



CUSTOMER STORY

TANAJI BORANE

Tea & Cold Drinks Shop
Angriwadi, Mumbai



Tanaji also realized that even if he used his savings to finance a portion of the cost of a flat, it would be difficult, if not impossible for him to get a loan to finance the rest of it – given that he had no formal documentation supporting his business income.

Tanaji Borane's tea and cold drinks shop, Pramod Cold Drinks, is tucked away in Angriwadi, one of Mumbai's historical wadis (low-rise, high-density residences) located in Girgaum.

Approximately 80 sq ft in size, Tanaji's shop is split into a kitchen that includes a stove, a large vat, and various other cooking utensils, and a small serving area comprising of two tables and a few accompanying chairs. The menu, displayed on the outside wall of the shop, offers customers a choice of 4 different kinds of teas, filter coffee, and cold drinks.

At 2:30 pm on a Thursday afternoon, the sleepy Angriwadi neighborhood is quiet compared to the manic rush of traffic outside. This is a good time to chat with Tanaji – post the morning stream of regulars and just before the afternoon shift kicks in. "By about 3:00 – 3:30 pm, I start preparing the tea," he says, "All the shops around this area come to me for their afternoon tea."

They have been coming to Pramod Cold Drinks for almost 20 years now.

Tanaji moved to Mumbai at the age of seventeen, from his hometown in Raigad district, in search of employment. After a finding a space to rent in Angriwadi in the early 1990s, he decided to start his own business and set up a tea-shop, Pramod Cold Drinks, in this space. Since the rent Tanaji had to pay for the shop was a hefty amount (currently Rs. 5,000 per month), he decided to forgo finding a place to live, and chose to stay in the shop itself.

Over the past 20 years, Tanaji has built up a sizeable client base, serving approximately 200 cups of chai every day, and earning an average income of Rs. 20,000 per month. He also got married shortly after moving to the city, to his wife Sangeeta Borane, with whom he now has four children – three sons and a daughter, all students. He returned frequently to Raigad to visit his family, but continued to grow his business in Mumbai. It was not until 2 years ago that Tanaji's family moved from Raigad to Mumbai to live with him.

Tanaji soon found that the make-shift living space he had created adjoining the tea shop was enough for himself, but difficult for a family of five to live in. He began to search for housing options in Mumbai – but everything seemed to be well out of his range of affordability. Tanaji also realized that even if he used his savings to finance a portion of the cost of a flat, it would be difficult, if not impossible for him to get a loan to finance the rest of it – given that he had no formal documentation supporting his business income.

In 2011, Tanaji heard about a housing project in Virar that a friend who worked down the street on V.P. Road had recently purchased a flat in. When he approached the builder, he was told that he could apply to MHFC for a loan. Initially apprehensive about his eligibility for applying for a loan, Tanaji was pleasantly surprised by how effectively his loan officer, Gulabrao Patil, was able to put forward his application. Within a week, Tanaji was able to buy his own home, MHFC sanction letter in hand.

When asked if he is concerned about the lengthy commute he will soon have to face from Virar to Angriwadi for work, Tanaji laughs and says, "I'll have to wake up earlier." After reflecting for a moment, he adds, "But it doesn't matter. Eventually, my wife and I will return to Raigad. What's important now is that we have a home in Mumbai for our kids."