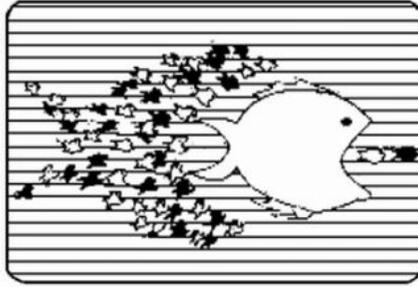


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**For Immediate
Release**

**BC Human Rights Tribunal finds discrimination in treeplanter case,
awards close to \$700,000 for injury to dignity**

The BC Human Rights Tribunal today issued its decision in favour of 55 treeplanters who worked for Khaira Enterprises Ltd. in 2010, finding that the workers were subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour and sex. All but one of the Complainants are of African origin. The Tribunal has awarded the workers close to \$700,000 in injury to dignity damages.

Tribunal Member Norman Trerise made a number of important findings, including:

- Unlike the South Asian and white workers, the African workers were not paid all of the wages they were owed. It is more probable than not that Khaira chose to pay its South Asian and white workers out in full rather than to equally distribute available funds amongst all of the workers in order to preserve its relationship with South Asian and white workers because it valued those relationships more than its relationships with the African workers.
- The African workers were subjected to racial slurs and racial harassment.
- Khaira had a duty to ensure a respectful workplace and erase a poisonous workplace environment. Khaira failed in its obligations to normalize the working environment for its workers and is responsible for the discrimination of its principals against its African workers and white female worker.
- The complaint was fully justified due to the discrimination endured by the workers.
- The Complainants were not motivated by money in pursuing this complaint.

Sarah Khan, one of the lawyers representing the Complainants, said “We are very pleased that the Tribunal has recognized that the discrimination the workers endured harmed their dignity and self worth.”

“This decision is a victory for the Khaira workers. The BC Federation of Labour has been involved with this case from the start and I am relieved that the efforts of these workers to stand up for their dignity and rights have been rewarded,” said Jim Sinclair President of the BC Federation of Labour. “But we need to remember that the conditions that led to this deplorable situation are still in place today. The provincial government needs to step up to the plate, apologize to these workers and immediately pay them the money ordered by the Human Rights Tribunal. These workers were planting trees under contract from the provincial government and they were working on public lands.”

For more information, please contact Sarah Khan at 604-687-3063.