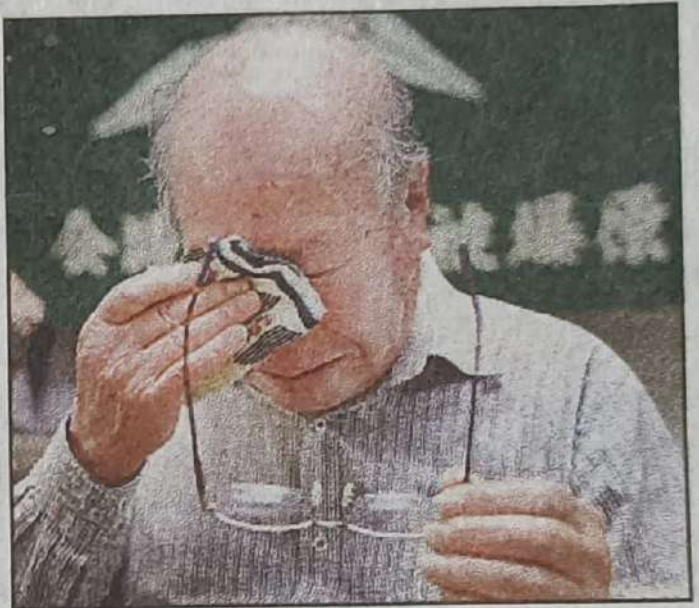
Peace Nobel for Japanese atomic bomb survivor grp

Japanese organisation Nihon Hidankyo, a grassroots movement of Hiroshima and Nagasaki survivors and anti-nuclear campaigners, won the Nobel Peace Prize Friday, in a warning to countries that have nuclear weapons not to use them.

The group received the honour "for its efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again", the Norwegian Nobel Committee said.

Nihon Hidankyo's co-he-

Reuters



Nihon Hidankyo's Shigemitsu Tanaka after the announcement

ad Toshiyuki Mimaki said, "(The win) will be a great force to appeal to the world that the abolition of nuclear weapons and everlasting peace can be achieved." AGENCIES **P27**

2nd time in 48 hrs, Israel forces hit UN peacekeepers' Lebanon base

2 Sri Lankans Hurt, Says UN; Israel Says Target Was Hezbollah Official Who Survived

Beirut/Jerusalem: Two UN peacekeepers were injured on Friday by an Israeli strike near their watchtower in south Lebanon, the Israeli military said, while blasts shook the peacekeepers' main base in the area for the second time in 48 hours as Israeli forces battled Hezbollah. The UNIFIL force said the incident was a "serious development", and that the security of UN personnel and property must be guaranteed.

France summoned Israel's ambassador. US defence secretary Lloyd Austin said he had urged his counterpart in Israel to ensure the safety of UNIFIL forces in Lebanon. Russia said it was "outraged" and demanded that Israel refrain from "hostile actions" against the peacekeepers. UN secretary-general Antonio Guterres had already condemned the attacks on UN personnel.

Israeli army says had warned hours earlier to take shelter

The Israeli military expressed "deep concern" and said two peacekeepers had been injured by Israeli fire as it was engaging Hezbollah. It said they had been warned hours earlier to take shelter, however. The United Nations said both were from Sri Lanka.

In a video released on Friday, the Israeli military's chief of staff, Lt Gen Herzl Halevi, said it would not stop its campaign "until we ensure that we can safely return the residents not just now, but with a future outlook". The watchtower that came under Israeli fire on Friday is located at UNIFIL's main base in Naqoura. UNIFIL said



22 DEAD IN BEIRUT: Rescue workers scoured the wreckage of a Beirut neighborhood on Friday after Lebanese officials said that Israeli air strikes had killed at least 22 people. One of the strikes hit the central Basta area, which is close to several Western embassies and the Lebanese parliament

Israel security cabinet yet to decide on how to retaliate against Iran

Israel has yet to decide how to retaliate against Iran for last week's missile attack, according to an Israeli official, and remains under pressure from the US and others to limit the severity of its response. A security cabinet meeting on Thursday ended without a decision on what the response should be, said the official, who asked not to be identified. It's unclear if there are divisions within PM Netanyahu's coalition govt or if it's biding its time. A day before Israel's cabinet meeting, US Prez Biden spoke to Netanyahu. They discussed Israel's response to Iran's salvo on Oct 1. The US has warned Israel against attacking Iran's oil-export facilities and nuclear sites. BLOOMBERG

an Israeli bulldozer had also knocked over barriers at UN positions near the Blue Line de-

After Macron, now Spanish PM urges an end to arming Israel

Spanish PM Pedro Sanchez on Friday called on the international community to stop selling weapons to Israel, after a meeting with Pope Francis at the Vatican. "I do believe that it is urgent that, in light of everything that is happening in the Middle East, the international community stops exporting weapons to the government of Israel," he said. "This is an appeal that I will make... to the entire international community," he said. His comments reflect those of French Prez Macron, who said countries should stop delivering weapons to fight in Gaza. Sanchez is one of the most outspoken critics in EU of Israel's response to Oct 7, 2023, attack. AP

noting the frontier between Lebanon and Israel, while tanks had moved into the vicinity.

Two Indonesian UN peacekeepers were injured on Thursday after falling from a watchtower after Israeli tank fire, after which Israel said its troops had opened fire nearby, and that Hezbollah fighters operated from areas near UNIFIL posts.

Thursday night's airstrike was the third on the centre of the Lebanese capital since Israel went on the offensive on Sept. 23. Security sources said the target was senior Hezbollah official Wafiq Safa, and that he had survived. A Hezbollah lawmaker visiting the site on Friday said no senior Hezbollah officials had been present at the time. The army said its initial review found that the intended target was located some 50 metres from the UNIFIL position.

Defeating Israel priority, says Hezbollah

The head of Hezbollah's media office, Mohammad Afif, promised Lebanese people displaced by Israeli attacks, most of whom are from Hezbollah's Shia support base, that they would soon return to their homes.

He said the group's priority is defeating Israel militarily but it is open to diplomatic efforts to stop "the aggression".

2 Lebanese soldiers killed

Two Lebanese soldiers were killed and three others wounded in an Israeli strike on an army post in southern Lebanon on Friday, the army said. The incident takes the number of Lebanese soldiers killed on duty to five in addition to 16 killed off-duty, a security source said. There was no immediate comment from Israel. REUTERS

'No solution in battlefield': PM calls for peace in West Asia

'Focus on Devpt In Region, Not Expansionism'

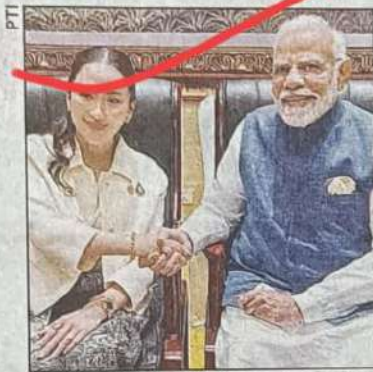
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Underlining a "collective desire for restoration of peace and stability in West Asia and Eurasia as soon as possible", PM Mo-

▶'No substantive Modi-Trudeau talks in Laos', P 26

di iterated that "solutions cannot be found in battlefields", and that India, in fulfilling its responsibilities as a "vishwabandhu", would continue to make every effort to contribute to peace efforts.

"I come from the land of Buddha, and I have repeatedly said this is not the age of war



PM Modi with Thai counterpart Paetongtarn Shinawatra in Vientiane, Laos, on Friday

It's essential to respect sovereignty, territorial integrity and international laws," he said while addressing the East Asia Summit in Laos Friday.

In a message to Asean countries amid growing Chinese assertiveness, Modi said the region's approach should be focused on development

Cautiously optimistic on LAC talks: Rajnath

India is cautiously optimistic about the diplomatic-military talks with China to resolve the border tension in east Ladakh, defence minister Rajnath Singh said Friday, adding, "our optimism" is "dependent" on "actual progress" on the ground. He said the Army could tackle any contingency if things went south. P 14

and not expansionism. He said a free, open, inclusive, prosperous and rules-based Indo-Pacific is crucial for progress of the entire region, and peace, security and stability in South China Sea are in the interest of Indo-Pacific region.

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Gifted by PM, Kali crown stolen from temple in B'desh

New Delhi has conveyed its displeasure to Dhaka over the theft of a crown gifted by PM Modi to the iconic Jeshoreshwari Kali temple in Satkhira district during his visit in 2021. The Indian high commissioner in Bangladesh has urged the authorities to probe the incident, recover the crown and bring the guilty to book, reports **Ahsan Tasnim**. The temple is one of the 52 Shakti Peeths.

The theft coincided with a group of six people, including two clerics, singing Islamic songs at a Durga Puja pandal in Chattogram, sparking tension. P 12

'Cautiously optimistic' about LAC talks with China: Rajnath

'Have Full Confidence In Army To Tackle Any Contingency'

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New Delhi: India is "cautiously optimistic" about the ongoing diplomatic-military talks with China to peacefully resolve the troop confrontation in eastern Ladakh, defence minister Rajnath Singh said on Friday, while at the same time expressing full confidence in the Army to tackle any contingency if things go south along the frontier.

"Our optimism" about the talks with China is "dependent" on "actual progress" being made on the ground in terms of troop disengagement in eastern Ladakh, Singh said, addressing the Army commanders' conference at Gangtok.

India has been pushing China for the sequential process of first disengagement at the two remaining face-off sites at Depsang and Demchok, followed by de-escalation and then de-induction of its 50,000 forward deployed troops along the line of actual control (LAC) there.

Singh's statement came against the backdrop of China's propensity for double-speak, with there often being a



Rajnath Singh said the armed forces must be prepared for 'asymmetric warfare', which has been brought home by ongoing conflicts in the present 'complex and ambiguous world situation'

yawning gap between what it says and what it does on the ground, ever since the People's Liberation Army made multiple incursions into eastern Ladakh in April-May 2020.

Singh was slated to attend the Army commanders' conference chaired by General Upendra Dwivedi at Gangtok but addressed it through videoconferencing from Sukna in Darjeeling due to bad weather.

The conference being held near the China border for the first time was itself a message to China, which has raised the stakes in the eastern sector (Sikkim, Arunachal) of LAC

as well by deploying another 90,000 soldiers there.

Gen Dwivedi himself had struck a note of caution earlier this month, stressing that "trust has become the biggest casualty" with China, with the situation being "stable but sensitive and not normal" along the LAC.

While "positive signaling" has come out from the flurry of political-diplomatic meetings over the last two months, the execution of any plan will depend on military commanders on the ground, he said.

Consequently, even as the Army will maintain its sol-

diers in forward locations for the fifth successive winter in the forbidding terrain of eastern Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh-Sikkim, the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is also working hard to narrow the huge border infrastructure differential with China.

At a ceremony in Sikkim on Saturday, Singh will inaugurate 22 roads, 51 bridges and two other projects constructed by the BRO for Rs 2,236 crore. Among the projects, 19 are in J&K, 18 in Arunachal Pradesh, 11 in Ladakh, 9 in Uttarakhand and 6 in Sikkim.

Singh on Friday also said the armed forces must be prepared for "asymmetric warfare", which has been brought home by ongoing conflicts in the present "complex and ambiguous world situation".

"Unconventional and asymmetric warfare, including hybrid war, will be part of future conventional wars. This necessitates that armed forces should keep all these facets in consideration while formulating strategies. Be alert, regularly modernise and prepare continuously for various contingencies," Singh said.

CCS approves launch of 52 spy sats at a cost of ₹27,000cr

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New Delhi: To boost India's surveillance system from space, the Cabinet Committee on Security led by PM Modi has quietly approved phase III of Space Based Surveillance (SBS-III) for launching a big bunch of spy satellites in low earth and geostationary orbits.

"CCS Monday gave approval for launching 52 satellites under SBS-III project, which would cost around Rs 27,000 crore," a source in Isro told **TOI**.

India has already launched several spy or earth observation satellites under SBS programme like Risat, Cartosat and Gsat-7 series satellites. SBS-1 was first approved under the Vajpayee regime in 2001 under which four satellites were launched. Thereafter, six such satellites were launched under the second phase in 2013.

The 50+ satellites, which are likely to be launched in five years, will boost the numbers of 'eyes in the sky', adding punch to the space-based surveillance system of India's land and sea borders.

The new fleet of satellites will be based on AI that can "interact with each other in space to gather geo-intelligence" on Earth. The new tech will "improve the ability of satellites to detect changes, bring in more AI-related and data-driven approaches to analyse data and get only necessary information," a senior Isro official said.