

= Sivaji (film) =

Sivaji is a 2007 Indian Tamil language masala film directed by S. Shankar and produced by AVM Productions . Rajinikanth and Shriya Saran play the lead roles , with Suman , Vivek and Raghuvaran playing other significant roles in the film . A. R. Rahman composed the soundtrack and background music , while Thotta Tharani and K. V. Anand were the film 's art director and cinematographer respectively .

The film revolves around a well @-@ established software systems architect , Sivaji , who returns home to India after finishing work in the United States . On his return , he dreams of giving back to society with free medical treatment and education . However his plans face a roadblock in the form of the influential businessman , Adishesan . When corruption also arises , Sivaji is left with no option but to fight the system in his own way .

The film was initially scheduled for release on 14 April 2007 (Tamil New Year) , but due to post @-@ production delays , it was released worldwide on 15 June 2007 in Tamil , and subsequently released in Telugu as a dubbed version on the same date . The film was also dubbed in Hindi , which released on 8 January 2010 . The film was positively received by critics , and became a commercial success worldwide . It went on to win a National Film Award , three Filmfare Awards and two Vijay Awards .

The film was converted into 3D and released on 12 December 2012 as Sivaji 3D . The runtime of the 3D version was shorter than the original , cut to 155 minutes , and released amidst moderate fanfare and fared positively critically and commercially . It also became the first Indian film to use Dolby Atmos surround sound technology .

= = Plot = =

Sivaji , an Indian software architect , returns to India from the United States . He aims to establish a non @-@ profit trust called the Sivaji Foundation to build a network of hospitals and educational institutions to serve the poor free of charge . However , the influential businessman Adishesan sees Sivaji as his competitor with the fact of the matter being that he runs profit @-@ making educational institutions and hospitals . Sivaji is forced to bribe the corrupt civil service , but eventually , the bribes demanded become so high that he has to mortgage his house and sell his car to pay them . When Sivaji goes to court , he loses the case filed against him by Adishesan regarding the methods Sivaji had used to open his foundation as a result of bribing numerous government officials . Simultaneously , Sivaji falls in love with a girl named Tamizhselvi . However , upon asking for his horoscope , an astrologer warns that their union will result in Sivaji 's death . When Tamizhselvi refuses the proposal due to her concern for Sivaji , he calms her fears and convinces her to marry him .

Following the loss in the court case , Tamizhselvi requests Sivaji out of fear not to come for her again . Sivaji is reduced to poverty . In revenge , Sivaji acquires evidence of ? 2 billion worth of illegal earnings in the possession of Adishesan and uses the documents to blackmail him into giving him half the money . He further obtains details on people who have similar amounts of illegal earnings across Tamil Nadu , and blackmails them to give him half of their illegal wealth . He then transfers the money to the bank accounts of his friends around the world by " hawala " forgery . They then deposit the money as donations to Sivaji Foundation , making the money usable and legitimate .

Sivaji then informs the Income Tax Investigation and Vigilance Department about the details of the illegal money held by the tax evaders (including Adishesan) and gets them arrested . He reopens the foundation , and soon is able to provide free , good quality education , infrastructure , services and employment to people in every district of Tamil Nadu . Led by Adishesan , those who Sivaji blackmailed exploit Tamizhselvi 's innocence to silence him . Fearing for Sivaji 's life , she hands over Sivaji 's laptop to CBI and Income Tax officers hired by Adishesan with all the information regarding the illegal money transactions . With presentable evidence , Sivaji is arrested .

At the jail , Adishesan and the police force Sivaji to unlock his laptop . When Sivaji refuses ,

Adishesan assaults him , leaving him for dead . To cover this up , Adishesan and the police organise for thugs to shoot at the police van that will carry Sivaji 's corpse , making it look like murder by a third party . Sivaji , however , is faking ; he was informed of the plans to kill him by a sympathetic police constable prior to the interrogation . Left alone in the room , he electrifies himself . Sivaji 's friend Dr. Chezhan and Tamizhselvi intercept the police van after being informed by Sivaji through a MMS and replace Sivaji 's body with a dummy before the thugs open fire . While everyone thinks that Sivaji is dead , Chezhan revives him using a defibrillator . Following Sivaji 's " death " , Adishesan and the CBI still try to open Sivaji 's laptop by trying to fool the voice @-@ detection program ; this fails and all the data in the laptop is erased .

A few days later , while everyone wonders about the future of Sivaji Foundation , the revived Sivaji returns to take control of the foundation in the guise of a friend , M. G. Ravichandran . Though Adishesan immediately realises that Ravichandran is actually Sivaji , he is unable to prove this to the police due to the tangible evidence of Sivaji 's " death " (his death being certified by a government hospital) . " Ravichandran " promises to avenge Sivaji 's " death " and eventually manages to corner Adishesan in the terrace of his medical college and fights him . During the fight , Adishesan inadvertently strikes the roof of his campus 's terrace causing money hidden in the roof to fly around the campus . The students who spot the money go after them causing a stampede ; Adishesan is killed in the stampede . Sivaji Foundation soon becomes a frontier for India 's economic and industrial rise .

= = Cast = =

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

Following the success of his film Jeans (1998) , S. Shankar wrote a script for his next film titled Mudhalvan (1999) having Rajinikanth in mind for the lead role . However , Rajinikanth could not act in the film due to schedule conflicts with Padayappa (1999) . Hence the role went to Arjun Sarja . Post Anniyan (2005) , Shankar decided to take a break before preparing for his next project .

In August 2005 , Rajinikanth signed up for his next film which was to be produced by Chennai 's oldest operative studio , AVM Productions , which was run by M. S. Guhan and M. Saravanan . This time Shankar was confirmed to be the film 's director . After consulting Sivaji Ganesan 's family to avoid any issues with the film 's name , the project was subsequently announced on 24 August 2005 . The film was titled Sivaji , after Rajinikanth 's name at birth ? Sivaji Rao Gaekwad . A tagline , The Boss , which stands for " Bachelor of Social Service " , was suffixed to the title .

In addition to being AVM Productions ' 168th film , Sivaji was also Rajinikanth 's 154th film , his 100th Tamil film and his ninth film with AVM Productions . According to Rajinikanth 's biographer Naman Ramachandran , the film was also made to commemorate the 100th birth anniversary of the production company 's founder , A. V. Meiyappan . Sivaji was also noted for its change in the traditional yellow coloured Rajinikanth introductory text which made its debut with Annamalai . Instead the text is displayed in Chrome .

= = = Cast and crew = = =

In October 2005 , Shankar and Rajinikanth announced that actress Shriya Saran would play the female lead role . Saran 's voice was dubbed by actress Kanika , who was selected after a successful voice test , thereby collaborating for the second time with Shankar . Actor Vivek was signed up for the role of Sivaji 's maternal uncle , Arivu , in November 2005 . Actress Sunaina made her acting debut through this film in a special appearance , however the scene was later deleted and her role was left uncredited . Nayantara , who had earlier worked with Rajinikanth in Chandramukhi ,

was signed up to perform alongside Rajinikanth in the song " Baleilakka " .

Suman was confirmed in March 2006 to play the role of Adishesan after Amitabh Bachchan , Prakash Raj and Mohanlal were considered . For his role , Suman removed his moustache and used dentures to make his smile visible . Shankar instructed one of the costume designers to give the character a spotless white dhoti , shirt , shoes , a Rolex watch and Ray @-@ Ban sunglasses . Prior to this , Suman had acted with Rajinikanth in Thee (1981) . Subbu Panchu Arunachalam , son of filmmaker Panchu Arunachalam , dubbed for Suman . Debate speakers Solomon Pappaiah and Pattimandram Raja were selected to play supporting roles making their cinematic acting debut . Vadivukkarasi and Manivannan were selected to play Sivaji 's parents . Raghuvaran appeared in a small role as Dr. Chezian .

Shankar , who also wrote the film 's story and screenplay , was paid a then record salary of ? 30 million (Indian rupees) for the project . A. R. Rahman , who was selected to compose the film 's soundtrack and background score , was also paid ? 30 million . Sujatha Rangarajan was assigned to write the dialogues for Sivaji . Tha . Prabhu Raja Cholan , who would later direct the film Karuppampatti (2013) , worked as an assistant director in this film . Rajinikanth 's daughter Soundarya worked as a graphics designer , creating the title for this film ; she had earlier worked in the same position on two of her father 's films ? Baba (2002) and Chandramukhi (2005) . K. V. Anand was hired as the cinematographer in August 2005 . Manish Malhotra was responsible for designing the film 's costumes , while Anthony and Thota Tharani were the editor and art director respectively . Additional make @-@ up for Rajinikanth was done by make @-@ up artist Banu .

= = = Filming = = =

Principal photography commenced on 28 November 2005 with a puja at AVM Productions . The film 's launch was a secret event , with only pivotal members of the cast and crew being called for the event 's attendance . The first schedule of Sivaji began on 14 December 2005 with the song " Vaaji Vaaji " featuring Rajinikanth and Saran being shot at Ramoji Film City in Hyderabad . The idea of shooting at Ramoji Film City was suggested to Shankar by Tharani who felt that the place offered a lot of scope for him to utilise his skills and experience as an art director . " Vaaji Vaaji " was picturised with an intention to showcase a Babylonian palace setting when Shankar requested Tharani to show " a palace with lots of colour " . Tharani created a four @-@ storey Babylonian palace to accommodate 80 dancers and 100 junior artists for the number . Shooting of the number , which according to K. V. Anand was filmed in Super 35 motion picture film format , was completed in eight days . G. Dhananjayan mentions in his book The Best of Tamil Cinema that ? 35 million was spent on the song 's making .

Tharani described the set designing for the song " Sahana " , which was also shot at Ramoji Film City , as " extremely challenging " . After listening to the lyrics of the song which speaks of the four traditional calendar seasons , Tharani thought of using a concept titled Living in Seasons , which he used at a symposium held in Japan . For the set 's design which depicted the four seasons , Tharani proposed three concepts ? a traditional Japanese house , a contemporary house and a futuristic house . Shankar chose the futuristic house concept , which consisted of three domes in the shapes of a square , a circle and a pyramid adjacent to one another . The circular dome had a pathway around it and water falling from a 50 feet high rock , which would seep under the set . Tharani made use of acrylic glass and normal glass with the former being implemented on the floor to make the dance movements more easier to perform . Construction of the set for the number was completed in 30 days .

In addition to these two songs , Tharani contributed to similar creations for the music store where Tamizhselvi works as a saleswoman , the street surrounding the music store , the warehouse behind the music store , the interior portions of Thamizhselvi 's house and Adishesan 's office room . The music shop was designed in the Victorian architecture style , while the warehouse was constructed at AVM Productions with the fight sequence being filmed there as well . Filming of another action sequence in an open @-@ air theatre , which was also designed by Tharani , took place for approximately 15 ? 20 days . K. V. Anand used balloon lights brought from a French

company Airstar Space Lighting for the sequence . The interior portions of Thamizhselvi 's house was designed using clippings of flats constructed by the Tamil Nadu Housing Board .

The " Style " segment was filmed in May 2006 at the Frank Gehry @-@ designed Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao , Spain . The fair look of Rajinikanth 's character in the segment was created using computer @-@ generated imagery , which was performed by V. Srinivas Mohan , the head of the Chennai @-@ based firm Indian Artists . K. V. Anand re @-@ shot every single movement of Rajinikanth with a British woman named Jacky , who was also one of the song 's background dancers . All the shots featuring Rajinikanth in the song and those featuring Jacky were scanned in 4K resolution to enhance their clarity after which Jacky 's skin colour was digitally implemented onto Rajinikanth 's skin . French hair @-@ stylist Sandrin Veriar Seth designed two distinct hair @-@ styles for the entire film and 13 hair @-@ styles for the segment alone . In order to avoid disruptions that could occur at the shooting spot due to Rajinikanth 's fan following in Tamil Nadu , Brinda choreographed " Balleilakka " , Rajinikanth 's introduction song sequence in Wai , a hill station near Pune with 500 people for eight days . To add more colour to the sequence , a 50 @-@ member team of Puli Kali artists from Thrissur were employed by Shankar as background dancers .

In November 2006 , sequences featuring Rajinikanth , Saran and Vivek were shot at the Pune Junction railway station . Filming of a key portion involving Rajinikanth and Vivek took place in the Victoria Public Hall building in Chennai . A fight sequence and the song " Athiradi " were filmed at Binny Mills . The sets for the song were made bearing resemblance to the city of Venice . For the climax scenes , which were filmed at the Magarpatta city SEZ towers , Rajinikanth tonsured his head . The scenes where Sivaji gets the money he transferred to his friends by forgery were filmed in New York . The completion of those scenes in February 2007 marked the end of the principal photography . The climactic fight between Sivaji and Adishesan was filmed at Vels University . K. V. Anand told Shobha Warrier of Rediff that the portions other than the songs and action sequences were completed in 65 days .

= = Themes and influences = =

Many critics stated that the theme of the film has been inspired from director 's previous films Gentleman (1993) and Mudhalvan (1999) . The film deals with the concept of corruption and money laundering and how the film 's protagonist employs methods to get rid of those elements .

Sivaji , who is a software engineer is frustrated with the corruption in India which is shown in the scene where he watches the pitiable condition of poor people stating that : " The rich get richer , the poor get poorer " . Sivaji 's love for his country is also illustrated in a scene where he is advised by his uncle to go back to abroad but he says " Where else will I go ? This is home . "

= = Soundtrack = =

After some re @-@ recording of the background score in Paraguay , A.R. Rahman had been to London for additional re @-@ recording .

A month and a half prior to the film 's official soundtrack release , three songs from the soundtrack were leaked into the Internet . The songs , however , were only unofficial with low quality , where the official versions were composed slightly different and sung by different artists .

= = Release = =

The television rights of the film were sold to Kalaignar TV for ? 40 million . The film 's distribution rights , as distributed by AVM Productions to various companies are ? 35 million (US \$ 520 @,@ 000) for the selling of rights to Kerala , ? 140 million (US \$ 2 @.@ 1 million) for Andhra Pradesh and ? 139 @.@ 5 million (US \$ 2 @.@ 1 million) for the rights to Ayngaran , an international Tamil film distributor . Sivaji was awarded a " U " (Universal) rating by the Central Board of Film Certification , only cutting three scenes ? a suggestive dialogue by Vivek and two scenes of close up views of Shriya Saran 's navel and cleavage . The trailer was released by CNN @-@ IBN on 30 May

2007 lasting for three minutes . The official trailer was released by AVM to Galatta.com , the official online sponsor and Ayngaran International . The film was supposed to be released on the Tamil New Year 's day , 14 April 2007 , but due to post @-@ production delays , the film was released worldwide on 15 June 2007 . On 15 July 2007 , AVM Productions , the producers of the film , announced their decision to dub the film into Hindi . That version was released on 14 January 2010 .

M. Satyamoorthy , on 9 July 2007 , sought to stop the film being screened , claiming that it defamed the Indian National Congress , a political party , as well as its President , Sonia Gandhi , and the Prime Minister of India , Manmohan Singh . Satyamoorthy cited a scene in which portraits of Gandhi and Singh are visible behind Adiseshan 's (the villain 's) chair , implying that he was a member of the Indian National Congress . Satyamoorthy also claimed ? 500 million (US \$ 7 @.@ 4 million) in damages from the film 's producer , director and lead actor to be paid to the Tamil Nadu section of the party . Jaya Rajadevan , one of the film 's assistant directors , sought an injunction in civil court to stop screening of the film for alleged plagiarism . Rajadevan claimed that he had written the film 's story and had discussed it with Shankar 's manager in 2005 . Although the court sent notices to Shankar , among others , the screening of the film was not stopped .

= = = Special screenings = = =

Rajinikanth used his political affiliations to screen the film for several politicians . He went to Hyderabad to showcase the film for the former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister , Chandrababu Naidu , on 14 June 2007 . At the screening , Rajinikanth told the media that he would invite the Chief Minister , Rajasekhara Reddy , for a special viewing as well . Rajinikanth said that he had screened the film to current and former Tamil Nadu Chief Ministers , Dr. Karunanidhi and Jayalalitha , respectively , and that India 's Finance Minister , P Chidambaram , was also keen to watch the film . A private screening was also shown to Amitabh Bachchan .

= = = 3D re @-@ release = = =

A 2012 re @-@ release , also known as Sivaji 3D , was created by re @-@ mastering the original to Dolby Atmos and post @-@ converting to 3D format and cutting half an hour of running time . Sivaji 3D is the first Indian film to be launched with the new Dolby Atmos platform . The trailer of 3D version was launched on 13 August 2012 at Prasad Labs along with Rajinikanth . The 3D version released on 12 December 2012 , coinciding with Rajinikanth 's birthday . The runtime of 3D version was shorter than original , cut to 155 minutes .

= = Box office = =

The theatrical rights of the film were sold for ? 26 million (US \$ 390 @,@ 000) in Kerala and ? 80 million (US \$ 1 @.@ 2 million) in Andhra Pradesh . Worldwide , the film was estimated to have been released in about 750 screens . The film opened to virtually full cinemas . Sivaji was released in 303 screens in Tamil Nadu , 300 screens in Andhra Pradesh ; 12 screens in North India and 145 screens across the rest of the world . It was released in 16 screens in Chennai and grossed ? 13 @.@ 5 million (US \$ 200 @,@ 000) within the first four days , at that point a new record for Tamil cinema . The film also debuted well in Kerala and in Bangalore . Despite protests from pro @-@ Kannada groups , the film debuted in 13 screens . In the national capital , New Delhi , the film debuted on 4 screens in PVR Cinemas . Based on what the distributors claim , there was " overwhelming response to the film " , with the number of screens increasing to 12 by the second week . The film made a good debut in the nation 's other metros as well such as Mumbai and Kolkata , as well as in other non @-@ traditional markets for Tamil films such as Pune and Baroda , . The film grossed ? 40 @.@ 7 million in two weeks ; ? 85 million in five weeks , and ? 100 million in seven weeks in Chennai .

Sivaji was also successful in international markets . The film had a wide release with over 145 prints

and in 200 theatres (Tamil Version alone) in over 20 countries across South East Asia , Europe , North America , GCC and Australia and others , one of the widest release for an Indian film in the international markets . Internationally , Sivaji had good screenings in Malaysia. grossing over US \$ 2 million in Malaysia , Sivaji made a debut with 150 shows in Singapore . In Sri Lanka , the film debuted across 70 screens with all 700 shows virtually sold out . In the Persian Gulf that contains a sizeably large Indian diaspora , the film opened to a good response . The film has collected over \$ 8 @. @ 5 Million from the overseas markets .

In Canada , the film released in 10 screens in 3 major cities along with special screenings for the Tamil diaspora in the smaller cities . In United Kingdom , the film debuted on the box @-@ office list at No.9 with earnings of about £ 14 @, @ 000 per screen and was the first Tamil film to enter UK Top 10 . In United States , Sivaji was released in 24 screens with subsequent additions of 19 and 21 screens for the Tamil version and Telugu version respectively . The producers of the film claimed that the film was going to be dubbed in Chinese and Japanese by Ayngaran International , the holder of international rights of the film . The response in Cape Town was disappointing , while the box @-@ office collections in Johannesburg and Durban allowed it to become the first Tamil film to feature in the South African box @-@ office top 10 . Singapore Airlines bought a 3 @-@ month exclusive in @-@ flight screening rights to the film , a first for the airline for any Tamil film .

In the UK , 13 seconds of the film was cut . The original film showed Rajinikanth throwing a firecracker into his mouth , lighting it and then spitting it out at Pattimanram Raja , which was removed to give the film a 12A rating , The Ayngaran UK DVD release was uncut and given an 18 rating by the BBFC . It was also the first Tamil film to be officially released on a 1080p High Definition Blu @-@ ray disc .

The overseas distributor Ayngaran International reported collections as follows : US \$ 2 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 , Canada \$ 500 @, @ 000 , UK \$ 750 @, @ 000 , Europe and Gulf \$ 750 @, @ 000 , Malaysia \$ 2 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 , Singapore \$ 750 @, @ 000 , Sri Lanka \$ 1 @, @ 250 @, @ 000 , Australia , New Zealand & Thailand \$ 250 @, @ 000 . Sivaji was released in South Africa in late July 2007 after six weeks of its release by the leading South African distributor Ster Kinekor with four prints and released in Johannesburg , Cape Town and Durban .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

Malathi Rangarajan of the The Hindu , in a review about the story , said that the lead character carrying out a rebellion against corruption was something " not be true to life " . She concluded by saying that " the story sags towards the end " . She , however , appreciated the performances of the prominent actors , the soundtrack , art direction , photography and the animation . Ananth Krishnan , another review from The Hindu , a month after the film 's release , said that the film " ... presents an effective diagnosis of entrenched corruption but the rather disturbing remedy it offers is , good old vigilantism . " It concluded by saying that , though the film did well at the box @-@ office , the message of rejecting the corrupt system instead of reforming it was troubling . T. S. V. Hari of Hindustan Times said that the director , Shankar , was not creative enough for the film and added this by saying " Sivaji turns out to be a rehash of all his previous jingoistic claptrap efforts " . It appreciated the other technical departments and suggested a good response at the box office . The Times of India had a similar review about the story saying that " it had nothing new to offer " but promised it to be entertaining and gave it four stars .

R G Vijayasathy of Rediff.com summed the film by saying , " No logic , only Rajni 's magic " . About the story , he said , " Unfortunately , (the) message is lost in the maze of illogical and sometimes absurd sequences " . The review , however , praised the performances of Rajinikanth , Shriya and Vivek and the technical crew . A. R. Rahman 's score and Shankar 's directorial abilities were also lauded in the review . Sify wrote : " There is only one hero here , [..] - Rajni himself . Such is the overpowering screen presence of his cinematic charisma in every frame of the film . The

film works big time as Shankar has made the film on a grand scale , [..] which is a visual treat with superbly choreographed action scenes . All this comes with top @-@ of @-@ the line techno @-@ finesse , perhaps the best ever in Tamil cinema " and also wrote that " Technically , [..] a revelation [..] there are stunning visuals , which is paisa vasool . K.V.Anand 's cinematography is top class . Art director Thotta Tharani work is enticing , especially the sets in songs " .

= = = Accolades = = =

2008 National Film Awards

Won ? Silver Lotus Award for Best Special Effects ? M.S. Indian Artists , Chennai

2008 Filmfare Awards South

Won ? Filmfare Award for Best Music Director ? A.R. Rahman

Won ? Filmfare Award for Best Cinematographer ? K. V. Anand

Won ? Filmfare Best Art Director Award ? Thotta Tharani

Nominated ? Filmfare Award for Best Actor ? Rajinikanth

Nominated ? Filmfare Award for Best Film ? Sivaji

Nominated ? Filmfare Award for Best Playback Singer Female ? Chinmayi

2007 Vijay Awards

Won ? Vijay Award for Favourite Hero ? Rajinikanth

Nominated ? Vijay Award for Favourite Heroine ? Shriya Saran

Won ? Vijay Award for Best Music Director ? A.R. Rahman

Nominated ? Best Playback Singer Female ? Chinmayi

Nominated ? Best Playback Singer Male ? Udit Narayan