



An Austrian Malayali

Meet Prince Pallikunnel, who has turned the tides in his favour in foreign shores and owns one of the largest Asian, African and Latin American food store in Vienna

VINOD NEDUMUDY
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He runs an exotic super-market and cosmetic world as well as a restaurant, right in the heart of Vienna. A quick round of the store will leave you stunned and unable to believe that a man in his forties has been able to achieve so much, coming as he does from humble beginnings.

Yet Prince Pallikunnel, a native of Malappuram district, who runs PROSI, the largest and finest Asian, African and Latin American food store in Vienna, Austria is quite unassuming.

Prince now translates euros that he earns into charity as well on a global scale

The sheer size of the supermarket and a restaurant spread over two buildings on the flanks of a wide road in Vienna and the

influence of the man who runs it are revealed by the fact that the PROSI International Street Festival has run for the past 11 years by closing down the road for two days in summer. This event is participated in by hundreds of citizens.

Prince founded PROSI on a philosophical ethos which is revealed by what the letters in the name stand for — P for Politeness, R for Respect, O for Obedience, S for Service and I for Intimacy.

People of Asian, African and Latin American origins find it a second home in Vienna. PROSI also holds cooking and yoga courses for its Viennese customers. Prince runs his show with the support of his wife and brothers.

It had been a rollercoaster of a ride for Prince before he opened his superstore. Born into a family of farmers, Prince got a chance to pursue higher studies in Austria while he was teaching at a higher secondary school in Balussery in Kozhikode after doing an M.Com. In 1992, he started a grocery shop with a partner to sell Indian spices and vegetables and also newspa-

pers. Initially, it was profitable but the eatery later went into loss, leaving the entire business in doldrums. Prince then tried a travel agency which also turned out to be a fiasco.

But Prince did not curse his fate. In 1994, he secured a job in an insurance company and then, when he felt the time was ripe, he turned to business again and started a simple shop in 1999 in a 120 sq. m. room with the \$ 100 offered by his father. This has, today, become the superstore PROSI.

Prince now translates euros that he earns into charity as well on a global scale. With the PROSI Charity Project in India Prince has built five houses in Semli Village in Indore back native India in July 2011. With the PROSI Charity Project in Ghana he has also built 5 Houses in Sogakope, Accra, Ghana in March 2012 and guns the next project in 2013 in Peru.

Born into a family of farmers, Prince got a chance to pursue higher studies in Austria



Cross roads

Two tourists cross the road in Kochi, on a hot afternoon — SUNOJ NINAN MATHEW

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