

**Before the National Green Tribunal
Principal Bench at New Delhi**

OA No. 606 of 2022

In the matter of:

Public Action Committee

...Applicant

Versus

State of Punjab & Ors.

...Respondents

List of Additional Documents on behalf of the Applicant and R-8

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Place: New Delhi,
Date: 31.12.2025

Filed by: 

Kawalpreet Kaur & Deepak Kumar Singh
Advocates for the Applicant & R-8
576, Masjid Road, Jangpura, New Delhi-110014
kawalpreet303@yahoo.in | 08287908688

**PRESS RELEASE****15.12.2025**

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Jalandhar Zonal Office, has provisionally attached immovable properties on 13/12/2025 in the form of land, building and plant & machinery, worth Rs 79.93 Crore belonging to M/s Malbros International Pvt Ltd, in a money laundering investigation related to environmental crime, under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of criminal complaint filed by Punjab Pollution Control Board against M/s Malbros International Pvt Ltd for violating the provisions of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 by injection of untreated wastewater through reverse boring into deep aquifers.

ED investigation revealed that M/s Malbros International Pvt Ltd (with its industrial unit at village Mansoorwal, Tehsil Zira, Dist. Ferozepur) was involved in generation and acquisition of Proceeds of Crime by deliberately causing pollution of ground water by persistently and covertly injecting untreated effluents into deep aquifers through reverse boring, and repeatedly discharging wastewater onto land, drains, and an adjacent sugar mill. Its daily functioning involved persistent illegal discharge of untreated effluents into land and groundwater, causing large-scale irreparable ecological damage in form of water pollution and consequent health hazards causing crop loss, cattle deaths and serious health impacts for residents of villages around its premises.

Earlier, searches were conducted at six locations on 16.07.2024 and an amount of Rs. 78.15 Lakh cash was seized from the premises of M/s Malbros International Pvt Ltd and its Directors under the provisions of Section 17 PMLA, 2002.

Further investigation is under progress.

**PRESS RELEASE****16.12.2025**

Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Jalandhar Zonal Office, has filed a Prosecution Complaint on 15.12.2025 before the Hon'ble Special Court for PMLA at Jalandhar, under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, against M/s Malbros International Pvt Ltd, Gautam Malhotra and other related persons, in connection with a money laundering investigation related to environmental crime.

ED initiated investigation on the basis of criminal complaint filed by Punjab Pollution Control Board against M/s Malbros International Pvt Ltd and others for violating the provisions of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 by injection of untreated wastewater through reverse boring into deep aquifers.

ED investigation revealed that the industrial unit of M/s Malbros International Pvt Ltd., located at Village Mansoorwal, Tehsil Zira, District Ferozepur, was involved in the generation and possession of Proceeds of Crime (POC) by deliberate and wilful pollution of ground water. The unit, through its daily operations, was engaged in the persistent and covert discharge of untreated industrial effluents into deep aquifers through reverse boring, and by releasing wastewater onto nearby land, drains, and an adjacent sugar mill. M/s Malbros International Pvt Ltd had run their factory operations through criminal activities of continuously causing environment pollution of ground water, nearby water bodies and areas and thus generated and acquired POC to the tune of Rs. 80 Crore during period involved under investigation.

Earlier, searches were conducted at six locations on 16.07.2024 under the provisions of PMLA, 2002. A cash of Rs 78.15 Lakh was recovered and seized during Search. Further, immovable properties worth of Rs 79.93 Crore, consisting of land, building and plant & machinery of M/s Malbros International Pvt. Ltd. have been attached in the case vide Provisional Attachment Order dated 13.12.2025.

Further investigation is under progress.

Probe into 'polluting' distillery: ED attaches ₹80cr assets of firm

Include Land, Buildings, Plant & Machinery

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Jalandhar/Bathinda: The Enforcement Directorate's Jalandhar zonal office has provisionally attached immovable properties worth Rs 79.9 crore belonging to Malbros International Pvt Ltd, owner of the Zira distillery, as part of its money-laundering probe related to alleged environmental law violations.

It has been alleged that at the Zira distillery, untreated effluents were persistently and covertly injected into deep aquifers through reverse boring. The attached properties include land, buildings, and plant and machinery.

An ED statement said an investigation was initiated based on a criminal complaint filed by the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) against the company. The complaint had alleged violation of provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, by injecting untreated wastewater through reverse boring into deep aquifers.

The ED investigation revealed that Malbros International's industrial unit at Mansoorwal village in Zira, Ferozepur district, was invol-

ACTION AFTER PPCB PLAINT

➤ Probe began on a PPCB complaint alleging violation of the Water Act by injecting untreated effluents into deep aquifers through reverse boring

➤ ED found the Zira unit generated proceeds of crime by persistently discharging

untreated wastewater into groundwater, land, drains and a nearby sugar mill

➤ The illegal acts caused irreparable ecological damage, including groundwater pollution, crop loss, cattle deaths and serious health hazards to nearby villagers

SMELLY WATER FROM 600FT-DEEP BOREWELL

The issue began in July 2022, when villagers were digging a borewell at a religious site and detected an odour from groundwater as deep as 600 feet. They discovered that this was due to the dumping of distillery waste into the groundwater through reverse boring, prompting them to start their protest. Samples were collected separately by scientists from the CPCB, and committees formed by the Punjab govt found that water and soil were contaminated. Various types of heavy metals were found to exceed permissible limits in the water in the surrounding areas. Based on these findings, Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann announced at least twice that the factory would not be allowed to operate, as evidence of it spreading pollution had come to light.

ved in generating and acquiring proceeds of crime. This was done by deliberately causing pollution of groundwater by persistently and covertly injecting untreated effluents into deep aquifers through reverse boring and repeatedly discharging wastewater onto land, drains, and an adjacent sugar mill. "Its daily functioning involved persistent illegal discharge of untreated effluents into land and groundwater, causing large-scale, irreparable ecological damage in the form of water pollution and

consequent health hazards, leading to crop loss, cattle deaths, and serious health impacts for residents of villages around its premises," the ED said.

Earlier, searches were conducted at six locations on June 16 last year, and an amount of Rs 78.15 lakh cash was seized from the premises of the company and its directors. Residents of several villages close to the distillery have accused the firm of environmental violations up to when its operations were suspended on July 24, 2022.

ANNEXURE A-3

True Typed Copy**Times of India 16.12.25****Probe into 'polluting' distillery: ED attaches Rs. 80 cr assets of firm**

Include Land, Buildings, Plant & Machinery

Action after PPCB Complaint

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of provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, by injecting untreated wastewater through reverse boring into deep aquifers.

The ED investigation revealed that Malbros International's industrial unit at Mansoorwal village in Zira, Ferozepur district, was involved in generating and acquiring proceeds of crime. This was done by deliberately causing pollution of groundwater by persistently and covertly injecting untreated effluents into deep aquifers through reverse boring and repeatedly discharging wastewater onto land, drains, and an adjacent sugar mill. "Its daily functioning involved persistent illegal discharge of untreated effluents into land and groundwater, causing large-scale, irreparable ecological damage in the form of water pollution and consequent health hazards, leading to crop loss, cattle deaths, and serious health impacts for residents of villages around its premises," the ED said.

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₹79.93-crore assets of ethanol plant attached over groundwater pollution

ANIRUDH GUPTA

FEROZEPUR, DECEMBER 15

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), Jalandhar Zonal Office, has provisionally attached immovable properties worth Rs 79.93 crore belonging to Malbros International Private Limited under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

The attached assets include land, buildings, plant and machinery. The ED launched the investigation based on a criminal complaint filed by the Punjab Pollution Control Board against the company for allegedly violating the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, by injecting untreated wastewater into deep aquifers through reverse boring.

In a press note, ED offi-



PROCEEDS OF CRIME

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ly discharging wastewater onto land, drains and an adjoining mill area.

The ED said the unit's daily operations involved persistent illegal discharge of untreated effluents, causing "large-scale irreparable ecological damage" in the form of water pollution. It added that this led to health haz-

ards, crop loss, cattle deaths and serious health impact on residents of nearby villages.

On July 16, 2024, searches were conducted at six locations under Section 17 of the PMLA, during which Rs 78.15 lakh in cash was seized from the plant premises and from its directors.

The ethanol plant is

reportedly owned by former SAD MLA and liquor baron Deep Malhotra. Villagers have been protesting outside the plant since July 2022 under the banner of "Sanjha Morcha", alleging groundwater pollution.

On January 17 last year, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann announced the closure of the plant through a video message on social media. However, protesters refused to lift the dharna, seeking written orders by the state government, which are still awaited.

Last month, the state government, in an affidavit submitted before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on November 2 by Manish Kumar, Special Secretary, Science, Technology & Environment, termed the unit a "rogue" industry with a documented history of violating environmental norms.

Green tribunal issues notice to BBMB, govt over repeated floods

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, DECEMBER 15

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) issued a notice to the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) and the Punjab Government on a petition concerning repeated floods in Punjab and issues related to dam operations, data transparency and dam safety.

The application was filed by the Public Action Committee (PAC), whose members Jaskirat Singh and Kuldeep Singh Khaira said they had analysed dam inflow and outflow data following the 2023 floods and approached the Centre and the state government, seeking an investigation into the causes.

They alleged that after these representations, the BBMB stopped placing critical dam operation data, including inflows, outflows and reservoir levels, in the public domain

from October 2023 onwards.

The PAC said such information had earlier been disclosed publicly and that Section 35(1)(e) of the Dam Safety Act, 2021, mandated dam authorities to make details of anticipated inflows, outflows, flood warnings and downstream impacts public. The discontinuation, the PAC said, deprived downstream administrations, farmers and the general public of timely information.

PAC members Kapil Arora and Dr Amandeep Singh Bains stated that despite India Meteorological Department forecasts of heavy rainfall from mid-August, reservoir levels continued to rise and water releases were carried out under high inflow conditions. They also submitted that reservoir operation targets appeared arbitrary and unscientific in the context of ageing infrastructure and changing climate patterns.

The Tribune 16.12.2025

Rs. 79.93-crore assets of ethanol plant attached over ground water pollution

Proceeds of crime

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Ethanol: Fuel's Paradox

Petrol blended with 20% ethanol might save forex and reduce carbon footprint, but most cars and bikes may suffer corrosion damage & low mileage, while the water table takes another hit

Anjana Menon



India's vehicle owners are stranded. In the hurry to achieve climate goals, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and claim self-reliance, govt's accelerated push for ethanol-blended fuel - without giving vehicle makers, service providers, or consumers a longer period to transition smoothly - feels like a policy ambush.

If govt wants consumers to switch willingly to E-20 (20% ethanol in petrol), it must prove that all existing vehicles are fully compatible with the higher blend, and that consumers will enjoy tangible cost savings, and that there is a safety net for older vehicles that are not compatible. Without such guarantees, the policy leaves consumers running on empty.

Biofuels are an old idea. Brazil, the world's largest sugarcane producer, created the Proalcool policy, pioneering the use of ethanol-blended fuels to overcome the oil price shock of the 1970s, and reduce its fuel import bill. For more than 50 years, it has steadily improved sugarcane yields, set up processing units and developed ethanol-fuel vehicles, giving consumers, manufacturers, and service providers time to ease into the switchover.

There are plenty of reasons why Ethanol burns faster than petrol, delivers about 34% less energy per unit, and is corrosive because it absorbs water. Brazil's flex-fuel vehicles (FFVs), re-engineered to run on ethanol, are built to counter these drawbacks and reassure buyers that their cars will last while maintaining performance.

Elsewhere, too, govt's have shown great prudence. Countries that sell biofuel blends offer pure petrol and lower blends to protect unadapted engines. In US, which produces more than 50% of the world's ethanol, the standard is a modest 10% ethanol blend for which most vehicles are tweaked. Even then, pure gasoline is still available for older cars at designated pumps.

India, which makes only 5% of the world's ethanol, has foisted a 20% blend on consumers. This may have given govt bragging rights for being committed to its net-zero goals, but it is causing widespread resentment among many. It's scientifically established that non-flex-fuel engines risk corrosion from biofuels - and problems extend beyond poor mileage. Understandably,



Image: AI

consumers distrust govt studies that downplay these risks.

In a press release a month ago, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas sought to assuage concerns by casually mentioning, "only in case of certain older vehicles, some rubber parts and gaskets may require replacement...for a vehicle owner, who believes that his/her vehicle may require further tuning or parts replacement, the entire network of authorised service stations is available to respond to such requests." It left unaddressed who would pick up the costs of replacement, which has left consumers venting on social media, and vehicle makers worried about their

performance promise. Automotive Research Association of India's (ARAI) findings do little to assuage mileage concerns as they are based on "controlled" road conditions. In reality, driving happens on clogged and potholed city roads, muddy villageroads, and stop-start stretches that drive up fuel consumption, making mileage a make-or-break factor in vehicle choice. The promise of extra miles goes a long way for vehicle manufacturers in India - both in rural and urban markets.

Even buyers of luxury vehicles, who pony up more on a vehicle than middle-class buyers do on home ownership, ask about mileage before the conversation shifts to ride quality and performance. In value-conscious India, every kilometre of lost mileage is a missed heartbeat. Worse, vehicles older than two years, which is the majority on Indian roads, are at greater risk of damage. Govt made it mandatory for all vehicle makers to produce E-20 compliant vehicles only from April 1, 2023. Consumers are worried that insurers are unlikely to entertain damage claims for policy adjustments, opening a new battlefield.

A govt think tank's earlier claims that ethanol-blended fuels would be cheaper to buy have also proved hollow. By govt's own admission, procuring ethanol is now more expensive than refined petroleum - a situation that will only worsen as our fuel needs grow.

Sugarcane, used to produce biofuel, is a water-intensive crop. While it may boost farmer incomes, the rush to produce the crop for ethanol may come at the cost of India's already depleting water tables. Maize, the other crop used for ethanol, is only slightly less water-intensive.

The odds are stacked against an aggressive E-20 rollout. If govt is serious about sustaining this programme and protecting consumer rights, it must offer attractive solutions, such as a one-time payment to make engines flex-fuel compliant, or a substantial rebate for trading in older vehicles for scrappage. It also needs to make lower-ethanol blends freely available at petrol stations so consumers have a choice.

To be fair, any programme to reduce emissions in India's polluted cities and lower our oil import bill is worth implementing. Still, if India wants to run on ethanol, it must not run consumers into the ground. For now, it would be prudent to go slow.

The writer is an author & entrepreneur

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True Typed Copy**The Times of India** 12.09.2025**Ethanol: Fuel's paradox**

Petrol blended with 20% ethanol might save forex and reduce carbon footprint, but most cars and bikes may suffer corrosion damage & low mileage, while the water table takes another hit

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ANNEXURE A-6

THE HINDU

States

Mandi 18/12/25

Farmers give ultimatum to stop work on ethanol plant

Delegation holds talks with Hanumangarh administration, seeks cancellation of MoU, withdrawal of cases against protesters; Cong., CPI(M) extend support; stir will continue till Jan. 7: farmer leader

Mohammed Iqbal
JAIPUR

A large number of farmers took part in a *mahapanchayat* at Dhan Mandi in Hanumangarh on Wednesday and gave a 20-day ultimatum to the Rajasthan government to stop construction of an ethanol factory at Rathikhera village.

Local Congress and CPI (M) leaders supported the gathering addressed by Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait, and farm union leaders Gurnam Singh Charuni and Joginder Singh Ugrahan.

Ahead of the meeting, barricades were erected and a large number of police personnel were de-



Farmers participating in the *mahapanchayat* at Dhan Mandi in Hanumangarh, Rajasthan, on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ployed at Dhan Mandi. Prohibitory orders were imposed and mobile Internet services suspended.

Former CPI(M) MLA Balwan Poonia, who heads the Kisan Sangharsh Samiti, said the agitation would be called off only when the State government cancels the MoU inked to set up the

ethanol plant. Farmers in the region fear that the proposed factory will create a livelihood crisis as groundwater contamination and air pollution will render farmland barren.

Protests intensified when construction of the plant's boundary wall began, leading to clashes and

violence on December 10.

A 13-member delegation of farmers held talks with the district administration and sought cancellation of the MoU, withdrawal of cases filed against protesters, and action against officials responsible for the clashes, in which several persons were injured.

Collector's assurance

Hanumangarh Collector Khushaal Yadav assured the delegation that a letter would be sent to the State government with the recommendation to accept the demands. Mr. Poonia said the peaceful agitation of farmers would continue till January 7, when another *mahapanchayat* will be held in Sangaria.

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True Typed Copy

THE HINDU 18.12.25

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ANNEXURE A-7



4085

True Typed Copy

Hindu 20.12.25

HC quashes order allowing company to set up brewery

The Hindu Bureau

Kochi

The Kerala High Court on Friday quashed a government order (G.O.) that had accorded preliminary sanction to a private firm to establish an ethanol plant for a brewery at Elappully in Palakkad district.

A Division Bench quashed the order, while considering a batch of public interest litigation (PIL) petitions that challenged the setting up of the plant in the area.

The court observed that many aspects that the government considered while according preliminary sanction were not factually correct.

The firm had submitted an application in November 2023 to the Excise Commissioner, seeking permission to install a 500- KL capacity ethanol plant and an IMFL bottling unit, among others, at the site.

Subsequently, the government granted preliminary sanction.

Water shortage

The petitioners contended that the sanction was granted on the basis of factually incorrect inputs, including that the unit was going to be established at the Kanjikode industrial area that is located around 5 km from Elappully. In addition, the Kerala Water Authority (KWA) agreed to provide water, despite the concern that this would imperil

water availability in the area. Moreover, statutory licences were not obtained from the panchayat.

While allowing the PILs and quashing the GO, the court clarified that the government was not precluded from making a fresh consideration of any application if made.

Chennithala hails order Congress leader and member of the Congress Working Committee Ramesh Chennithala welcomed the High Court order denying permission to the brewery.

He said that it gives him immense satisfaction that the agitation he had led as the then Leader of the Op-position, against the government's move to grant licences to breweries and distilleries, was accruing results. He said that the move was part of a larger conspiracy to hand over the State to liquor lobby.



Deepak Singh <deepak.singh@hrln.org>

List of Additional Documents dated 31.12.2025 in O.A. 606 of 2022 filed by the Applicant and R-8

1 message

Deepak Singh <deepak.singh@hrln.org>

Wed, Dec 31, 2025 at 9:16 PM

To: chairman.ptl.ppcb@punjab.gov.in, chairmanppcb@yahoo.co.in, seezobti@gmail.com, zldmalbros@oasisgrp.in, rdchandigarh.cpcb@gov.in, gurnamsingh.cpcb@nic.in, msppcb@punjab.gov.in, mattewarasutlejpac@gmail.com, ccb.cpcb@nic.in, narendersharma.cpcb@gov.in, mscb.cpcb@nic.in, ppcbfdk@yahoo.com, cs@punjab.gov.in, "naginder.benipal@gmail.com" <naginder.benipal@gmail.com>, "officeofbalendu@gmail.com" <officeofbalendu@gmail.com>, artakkar@artlo.in, rahul@artlo.in, ENVIRO LEGAL DEFENCE FIRM <eldflegal@gmail.com>

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find the List of Additional Documents in O.A. 606 of 2022 by the APPLICANT and R-8 dated 31.12.2025, listed before the Hon'ble NGT, Principal Bench, Delhi. Please consider it as proof of advance service.

Thank you,

Regards,

Deepak Kumar Singh (Advocate)
576, Masjid Road, Jungpura,
New Delhi-110014

**List of Additional documents dated 31.12.2025 by OA.pdf**

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