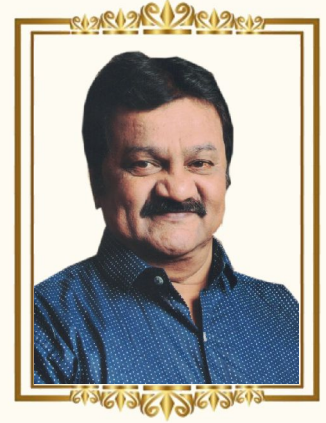




### **SHRI RAGHUVIR KHEDKAR**



Shri Raghuvir Khedkar is an acclaimed and veteran Tamasha artist and troupe owner, widely recognized as a gifted songadya (the witty jester-narrator) with a deep commitment to preserving and promoting this folk art form.

2. Born on 04<sup>th</sup> August, 1961, Shri Khedkar, with over four decades of experience has been instrumental in carrying forward the Tamasha legacy initiated by his mother, Kantabai Satarkar, managing her troupe and excelling as a performer himself. He also served as the President of the Maharashtra State Dholki Phad Tamasha Organization.

3. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when public performances halted and many artists faced hunger and unemployment, Shri Khedkar stood up as a staunch advocate. He led appeals for financial support and leveraged solace and solidarity for folk artists. In 2021, he spearheaded the formation of the All-India Tamasha Parishad, a unified body of 130 troupe-owners and artists and was elected its president. This marked the first collective mobilization of Tamasha artists since 1949.

4. Shri Khedkar courageously shared the harsh realities faced by Tamasha artists many of whom are elderly, illiterate and financially marginalized during the lockdown, drawing statewide attention in media forums. Despite Tamasha being a culturally crucial art form, many artists face neglect and financial instability. His leadership during crises, efforts to unify artists, and public articulation of their struggles represent profound sacrifices he prioritized the collective welfare of the Tamasha community over personal gain.

5. Shri Khedkar's innovations and performances earned him honours across India from the Commonwealth Games in Delhi to stages at Chandigarh, Mumbai University, and the Sangeet Natak Akademi. His unwavering devotion has been honoured with several awards such as Jeevan Sadhana Award by Savitribai Phule Pune University in recognition of his lifetime service and State-level Pathe Bapurao Award, one of Tamasha's prestigious honours, acknowledging his significant artistic contributions.