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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2015

HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRIAL

'Every night was a nightmare for me. I couldn't sleep all those 22 days.'

MUMTAZ LADHA



GERRY KAHRMANN/PNG

Mumtaz Ladha speaks during an interview at the Vancouver office of her lawyer David Martin last week.

Mumtaz Ladha was acquitted in 2013 after judge said alleged victim couldn't be believed

LORI CULBERT
VANCOUVER SUN

Mumtaz Ladha cries as she recalls sitting in a Supreme Court prisoner's box, listening to a former friend testify that she had been enslaved, starved and generally mistreated in the accused's home.

It was difficult to listen to the testimony, which Ladha insists was all lies, and even more troubling to face the possibility of conviction during the 22-day trial in 2013.

"Every night was a nightmare for me. I couldn't sleep all those 22 days. We didn't know what the verdict would be," Ladha said as she wept in a recent interview.

"It was very hard for my husband. ... My daughter was pregnant and lost the baby during the trial. My son had to leave his job to come here and be with me to give me all the support I needed. (My other daughter) was already in depression."

At the end of the trial, B.C. Supreme Court Justice Lauri Ann Fenlon acquitted Ladha, rejecting

the complainant, a young Tanzanian woman, as an unreliable witness and ruling she had motivation to lie — to apply to stay in Canada as a victim of human trafficking.

Instead, Fenlon believed Ladha's story of meeting the complainant in Africa, where Ladha's family has businesses, and offering to bring the 21-year-old woman to Canada for a visit.

The Crown did not appeal.

CONTINUED ON A8

Vision set election expense record

\$3.4 million spent, but \$2.9 million raised

JEFF LEE
VANCOUVER SUN

Vancouver's ruling Vision Vancouver party, waging a life-and-death fight against its archrival, the Non-Partisan Association, waged the most expensive election campaign in the city's history, and in the end also declared the largest deficit.

The more than \$3.4 million Vision spent in the Nov. 15 election far exceeded the \$2.9 million it raised, leaving it with a \$485,420 deficit, according to election disclosure records released Monday by Elections BC.

A large chunk of the money poured in during the final days of the campaign when the party acknowledged the race was close.

A week before the election, Vision publicly indicated it had raised \$2.2 million but a massive last-minute fundraising appeal drew in another \$700,000.



You shouldn't be spending money you don't have. That is a behaviour that a fiscally responsible organization like the NPA doesn't try to do.

PETER ARMSTRONG
NPA PRESIDENT, ON VISION VANCOUVER'S ELECTION EXPENSE DEFICIT

CONTINUED ON A6

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Entrepreneur delivers late-night snacks to hungry souls. » C1

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