# Anish Gawande becomes India's first gay national political spokesperson



In a surprise move, Anish Gawande has been appointed as the National Spokesperson for the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP)-Sharad Pawar faction, marking a significant milestone in Indian politics. The appointment symbolises an important moment in representation within the political arena.

Gawande's journey to this role has been unconventional. Despite a decade of experience working on various election campaigns, he has never held a formal position within a political party until now. His political career has mostly been behind the scenes as a strategist. His notable work includes participation as a door-to-door volunteer during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections for Milind Deora and strategising for the Maharashtra Congress during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

The trajectory of his political involvement shifted significantly with the creation of Pink List India, an archive of politicians supporting LGBTQ+ rights. This initiative brought him into closer contact with NCP leader Supriya Sule, whom he first met at the Harvard US-India conference in 2020. This meeting was followed by informal collaborations during the COVID-19 pandemic, which deepened his connection with the party. Upon returning from Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar, Gawande expressed his willingness to assist in the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha elections, which eventually led to his meeting with Sule in Mumbai and his eventual appointment.

In the last two months, Gawande has faced the challenges of public scrutiny that come with his historic appointment, being labelled as "India's first gay national spokesperson". This has involved significant engagement in television debates and extensive travel across Maharashtra as part of the Vidhan Sabha campaign trail. His involvement has drawn various media narratives, from salacious to supportive, as he navigates his unique role in Indian politics.

His appointment has also brought a reflection on political representation, particularly regarding the LGBTQ+ community. Despite hailing from a privileged background and receiving education abroad, Gawande acknowledges the symbolic weight of his position and the potential for driving broader discussions on representation and inclusivity in politics.

The NCP's success in the recent Lok Sabha elections, achieving a strike rate of 80% by winning 8 out of 10 contested seats in Maharashtra, has brought newfound responsibilities for Gawande. As the party prepares for the upcoming state elections, Gawande's role involves navigating not only the party's strategic communications but also addressing broader societal issues.

Gawande's path into politics, he points out, echoes other 'accidental' entries within the NCP. Fauzia Khan, now a key figure in the party, was similarly introduced to politics through a direct appointment by Sharad Pawar years ago. Such narratives spotlight the party's open approach to diverse voices.

Reflecting on his new role, Gawande sees his queerness not merely as an identity but as a perspective that informs his political engagements. He acknowledges the complexities of representation and aims to extend dialogues within and beyond the LGBTQ+ spectrum, exploring how inclusive political frameworks can respond to various societal challenges.

Gawande's appointment as India's first gay national spokesperson marks a noteworthy chapter in the nation's political landscape. As he settles into his role, the evolving conversation around representation and the responsibilities it entails continues, with many watching how his influence might shape future dialogues within Indian politics.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.wionews.com/india-news/exclusive-anish-gawande-speaks-about-kolkata-case-queer-tax-and-being-labelled-a-gay-politician-763565> - Corroborates Anish Gawande's appointment as the first openly gay national spokesperson of an Indian political party and his views on queerness and political representation.
* <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/meet-indias-first-gay-national-spokesperson-of-a-political-party/articleshow/112437059.cms> - Provides details about Anish Gawande's background, his education, and his journey to becoming the national spokesperson of NCP (SP), including his work on LGBTQ+ rights and the creation of Pink List India.
* <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/queer-politician-anish-gawande-ncp-spokesperson-supriya-sule-9618075/> - Describes Anish Gawande's unconventional path into politics, his meeting with Supriya Sule, and his reflections on being a queer politician in Indian politics.
* <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/queer-politician-anish-gawande-ncp-spokesperson-supriya-sule-9618075/> - Details Gawande's experience working on election campaigns, his role as a strategist, and the significance of his appointment as a national spokesperson.
* <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/meet-indias-first-gay-national-spokesperson-of-a-political-party/articleshow/112437059.cms> - Explains the creation of Pink List India and how it brought Gawande closer to the NCP and its leader Supriya Sule.
* <https://www.wionews.com/india-news/exclusive-anish-gawande-speaks-about-kolkata-case-queer-tax-and-being-labelled-a-gay-politician-763565> - Discusses Gawande's public scrutiny and media narratives following his appointment as India's first gay national spokesperson.
* <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/queer-politician-anish-gawande-ncp-spokesperson-supriya-sule-9618075/> - Reflects on the symbolic weight of Gawande's position and its potential for driving broader discussions on representation and inclusivity in politics.
* <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/meet-indias-first-gay-national-spokesperson-of-a-political-party/articleshow/112437059.cms> - Mentions the NCP's success in recent elections and Gawande's new responsibilities, including navigating the party's strategic communications and addressing broader societal issues.
* <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/queer-politician-anish-gawande-ncp-spokesperson-supriya-sule-9618075/> - Highlights the 'accidental' entries into politics within the NCP, such as Fauzia Khan's appointment by Sharad Pawar, and the party's open approach to diverse voices.
* <https://www.wionews.com/india-news/exclusive-anish-gawande-speaks-about-kolkata-case-queer-tax-and-being-labelled-a-gay-politician-763565> - Details Gawande's perspective on his queerness as a lens to critically examine and respond to various societal challenges and his aim to extend dialogues within and beyond the LGBTQ+ spectrum.