

= Rajinikanth =

Shivaji Rao Gaekwad (born 12 December 1950) , known by his mononymous stage name Rajinikanth , is an Indian film actor who works primarily in Tamil cinema . He began acting in plays while working in the Bangalore Transport Service as a bus conductor . In 1973 , he joined the Madras Film Institute to pursue a diploma in acting . Following his debut in K. Balachander 's Tamil drama Apoorva Raagangal (1975) , his acting career commenced with a brief phase of portraying antagonistic characters in Tamil films . After establishing himself as a lead actor in a number of commercially successful films , he began to be referred to as a " superstar " and has since continued to hold a *matinée* idol status in the popular culture of Tamil Nadu . His mannerisms and stylised delivery of dialogue in films contribute to his mass popularity and appeal .

After earning ₹ 26 crore (equivalent to ₹ 55 crore or US \$ 8 @. @ 2 million in 2016) for his role in Sivaji (2007) , he was the highest paid actor in Asia after Jackie Chan at the time . While working in other regional film industries of India , Rajinikanth has also appeared in the cinemas of other nations , including the the American film Bloodstone (1988) . As of 2014 , Rajinikanth has won six Tamil Nadu State Film Awards : four Best Actor Awards and two Special Awards for Best Actor : and a Filmfare Best Tamil Actor Award . In addition to acting , he has also worked as a producer and screenwriter . Apart from his film career , he is also a philanthropist , spiritualist , and serves as an influence in Dravidian politics .

The Government of India has honoured him with the Padma Bhushan in 2000 and the Padma Vibhushan in 2016 for his contributions to the arts . At the 45th International Film Festival of India (2014) , he was conferred with the " Centenary Award for Indian Film Personality of the Year " .

= = Early life = =

Rajinikanth was born on 12 December 1950 , in a Marathi family to his mother Ramabai , a housewife , and Ramoji Rao Gaekwad , a police constable , in Bangalore , Mysore State (present day Karnataka) . He was named Shivaji Rao Gaekwad after Chhatrapati Shivaji , a Maratha warrior King , and was brought up speaking Marathi at home and Kannada outside . Rajinikanth 's ancestors hailed from a village called Mavdi Kade Pathar , near Jejuri a part of the Purandar taluka of the present @-@ day Pune district , Maharashtra . He is the youngest of four siblings in a family consisting of two elder brothers , Satyanarayana Rao & Nageshwara Rao and a sister , Aswath Balubhai . After his father 's retirement from work in 1956 , the family moved to the suburb of Hanumantha nagar in Bangalore and built a house there . When he was nine years old , he lost his mother .

At the age of six , Rajinikanth was enrolled at the " Gavipuram Government Kannada Model Primary School " where he had his primary education . As a child , he was studious and " mischievous " with a great interest in cricket , football and basketball . It was during this time his brother enrolled him at the Ramakrishna Math , a Hindu monastery set up by Ramakrishna Mission . In the math , he was taught Vedas , tradition and history which eventually instilled a sense of spirituality in him . In addition to spiritual lessons , he also began acting in plays at the math . His aspiration towards theatre grew at the math and was once given an opportunity to enact the role of Ekalavya 's friend from the Hindu epic Mahabharata . His performance in the play received praise from the audience and Kannada poet D. R. Bendre in particular . After sixth grade , Rajinikanth was enrolled at the Acharya Pathasala Public School and studied there till completion of his pre @-@ university course . During his schooling at the Acharya Pathasala , he spent a lot of time acting in plays . In one such occasion , he performed the role of the villainous Duryodhana in the play Kurukshetra . At the age of 11 , Rajinikanth took the autograph of Kannada actor Rajkumar and he claimed in 2014 that it is the only autograph he has taken of someone in his life .

Upon completion of his school education , Rajinikanth continued to perform various jobs in the cities of Bangalore and Madras , including that of a coolie and carpenter , and finally ended up being recruited in the Bangalore Transport Service (BTS) as a bus conductor . He began to take part in stage plays after Kannada playwright Topi Muniappa offered him a chance to act in one of his

mythological plays . During the time , he came across an advertisement issued by the newly formed Madras Film Institute which offered acting courses . Though his family was not fully supportive of his decision to join the institute , his friend and co @-@ worker Raj Bahadur motivated him to join the institute and financially supported him during this phase . During his stay at the institute , he was performing in a stage play and got noticed by Tamil film director K. Balachander . The director advised him to learn to speak Tamil , a recommendation that Rajinikanth quickly followed .

= = Acting career = =

= = = Early career (1975 ? 77) = = =

Rajinikanth began his film career through the Tamil film Apoorva Raagangal (1975) . Balachander gave Rajinikanth a relatively small role as an abusive husband of Srividya . The film was controversial upon release as it explored relationships between people with wide age differences . However , it received wide critical acclaim as it went on to win three National Film Awards including the award for the Best Tamil Feature at the following year ceremony . A review from The Hindu noted that , " Newcomer Rajinikanth is dignified and impressive " . He followed that with Katha Sangama (1976) , an experimental film made by Puttanna Kanagal in the new wave style . The film was a portmanteau of three short stories had Rajinikanth playing a small character in the last segment where he appears as a village ruffian who rapes a blind woman in the absence of her husband . His next release was Anthuleni Katha , a Telugu film directed by Balachander . A remake of his own Tamil film Aval Oru Thodar Kathai (1974) , had Rajinikanth playing a pivotal role for the first time in his career . In the subsequent films , he continued to perform a series of negative roles mostly as a womaniser . In Moondru Mudichu ? the first film to feature him in a prominent role ? he plays a character that " blithely row [s] away " when his friend drowns accidentally into the lake only to fulfill his desire to marry the former 's girlfriend . His style of flipping the cigarette made him popular among the audience . His final release of the year Baalu Jenu , yet again saw him performing a role which troubles the female lead . He followed that with similar roles in Avargal , and 16 Vayadhinile . In 1977 , he accepted his first @-@ ever lead role in the Telugu film Chilakamma Cheppindi . Though Rajinikanth always refers to K. Balachander as his mentor , it was S. P. Muthuraman who revamped his image . Muthuraman first experimented with him in a positive role in Bhuvana Oru Kelvikkuri (1977) , as a failed lover in the first half of the film and a protagonist in the second half . The success of the film brought the duo together for 24 more films till the 1990s . The year saw Rajinikanth playing supporting roles in majority of the films with few of them being " villainous " . In Gayathri he was cast as pornographer who secretly films his relationship with his wife without the knowledge of her , while in Galate Samsara he played the role of a married man who develops an affair with a cabaret dancer . All in all , he had 15 of his films released during the year , much higher than the previous years .

= = = Experimentation and breakthrough (1978 ? 89) = = =

In 1978 , Rajinikanth went on to star in 20 different films across Tamil , Telugu , and Kannada . His first film of the year was P. Madhavan 's Shankar Salim Simon . Following that he was seen in the Kannada film Kiladi Kittu co @-@ starring Vishnuvardhan , who was then a leading actor in Kannada . His next release Annadammula Savaal saw him playing the second lead with Krishna . Rajinikanth had reprised his role in the Kannada original . He then played an important role in Aayiram Jenmangal which was touted to be a supernatural thriller . He then appeared as a prime antagonist in Maathu Tappada Maga , which happened to be his 25th release . Bairavi released in the same year was the first Tamil film to cast Rajinikanth as a main hero directed by M.Bhaskar. It was in this film he earned the sobriquet " Superstar " . S. Thanu who was one of the film 's distributor placed a cut @-@ out of Rajinikanth over a height of 35 feet (11 m) . His next appearance Ilaamai Oonjal Aadukirathu , a quadrangular love story made by C. V. Sridhar , saw him

playing the role of a man who sacrifices his love for his friend , played by Kamal Haasan . The film 's success prompted Sridhar to remake the film in Telugu and thus ended up directing Vayasu Pilichindi where the original cast in the Tamil film was retained . His next film Vanakkatukuriya Kathaliye has an introductory song to mark his entry , a trend that would soon catch up with his later films . Mullum Malarum that released during the same period received critical acclaim . The film marked the directional debut of J. Mahendran , had the screenplay adapted from a novel of the same name published in Kalki . It eventually won the Filmfare Award for Best Tamil Film and Rajinikanth a special prize for Best Actor at the Tamil Nadu State Film Awards . Following this , he made a foray into Malayalam cinema through the fantasy film Allauddinum Albhutha Vilakkum which was based on a story from Arabian Nights . The same year , he acted in Dharma Yuddam , in which he played a mentally ill person taking revenge for his parents ' deaths . He then co -@-@ starred with N. T. Rama Rao in Tiger . With the completion of Tiger , Rajinikanth had acted in 50 films over a period of four years and spanning across four languages . Some of the popular films that also released during this period are the youthful entertainer Ninaithale Inikkum , the Tamil ? Kannada bilingual Priya , the Telugu film Amma Evarikkaina Amma and the melodrama Aarilirunthu Arubathu Varai . Priya , based on a detective novel by Sujatha Rangarajan had the distinction of being the first film of Rajinikanth to be shot mostly outside India , mainly in Southeast Asia .

By 1980 , he became a popular actor in the South Indian cinema . During this phase of his career , Rajinikanth abruptly chose to quit acting , but was coaxed back . He made a comeback with the Tamil film Billa , which was a remake of the Bollywood film Don (1978) . It had Rajinikanth playing dual roles and eventually became his first ever commercial success . His pairing with Sridevi continued in Johnny where he was once again cast in a double role . He also starred in Murattu Kaalai which was a commercial success . In 1981 , he appeared in Garjanai which was shot simultaneously in Kannada and Malayalam , making it his last film in those two languages till date . In K. Balachander 's first home production , Netrikan , he performed dual roles as a womanising father and a responsible son . He acted in Thillu Mullu directed by K. Balachander , which was Rajinikanth 's first full @-@ length comedy . He agreed to it solely due to the strong suggestion by his mentor that he should do non @-@ commercial roles , to break the stereotyped action @-@ hero mould by which he was getting famous at the time . 1981 also saw the release of Thee , the remake of Amitabh Bachchan 's 1975 blockbuster Deewar , in which Rajinikanth reprised the role of Bachchan in the original . In 1982 , he starred in Pokkiri Raja , Moondru Mugam , Thanikattu Raja , Puthukavithai and Enkeyo Ketta Kural . Moondru Mugam had Rajinikanth playing three roles for the first time .

In 1983 , he starred in his first Bollywood film , Andha Kanoon , alongside Amitabh Bachchan and Hema Malini . The film went on to become one of the highest @-@ grossing films of that time . His 1984 film , Naan Mahaan Alla , was directed by Muthuraman and produced by K. Balachander . He acted in his first cameo role in the film Anbulla Rajinikanth . He played a triple role in John Jani Janardhan . His performance in Nallavanuku Nallavan earned him a Filmfare Best Tamil Actor Award . In his 100th film , Sri Raghavendra (1985) , he played the Hindu saint Raghavendra Swami . His major success in Hindi films was his 101st film Bewafai . In 1985 , the film Bewafai , with Rajesh Khanna as the lead hero and Rajinikanth in negative role , released and became a success and grossed Rs 11 @. @ 95 crore at the box office that year .

In the second half of the 1980s , Rajinikanth acted in commercially successful films like Naan Sigappu Manithan (1985) , Padikkathavan (1985) , Mr. Bharath (1986) , Velaikaran (1987) , Guru Sishyan (1988) and Dharmathin Thalaivan (1988) . In 1988 , he made his only American film appearance in Bloodstone , directed by Dwight Little , in which he played an English @-@ speaking Indian taxi driver . Rajinikanth finished the decade with films including Rajadhi Raja , Siva , Raja Chinna Roja and Mappillai while also starring in a few Bollywood productions . Raja Chinna Roja was the first Indian film to feature live action and animation .

= = = Commercial stardom (1990 ? 2001) = = =

By the 1990s , Rajinikanth established himself as a commercial entertainer . Almost all the films

released during this period were highly successful at the box office .

He began the decade with a blockbuster in Panakkaran (1990) , which was a remake of Amitabh Bachchan 's 1981 film Laawaris . His next two Tamil films , the fantasy comedy Athisaya Piravi (a remake of Chiranjeevi 's 1988 film Yamudiki Mogudu) which also released in 1990 and the family drama Dharmadorai (1991) , did above @-@ average business at the box office . His stint with Bollywood continued since the past decade as he went on to star in more Hindi films . Hum released in 1991 saw him doing the second main lead with Amitabh Bachchan became an inspiration for Badsha . In 1991 , he worked with Mani Ratnam in Thalapathi , which was heavily inspired by the Mahabharata. in which he co @-@ starred with actor Mammooty ; the film dealt with the friendship between two unknown characters based on Karna and Duryodhana , respectively , and was set in a more contemporary milieu and was both critically acclaimed and successful upon release . He went on to appear in remakes of films from other languages , mostly from Hindi and Telugu . Annamalai , which released in 1992 , was yet another friendship centric film and was loosely based on the 1987 Bollywood film Khudgarz . Mannan , directed by P. Vasu and a remake of Kannada actor Rajkumar 's 1986 blockbuster Anuraga Aralithu , also released in 1992 and became a box @-@ office success . Rajinikanth wrote his first screenplay for the film Valli (1993) , in which he also made a special appearance . He also starred in the film Yejaman , in which he played the role of Vaanavaraayan , a village chieftain . His romantic @-@ comedy Veera (1994) was controversial for its climax but went on to become one of the highest @-@ grossing films in 1994 .

He joined hands with Suresh Krishna for Baasha (1995) , which emerged as an industry record , and is routinely touted by fans and critics alike as a major @-@ hit , as the film elevated him from being just another very popular actor to nearly a demigod status among the masses . He made a cameo in Peddarayudu for his friend Mohan Babu and also helped him in obtaining the remake rights . The same year , he acted in yet another gangster film , Aatank Hi Aatank with Aamir Khan which was also his last Hindi film in a major role till date . His film Muthu was another commercial success , directed by K. S. Ravikumar and produced by K. Balachander , and became the first Tamil film to be dubbed into Japanese , as Mutu : Odoru Maharaja . The film grossed a record US \$ 1 @.@ 6 million in Japan in 1998 and was responsible for creating a large Japanese fan @-@ base for the actor . Muthu 's success in Japan led American news magazine Newsweek to comment in a 1999 article that Rajinikanth had " supplanted Leonardo DiCaprio as Japan 's trendiest heartthrob " . During a visit to Japan in 2006 , Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh acknowledged the success of Muthu in the country during a speech , justifying the positive relationship between the two nations . He also entered Bengali cinema through Bhagya Debata , which released at the end of 1995 . 1997 's Arunachalam was another commercial success . Rajinikanth released his last film of the millennium with Padayappa (1999) which went on to become a blockbuster success . It starred Ramya Krishnan and Soundarya , the former who was critically acclaimed for her performance . It was also the last , prominent role for veteran Tamil actor Sivaji Ganesan .

= = = Struggles , resurgence and acclaim (2002 ? 10) = = =

After a brief gap , Rajinikanth starred in Baba in 2002 , for which he had also written the screenplay . Released with much fanfare and hype at the time , the film featured a story revolving around the reforming of a gangster , who is revealed to be the reincarnation of the Hindu saint Mahavatar Babaji , and fights against political corruption . It fell short of market expectations and the high bids reportedly translated to heavy losses for the distributors . Rajinikanth himself repaid the losses incurred by the distributors . The film was received with comments such as " the bloom was off the rose " and that " the gold does not glitter any more " . Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) leader S. Ramadoss condemned him for smoking and posing with beedis in the film . He was criticised for spoiling the Tamil youth by glorifying smoking and drinking . PMK volunteers attacked the theatres which screened the film and usurped film rolls and burnt it .

Two years later , Rajinikanth signed up for P. Vasu 's Chandramukhi (2005) , a remake of the Malayalam film Manichitrathazhu . Upon release the film was highly successful at the box @-@ office , and in 2007 it set the record of being the longest running Tamil film . Chandramukhi was also

dubbed in Turkish and German as *Der Geisterjäger* and released in the respective nations . Following Chandramukhi 's release , it was reported that AVM Productions were set to produce a film directed by Shankar starring Rajinikanth ? the largest collaboration yet for a Tamil film . The film was titled *Sivaji* and released in the summer of 2007 , following two years of filming and production . It became the first Tamil film to be charted as one of the " top @-@ ten best films " of the United Kingdom and South Africa box @-@ offices upon release . Rajinikanth received a salary of ? 26 crore (equivalent to ? 55 crore or US \$ 8 @.@ 2 million in 2016) , for his role in the film , which made him the second highest paid actor in Asia after Jackie Chan . During the production of *Sivaji* , Soundarya Rajinikanth announced her intention of producing a computer @-@ generated imagery film starring an animated version of her father titled *Sultan : The Warrior* . The film was set for release in 2008 , however it entered development hell and its development status would become unknown over the next few years .

He worked with P. Vasu again for *Kuselan* , remake of the Malayalam film *Kadha Parayumbol* which was made simultaneously in Telugu as *Kathanayakudu* , in which Rajinikanth played an extended cameo role as himself , a film star in the Indian cinema , and as a best friend to the film 's protagonist . According to Rajinikanth , the film somewhat narrated his early life . The film , however , performed poorly at box offices and led to many distributors incurring major losses . Rajinikanth also stated that he would work with Pyramid Saimira again to compensate for *Kuselan* .

Rajinikanth worked again with Shankar for the science fiction film , *Enthiran* . The film was released worldwide in 2010 as the most expensive Indian film ever made , ultimately becoming the second highest @-@ grossing film in India of its time . Rajinikanth was paid a remuneration of ? 45 crore (equivalent to ? 71 crore or US \$ 11 million in 2016) for the film . The film 's success lead to the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad to use the film as a case study to analyze the business of cinema and its success story in a post @-@ graduate elective management course called *Contemporary Film Industry : A Business Perspective* . The course would also study Muthu .

= = = Hospitalisation and return (2011 ? present) = = =

In January 2011 , Rajinikanth was slated to appear in *Rana* , a period film to be produced by Soundarya Rajinikanth and directed by K. S. Ravikumar , who would work with the actor for a third time . During the principal photography of the film on 29 April 2011 , he suffered a mild foodborne illness on the sets , which led to vomiting , dehydration , and exhaustion . He was treated at St. Isabel 's Hospital for a day before being discharged . Five days later , he was rushed to the same hospital again after suffering from breathlessness and fever . He was diagnosed with bronchitis and was kept at the hospital for a week , while also spending a few days in an intensive care unit . Several conflicting reports of discharge dates arose , as well as claims of Rajinikanth 's health deteriorating , which were continuously denied by Latha Rajinikanth . By this time , CNN @-@ IBN reported that " Rajinikanth dead " was one of the top trends on Twitter and most searched term on Google in India . Two days after his last discharge , Rajinikanth was admitted to the Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute on 16 May 2011 for recurring respiratory and gastrointestinal problems . The hospital maintained that Rajinikanth was in stable condition and showed positive response to treatment . It was widely reported that he required a kidney transplantation , which was later denied by Dhanush . On 21 May 2011 , Aishwarya Rajinikanth released a photo of her and Rajinikanth in his hospital ward , both posing with a thumbs signal , responding to fans ' negative reaction to news reports . The hospital restricted unauthorised visitors . Rajinikanth 's brother , Sathyanarayana Rao Gaikwad , reported that the cause of the sudden illness was due to stress from rapid weight @-@ loss and changes in diet , as well as withdrawal of alcohol consumption and smoking cessation . After addressing fans in a 4 @-@ minute digitally recorded voice message to the media , Rajinikanth , under the advice of Amitabh Bachchan , travelled from Chennai to Singapore with his family on 21 May 2011 , where he was to undergo further treatment for nephropathy at Mount Elizabeth Hospital . After spending over two weeks at the hospital , he was finally discharged on 15 June 2011 and continued to recuperate in Singapore , before returning to Chennai on 13 July 2011 .

Despite several failed attempts to restart Rana upon his return , Rajinikanth reprised his Enthiran character , Chitti , in the Bollywood science @-@ fiction film Ra.One (2011) in a guest appearance alongside Shah Rukh Khan and Kareena Kapoor . In November 2011 , it was decided that Rana would be shelved in favour of a new project with Rajinikanth , titled Kochadaiyaan . The motion capture film , which is the first of its kind in India , was released in 2014 to positive reviews . Kochadaiyaan , and the 3D release of Sivaji in 2012 , made Rajinikanth the first Indian actor to have appeared in four different forms of cinema : black @-@ and @-@ white , colour , 3D and motion capture . Following the completion of Kochadaiyaan , Rajinikanth began work in Ravikumar 's next directorial venture , titled Lingaa alongside Anushka Shetty and Sonakshi Sinha . The film was released on 12 December 2014 , coinciding with his birthday , and received mixed reviews from critics . Rajinikanth 's next film was director Pa . Ranjith 's crime drama Kabali , produced by S. Thanu . The film was released in July 2016 . Rajinikanth is filming for 2 @.@ 0 , a spiritual successor to Enthiran , that is scheduled for release in 2017 .

= = Image and influence = =

= = = Culture = = =

Rajinikanth has often been referred to as the most popular film actor in South India by the media and audiences . In 2015 , a film about his fandom , For the Love of a Man , premiered at the 71st Venice International Film Festival .

His popularity has been attributed to " his uniquely styled dialogues and idiosyncrasies in films , as well as his political statements and philanthropy " . Many also cite reasons for Rajinikanth 's popularity as coming from his larger @-@ than @-@ life super @-@ hero appearance in many films , supported by gravity @-@ defying stunts and charismatic expressions , all while attempting to maintain modesty in real @-@ life . Almost every film of Rajinikanth has punchlines delivered by him in an inimitable style , and these punchlines often have a message or even to warn the film 's antagonists . These dialogues are usually fabricated to create new ones or even taken in a comical way , but do not fail to create a sense of entertainment among viewers . It is suggested by the media that actresses such as Gouthami and Nayanthara got their initial breakthrough after co @-@ starring with Rajinikanth very early in their careers , giving other aspiring actors the urge to work with him .

Rajinikanth is also the only Indian actor to be featured in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) syllabus , in a lesson titled From Bus Conductor to Superstar . After opening his first official Twitter account in 2014 , Rajinikanth received over 210 @,@ 000 followers within 24 @-@ hours , which according to The Economic Times was deemed by social media research firms as the fastest rate of followers for any Indian celebrity , as well as among the top @-@ 10 in the world .

Much like Chuck Norris facts , " Rajinikanth facts " or " Rajinikanth jokes " are widely circulated in text messages and memes over the Internet . These satirical jokes have also inspired several mobile applications for iOS and Android .

= = = Politics = = =

Critics , such as Cho Ramaswamy , have commented that Rajinikanth has the potential to be successful in Indian politics due to his popularity and fan base alone . In 1995 , Rajinikanth began supporting the Indian National Congress after meeting Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao . An opinion poll conducted by the magazine Kumudam predicted that Congress with Rajinikanth 's support might win up to 130 seats in Tamil Nadu Assembly . In 1996 , when the Congress Party decided to align with All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) for the assembly election in Tamil Nadu , Rajinikanth changed loyalties and supported Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) -Tamil Maanila Congress (TMC) alliance . The TMC used a bicycle as their election symbol and used an image of Rajinikanth riding a bicycle from the film Annamalai in their posters .

Rajinikanth said , " Even God cannot save Tamil Nadu if AIADMK returns to power . " Rajinikanth wholeheartedly supported the DMK and TMC alliance and asked the people of Tamil Nadu and his fans to vote for that alliance . This alliance had a complete victory in 1996 . Rajinikanth also supported the DMK @-@ TMC alliance in the parliamentary election held the same year . Later in 2004 , Rajinikanth said he would personally vote for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) but would not extend his support to any front during the upcoming Indian general election . The party however failed to win any seats in Tamil Nadu in the Lok Sabha .

Fans of Rajinikanth in Tamil Nadu have continuously speculated his entry in politics , particularly to run for Chief Minister of the state . In 2008 , a few fans in Coimbatore launched a political party for Rajinikanth , in an attempt to pressure his entry . The party was named the " Desiya Dravadar Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam " , with a dedicated party flag and symbol . After learning about this , Rajinikanth submitted an open letter to the media , declaring that he had no connection with these events and requested fans not to indulge in such activities , warning that he would take legal action if they failed to adhere . He also mentioned that he was not interested in politics and thus was only committed to working in films . He added that nobody can force him to enter politics , just as no one can stop him from entering it .

= = Personal life = =

= = = Family = = =

Rajinikanth married Latha Rangachari , a student of Ethiraj College for Women , who interviewed him for her college magazine . The marriage took place on 26 February 1981 , in Tirupati , Andhra Pradesh . The couple have two daughters named Aishwarya Rajinikanth and Soundarya Rajinikanth . Latha runs a school named " The Ashram " .

Aishwarya married actor Dhanush on 18 November 2004 and they have two sons , Yathra and Linga . His younger daughter , Soundarya , works in the Tamil film industry as a director , producer and graphic designer . She married industrialist Ashwin Ramkumar on 3 September 2010 and have a son Ved Krishna .

= = = Views = = =

Rajinikanth is a follower of Hinduism , spiritualism , and a strong believer of spirituality . He is also a practitioner of yoga and meditation . Rajinikanth has religiously visited major Hindu temples prior to the release of each of his films ; for instance he visited the Tirumala Venkateswara Temple before the release of Sivaji in 2007 and visited Sathya Sai Baba at Prasanthi Nilayam in Andhra Pradesh before the release of Kuselan the following year . He also occasionally leaves for pilgrimage to the Himalayas . He has often referred to Ramakrishna Paramahansa , Swami Satchidananda , Ragavendra Swami , Mahavatar Babaji , and Ramana Maharishi as his favourite spiritual leaders ..

= = = Controversies = = =

In 2002 , Rajinikanth undertook a daylong fast to protest the Government of Karnataka 's decision to not release Kaveri River water into Tamil Nadu and announced that he would contribute ? 10 million (US \$ 150 @,@ 000) toward a plan to interlink Indian rivers . He met with Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and many experts to canvass support for the project . His hunger strike was independent of the Nadigar Sangam , who organised their own solidarity protest for the same cause . Film director Bharathi Raja lashed out against Rajinikanth , alleging him of dividing the film industry and saying that he was a " traitor who had a tacit understanding with the Karnataka government " .

In 2008 , Rajinikanth took part in a hunger strike organised by the Nadigar Sangam against Karnataka 's stance on the Hogenakkal Falls water dispute . In his speech , which was well received

in Tamil Nadu , he warned leaders not to inflame the water project issue for political gains and requested that the issue should be resolved soon . He reprimanded politicians in Karnataka and urged them " to speak the truth " to the public . " They cannot be fooled and will not remain silent if you continue to act in such manner , " he stated . The speech led to Vatal Nagaraj , leader of the Kannada nationalist group Kannada Chaluvalli Vatal Paksha , demanding an apology from Rajinikanth and threatening that he and his films would be boycotted from the state of Karnataka . The threats were echoed by other pro @-@ Kannada organisations , such as the Karnataka Rakshana Vedike . In a move to save the market of Tamil cinema in Karnataka and ensure welfare of Tamil Nadu @-@ based filmmakers , Rajinikanth apologised for his statements in a brief media appearance on TV9 Kannada . He later thanked the Kannada film industry for allowing the release of Kuselan and lifting the ban the industry had briefly imposed on it . This led to strong reactions from Nadigar Sangam members R. Sarathkumar , Sathyaraj and Radha Ravi , who called the apology a disgrace to Tamils and opined that his speech never provoked the sentiments of the Kannada people .

Rajinikanth 's support toward fellow actor Ajith Kumar , who in 2010 condemned the forceful inclusion of Tamil cinema personae in political affairs , broke into a controversy .

= = = Philanthropy = = =

According to Naman Ramachandran , the author of Rajinikanth : The Definitive Biography , most of Rajinikanth 's philanthropic activities went unpublicised because he did not want them to be so . Rajinikanth has given away half of his income to charities . In the 1980s , when superstitious beliefs prevented a majority of people from donating eyes , Rajinikanth took the case of campaigning in support of corneal transplantation via television and public speeches . In 2011 , Rajinikanth announced his support for the anti @-@ corruption movement led by Gandhian Anna Hazare and offered his marriage hall , the Raghavendra Kalyana Mandapam , in Chennai free of cost for the India Against Corruption members to hold their fast . Rajinikanth 's fan associations regularly organise blood donation and eye donation camps and distribute food during his birthday .

= = Awards and honours = =

Rajinikanth has received numerous awards for many of his films mostly in Tamil . He received his first Filmfare Award for Best Tamil Actor in 1984 for Nallavanuku Nallavan . Later he received Filmfare Award nominations for his performances in Sivaji (2007) and Enthiran (2010) . As of 2014 , Rajinikanth has received six Tamil Nadu State Film Awards for his performances in various films . He also received numerous awards from Cinema Express and Filmfans ' Association for his on @-@ screen performances and off @-@ screen contributions in writing and producing .

Rajinikanth received the Kalaimamani award in 1984 and the M. G. R. Award in 1989 , both from the Government of Tamil Nadu . In 1995 , the South Indian Film Artistes ' Association presented him with the Kalaichelvam Award . He was honoured with the Padma Bhushan (2000) and the Padma Vibhushan (2016) by the Government of India . He was selected as the Indian Entertainer of the Year for 2007 by NDTV , competing against the likes of Shahrukh Khan . The Government of Maharashtra honoured him with the Raj Kapoor Award the same year . He received the Chevalier Sivaji Ganesan Award for Excellence in Indian Cinema at the 4th Vijay Awards . Rajinikanth was also named one of the most influential persons in South Asia by Asiaweek . He was also named by Forbes India as the most influential Indian of the year 2010 . In 2011 , he was awarded the Entertainer of the Decade Award by NDTV for the year 2010 by the then Indian Minister for Home Affairs P. Chidambaram . In December 2013 , he was honoured by NDTV as one among the " 25 Greatest Global Living Legends " . In 2014 , he was presented with the " Centenary Award for Indian Film Personality of the Year " at the 45th International Film Festival of India held at Goa .