

# BATTLE FOR THE SENA: ON EC FREEZING SHIV SENA'S NAME AND SYMBOL

Relevant for: Indian Polity | Topic: Elections, Election Commission and the Electoral Reforms in India Incl. Political Parties

In an interim order on Monday, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has [allotted 'Balasahebanchi Shivsena' as the party name for the Eknath Shinde faction](#) of the Shiv Sena, also asking it to furnish a fresh list of three symbols by Tuesday. The name and the 'bow and arrow' symbol had also been claimed by Mr. Shinde, the Maharashtra Chief Minister. The [ECI's preceding decision to freeze the name and the symbol of the Shiv Sena](#) has followed precedent — in earlier cases of splits in the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the Lok Janshakti Party, the commission had kept the symbols suspended until a final decision on the contesting claims of rival factions could be taken. Symbols are more than symbolism for political parties after years of mutual association. In some cases, symbols may even carry some political meaning — as in the case of the Rashtriya Janata Dal's 'lantern' and the Samajwadi Party's 'bicycle'. The Shiv Sena may have felt the 'bow and arrow' went well with its constant need to appear combative and strident. That inheritance is now the central element of the dispute between the two factions. Though the ECI has frozen it, the legal battle for the symbol and the name will continue. Both factions are marshalling facts and fiction in support of their claims and the ECI has a tough task in determining which side gets to own the Sena brand. Mr. Shinde is an ally of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that is in power at the Centre. Who gets to inherit the legacy of Bal Thackeray has a huge bearing on the political fortunes of both.

Though there is a legal battle for the name and symbol of the Shiv Sena, the inheritance will be fundamentally settled through politics. Whichever faction will be seen as the more real Shiv Sena by the public will win the battle, regardless of who gets to keep the symbol and the name. Therefore, both factions are leaving no stone unturned to demonstrate their public support. [The Dussehra rally](#), the most notable event on the Sena annual calendar, had two iterations this year — one addressed by Mr. Thackeray at the traditional venue of Shivaji Park, and the other by Mr. Shinde six kilometres away. The first electoral test for the factions will be on November 3, the date of the Andheri East Assembly segment by-election. The Thackeray faction will be facing off with the BJP candidate who is backed by the Shinde faction. Mr. Thackeray has inherited the name of his father and Sena founder, Bal Thackeray, but his style and character may be a bit too modest for the party's reputation. Mr. Shinde on the other hand may lack the name, but is equipped for the street battles that have made the Sena. It is unlikely that both factions will survive over the long term: the symbol might not be enough to decide the winner, but it will have more than a symbolic value for the faction still standing after the slugfest.

[Our code of editorial values](#)

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© [Zuccess App](#) by [crackIAS.com](#)