

## **Promotion of Education in Pakistan: The Role of an English man, G.D Langland**

Fakhr-ul-Islam\*

### **Abstract**

*Education in Pakistan in general and in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular is faced with multifarious problems. Apart from endeavors by the government, some individuals are also putting in their efforts for promotion of education. One such individual is a foreign luminary, Geoffrey Douglas Langland. This 95 years old English man is settled in Pakistan right from the inception of the country in 1947. Holding the rank of Major in British Army, he spent a couple of years during 1947-54 in Pakistan Army training section, and then switched over to education in 1954. He served at Aitchison College Lahore, Cadet College Razmak and finally made Chitral as his abode. In Chitral he established Langlands School and College in 1989. He contributed a lot to education in Pakistan during the past 58 years. In this paper, an attempt has been made to introduce that legendary character and his meritorious services, to Pakistani people in particular and rest of the world in general. Most part of the paper pertains to oral history as a large amount of information has been gathered from interviews with Langlands and people associated with him one way or the other. Few secondary sources such as books, reports and websites have also been consulted.*

**Keywords:** Education, G.D. Langland, Chitral

### **Early life**

Geoffrey Douglas Langlands was born in Yorkshire (United Kingdom), on October 21, 1917 and was ten minutes younger than his identical twin brother.<sup>1</sup>

In 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1918 after a period of one year his sister Audrey was born. His father was an employee in an Anglo American company in England. When Langlands was only one year old, his father died due to worldwide Influenza Epidemic which killed about a hundred million people in 1918<sup>2</sup>. After the death of his father, his mother took her family back to her parents

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\* Dr. Fakhr-ul-Islam, Director, Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar. Email: ifakhar@hotmail.com

in Bristol. There, in Bristol, his grandfather took the responsibilities of him and his family.<sup>3</sup> Their grandfather, who was already retired, took up a new part time job in order to maintain the family requirements. The money which his grandfather earned was not sufficient so, his mother also went to another town for a job so that she could be able to fulfill their requirements.<sup>4</sup> It was in 1930, life became more difficult for Langlands when his mother working for 6 years with cancer, passed away.<sup>5</sup> At the age of 12, Langlands lost his parents. He remembers those days and says “When my father died I was one year of age so I didn’t feel, but when I lost my mother I became very upset and I can’t forget those worst days of my life.”<sup>6</sup> He further added and says “As I belong to a lower class family so it was a very tough time of my life without my parents as I loved my mother too much.”<sup>7</sup> He was little worried about his future after the death of his mother because no one had the energies to support him; as his grandfather was very old yet doing some job. After the death of his mother, the grandfather took full charge of his children.<sup>8</sup>

But life created more difficulties for G. D Langlands. His grandfather who was the only support of his family, died on 25 December, 1932, leaving behind his orphan grandchild. About his grandfather he says “My grandfather very loved person and he never gave me the impression that I am orphan, He, at that age, was doing job. I can not forget his sincerity of love.” After the death of his grandfather his aged grandmother took the responsibilities to look after him. She continued to provide home for them, but she was unable to do anything about their future.<sup>9</sup> From the beginning of his life, G. D Langlands faced lot of difficulties. For an orphan it was too difficult to achieve a respectable position in life, but he had the courage to face all hardships. The childhood of Langlands passed in deep sorrow and multifarious difficulties. However, he did not lose his courage and continued his educational carrier with unflinching struggle. He remembers some of the interesting moment of his childhood and says:

*“On some occasions, I wished to buy those things which a child of my age wanted but due to lack of money those were not in my reach. I was aware of my family’s financial position, therefore, I never insist to buy those things. In those days it was hard to survive as I had little food to eat. However, my grandfather gave me undaunted support in those difficult circumstances.”<sup>10</sup>*

### School Life

Langlands started his educational carrier in 1923, at the age of six years. He had a dream to go to a good school, but due to his weak financial position, it was impossible to realize it. Nevertheless his dreams proved to be true when some of his mother's friends collected money and sent him to a good Upper Class School. He started his educational carrier at that school. He was an intelligent boy and did not miss the opportunity which was being provided to him.<sup>11</sup> He worked hard and became one of the best students in his class. That school really set him up for life to become a respectable person. He never missed any opportunity whenever he got a chance to show his abilities. The most favorite subject he thinks was mathematics, therefore, he focused on mathematics in his professional life. He loved his teachers, showed respect to them and established friendly relations with them. He said about teachers "I believe teachers are the architects of society. I always obeyed them whatever they ordered."<sup>12</sup> He had friendly relations with his class fellows and helped them whenever they needed. About his daily routine, Langland said "After returning from school I always revised my lesson and regularly completed my home work. Then I used to help my family in their routine work. I did not play games with my friends, brother and sister but I helped them in their school work."<sup>13</sup>

Langlands is happy with his life now because life had given him a chance to do something not only for himself and family but for humanity at large. He always remembers his mother's efforts due to which he got admission in a good higher class school. He attributes all his educational achievements to his mother.<sup>14</sup> At school he was not naughty as compared to other children. He always focused on his studies. He knew that life had provided him a golden opportunity to show his talent. In those days it was just a dream to receive education especially from a good high standard school. He always gave respects to elders, obeyed them and helped them whenever they needed. He followed tough routine in every work and strictly followed his time table before embarking on any work. About time he says "I always believed that time is precious and those who gave respect to time succeed in life. During my school life I attended my classes regularly and with great interest and that is why I became a successful person."<sup>15</sup>

In 1936, Langlands completed his school studies and got high school certificate (12 classes). This was the time when he had to decide about his future, because he could not afford to go for higher education.<sup>16</sup>

### Career

Langford's financial position did not allow him to continue his education further, He had to earn money for his family in order to make both ends meet. In 1936, he started teaching at a private school in Croydon near London at a meager salary of £ 5 a month. He had to conduct one hour journey to London to reach his job place.<sup>17</sup> Later on he got admission in B.Sc programme at Brikbeck College, London University. Due to his job, he opted for evening classes, wherein 4 lectures a week were delivered.<sup>18</sup> In that private school, he taught mathematics which was his favorite subject from his school life. Langlands loved teaching profession and he took pains in training his students. He was able to establish friendly relations with students which in due course of time benefited the younger generation. About his teaching experience He says "I learned a lot from teachings which helped me to build my future."<sup>19</sup> Besides supporting his family financially, he but also completed his B.Sc. degree from the college of Brikbeck.

The outbreak of Second World War was another mile stone in Langland's career. On September 1, 1939 German troops swarmed across the Polish Border and unleashed the first Blitzkrieg the world had seen. Hitler had been planning his attack since March – ever since German troops occupied the remainder of Czechoslovakia. Britain and France had sworn to defend Poland. Honoring these obligations, the two countries sent ultimatums to Hitler demanding his withdrawal from Poland. Hitler declined to respond.<sup>20</sup> The declaration of war on Germany on 3, September 1939 was announced by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. World War II had begun.<sup>21</sup> On the same day Langlands joined the British Army as an ordinary recruit. He went to war under Lord Lovat's command and then joined the British Army commando unit, He spent three and half years as commando sergeant. He was a section sergeant in C Troop 4 Cdo at the time of the Dieppe Raid and his section officer was Lt David Style, who was awarded the MC for his part in the action. Before taking part in the Dieppe Raid, he had qualified as a climbing instructor. He put his expertise to good use Whilst C Troop was based in the village of Bethesda, Snowdonia. Langlands was a brave soldier and took part in the Second World War from which he seeks a lot as he faced difficulties from his early childhood. The experience at minor age enabled him to face problems with courage.<sup>22</sup> About his army life he says "For a school teacher to join an army was totally a different life. It was harder than normal life but I enjoyed it and

faced it with courage. After spending three and half years as commando sergeant, I joined officer training course.”<sup>23</sup>

About his experiences in the World War II, he says “it was a bloody war and I faced a lot of problems during that war, where my friends were dying in front of me and I could not do anything for them. There came a time where I had to live without food and water for several days. I can’t believe even now that I am among those who survived. Once I and my friends were defending an area near Bethesda, when there came a sudden attack from the enemy side. Most of my friends were killed but I narrowly escaped. I was very sad at that time which I can’t explain in words.”<sup>24</sup> He further says “it is very difficult to kill someone but at that time there was no other option to survive. From that participation in war, I learned as how to survive and how to face difficulties when one is in trouble.”<sup>25</sup> He has all praises for his commanders who tried to boost their morale. In one such situation, his commander arranged a party for his troops before launching an offensive. The idea was that for few minutes, the soldiers may forget their sorrows and prepare themselves for the upcoming danger.”<sup>26</sup>

#### **Arrival at the Subcontinent**

In 1943, Langlands got commission in British Army and was posted to India, In January, 1944; he arrived at India via sea route. He was put under the command of Lord Lavot’s Four Commando Regiment.<sup>27</sup> He continued my services in the British Indian Army for almost three years. That was the time that struggle for independence was at its last stages, and on 14 August, 1947 sub-continent was divided into two independent states Pakistan and India. Somehow he fell in a sort of charm with this land and stayed back after independence<sup>28</sup>

#### **Arrival in Pakistan (Services in Pakistan Army (1947 to 53)**

G. D Langlands, was one of the few British Army men who chose to stay in Pakistan after the partition of sub-continent. He came to Pakistan as a result of an agreement reached with the British officers. Under that agreement, the British officers were asked to stay on for one year to assist development of new army and they were given the rights to join Indian or Pakistani army. Major Langlands opted to join Pakistan army.<sup>29</sup> In Pakistan Army, he was given the task of imparting training to the new national armed forces of Pakistan. It was a difficult task to train an army from the scratches but by his abilities he overcame those difficulties. His special task was to train those new officers who got commission in

the Pakistan Army.<sup>30</sup> He directly observed all the difficulties which Pakistan was confronted with. Langlands was committed to his duty as a result of which he won over confidence of his high ups. After completing his first tenure of one year, the Army Chief of Staff extended contract for another term of five years. During his job as trainer, Langlands produced outstanding officers who served Pakistan in various capacities.<sup>31</sup> When his job in army was coming to end, the Chief of staff of Pakistan Army General Ayub Khan, sent for him not to go back to England. In 1954 he was appointed as a professor at the Aitchison College Lahore<sup>32</sup> where he served for 25 years i.e. from 1954 to 1979<sup>33</sup> Aitchison College, Lahore, is one of the most prestigious educational institutions of its kind in South Asia. The original name of this college was Chiefs' College; it was established by British Indian Government in 1864. Later on it was renamed as Aitchison College in recognition of services of Punjab Governor Charles Aitchison (r. 1882-1887). The main purpose of this college was to impart education to sons of rulers of princely states, land lords and other influential people. It has retained its character over the years, maintaining the public school tradition of providing an education that uses academics, sports and co-curricular activities as tools for character development.<sup>34</sup> Once again Langlands chose his favorite profession of teaching which he had left after joining the army. He loved Mathematics and Algebra and that has been a part of his life for a very long time, writing with chalks on the black board of his school. In Aitchison College Lahore, most of the teachers were British who were educating the children of Indian tribal royalty before independence. About his teaching in Aitchison College he says:

*“During my teaching period there, I focused myself to mathematics, the subject I loved the most, and I fully satisfied my students by my teaching methods. I always was a cooperative teacher and gave full support to the students and my students also loved me. I was very happy with my job in Lahore. At Aitchison College I taught those students who later served Pakistan in different field of life.”<sup>35</sup>*

He has a long list of students, who, after graduating from Aitchison, occupied vital positions in civil as well as military bureaucracy, politics, business and other professions. His illustrious students included, among others, former President Faruq Ahmad Khan Leghari, former Prime Minister Zafar Ullah Khan Jamli, Present Governor of Baluchistan Zulfiqar Ali Magsi, ex-Governor and Chief Minister Baluchistan Muhammad Akbar Khan

Bugti, former Chief Ministers Baluchistan Taj Muhammad Khan Jamli and Jan Muhammad Jamli. Similarly Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah, Syed Hamid Raza Gillani, Ministers Sikandar Hayat Khan, Barrister Aitzaz Hassan, Faisal Salah Hayat, Makhdoom Shah Mahmud, Asfandiyar Wali Khan, Mir Rustam Khan Jamali, Muhammad Owais Khan Laghri, Members of National Assembly Mia Gul Adnan Aurengezeb, Amjad Ali Noon, Member Provincial Assembly Shahjahan Ahmad Khan, Sportsman Imran Khan, Majid Jahangir Khan and Ramiz Hassan Raja were included in the long list of his pupils.<sup>36</sup> Of all the students, Langlands liked Imran Khan and Zafar ullah Khan Jamali. About Imran Khan he says:

*“Imran Khan owns me quite a lot. Everyone knew he was going to be an outstanding sportsman but I told him that if he wants to be a leader, he would have to focus on his lesson. He was an average student, not so focused on his studies because he always was busy with his cricket.”*

Langlands recalls Zafar Ullah Khan Jamali as a kind hearted person. In 1979, Langlands had to leave the Aitchison College because he was asked to do an even tougher job, teaching in the Razmak Cadet College of North Waziristan. Since he was a mountaineer, therefore he accepted the offer to serve in mountainous area<sup>37</sup> He never married and devoted his life to serve humanity. He did try to marry someone in Pakistan, but every one was interested to settle in England while he had decided to remain in Pakistan for ever.<sup>38</sup>

### **Serving Razmak Cadet College from (1979-89)**

In 1979 G. D Langlands received a short letter from the Secretary, Education, Government of NWFP inviting, him to join Razmak Cadet College in North Waziristan He accepted the offer and had to leave his comfortable job in Aitchison opting for a difficult job in the Tribal Area. It was not an easy task to establish Cadet College at a remote place like Razmak.<sup>39</sup> Razmak is situated in the tribal area of North Waziristan. It lies towards South-West of Bannu at a distance of 120 kilometers. Before partition, Razmak was a British Army station. After partition, it was housed by Pakistan Army, Shawwal Rifles and Frontier Constabulary. Here Cadet College was established in 1978. Its building is spread over 154 acres<sup>40</sup> Razmak was not an easy place to live or work in However, Langlands was fond of facing challenges. He joined the institution as a teacher and very soon was elevated to the post of Principal. He was a good administrator and through hard work and

ability, he improved the administration and academics of the college. Hardly after a year, in 1980, had Langlands fallen prey to the lawlessness of Waziristan. He was kidnapped by some tribal men for getting their demands accepted by the government. He disclosed that the kidnapping drama was staged by a tribal chief who lost election to his rival. By kidnapping him, the chief wanted to reverse results of the election but in vain Langlands has all praises for good behaviour of his captors.<sup>41</sup> He recalled:

*"The kidnappers weren't bad sorts. They lined up with their Kalashnikovs; then they wanted one with me in it. Later they invited me to join them in shooting at target practice, handing me a gun. It didn't seem to occur to them I could turn on them, although I would have had to kill 16 of them."*<sup>42</sup>

The captivity did not last long and he was released after six days. For him, it was an adventure but for government it was an ordeal. After his release, the President and Army Chief, General Zia-Ul-Haq invited him to lunch in Peshawar. The President intended to send him back to London but he refused and resumed his duties in Razmak<sup>43</sup> His students had a great affection and love for him. Mr. Arif Mahmud was his student at Razmak Cadet College in 1980. He is now on the strength of Islamia College University Peshawar. He recalls his first encounter with Langlands.

*"I was a student of grade eight. One day I saw a graceful man (Langlands) in my mathematics class. His manners and command on subject impressed me a lot. He paid great significance to discipline in classroom but at the same time was helpful and friendly. Of his students passed out from Razmak Cadet College, almost 300 hundreds got commission in the Pakistan Army, out of them 17 students were promoted to generals ranks. That shows his role in nation building".*<sup>44</sup>

### **Arrival of G.D Langlands in Chitral**

After serving Cadet College Razmak for ten years his contract expired in 1989. He shifted to Islamabad where many institutions offered him job. However, finally he was assigned the task of setting up of a Cadet College at Pallandari Azad Kashmir but he could not undertake the task.<sup>45</sup> In the mean time, the then Deputy Commissioner of Chitral Mr. Javed Majid approached and requested him to set up a school in Chitral. Initially Mr. Javed Majid allotted government guest house to the proposed school. It was not an easy decision to settle in a far flung place like Chitral. However, Langlands liked challenges. He knew about the area because he used to come to Northern Areas including Chitral with



Aitcheson College hiking teams. Moreover he knew that Chital needed his services more than other parts of the country. So he accepted offer of Mr. Javed Majid and joined Sayurj Public School in September, 1989.<sup>46</sup>

### **Background of G.D Langlands School**

The original name of the school where Langlands started his work was Sayurj Public School Chital. Sayurj is a Chitali language word which means eagle<sup>47</sup>. It was established in 1989. A group of British volunteers led by Miss Jullet started teaching there.<sup>48</sup> Later on it was renamed as G.D Langlands School and College. Chital attained a respectable position in educational development after starting from the graze. Chital lagged behind other areas of Pakistan in the field of education. For years, a single school i.e. High School at the state head quarter Chital was imparting knowledge. It was established by Muhammad Nasir-ul-Mulk, the then ruler of Chital in 1940.<sup>49</sup> Now a days, it is called as Government Centennial Model School Chital. The school has contributed a great deal in producing a cadre of professionals e.g. doctors, engineers and teachers and so on. These professionals later on played their role in running the front line departments when Chital became part of the federation of Pakistan in 1969.

After merger of the State with Pakistan, there were few Government schools in Chital. Resultantly literacy rate and quality remained poor. To improve quality of education, it was necessary to build private sector schools in the District.<sup>50</sup> In early 80s Aga Khan Education Service took an initiative to establish schools in Gilgit, Hunza and teachers training programme in Chital. From Chitali community, Ashraf-ud-Din was pioneer in private school system who established Chital Public school in 1982.<sup>51</sup> Then other people followed suit and a mushroom growth of private schools was noticed. Naveed Iqbal looks at the role of private sector in educational development in Chital as:

*“In the field of education the private sector has also played an important role. In private schools, the medium of instruction is English and often good educated teachers are appointed. These schools have given a good support to the cause of education and have maintained interest of students in their studies”<sup>52</sup>*

The above mentioned schools played a vital role in promoting education in Chital. However, these schools were Urdu medium while many people in Chital wanted English medium school for their children. Their dreams became true when G.D Langlands

came to Chitral and started an English medium school in 1989. Starting from class four; this School was upgraded to class eight in 1993. In 1995, it was elevated to high school level.<sup>53</sup> In 1995, the number of students increased and there was no class room in the Xhang Bazaar campus for such strength. In August, 1995 a new building was constructed on Garam Chashma Road, nine kilometer away in the suburb of Chitral city. For this purpose, Langlands purchased land from Shahzada Burhan-ud-Din at a cost of Rs.4 million. Under his supervision, the construction was completed. The boy's portion consists of twelve rooms and the girls section was located on the upper storey of one wing having similar capacity. Langlands spent six and half million rupees on the construction. The new campus was meant for the senior classes.<sup>54</sup>

In 1997, the school was upgraded to higher secondary School and F.Sc. classes were started. As a token of recognition, Surj public school and college was renamed as Langlands School and College in July, 2006.<sup>55</sup> After starting F.Sc. classes the strength of students increased year by year and in 2007 the number of students reached up to eight hundred. Currently, there are almost 900 students studying in Langlands School and college. The strength and standard of the school increased rapidly and it got recognition from the community and the government. The Langlands School and College has a motto "There is always room for improvement". Till compilation of this paper there were 50 teachers and 900 students on the strength of the school.<sup>56</sup>

### **The Langlands Endowment Trust**

Langland is a missionary in the sense that he did not confine himself to performance of duty in the school. In 2004, he established Langlands Endowment Trust for educational development in Chitral. About the trust he says:

*"When I came to Chitral in 1989 I made it clear that if they wanted a high standard public school it must not be just for a small section of the elite, but must serve as wide a section of Chitral population as possible right down to at least lower middle class. This meant that the fees had to be kept at a very reasonable rate, in order to avoid the complaint that good education only available for the rich. After our small start in F. Sc, in 1998, number started increasing year by year and with it expenditure increased to maintain high standards and our financial reserves went down. I spent time in 2003 in preparing with the help of a very senior advocate of Supreme Court suitable documents for setting up the Langlands Endowment Trust. Approval was given by the CBR (Central Board of*

*Revenue) in March 2004 and I went to Prime Minister, Zafarullah Jamali, and requested him to grant the first donation. The Prime Minister was generous enough to donate Rs. 10 million grant.”<sup>57</sup>*

In October 2005, Langlands called on President General Musharraf in Rawalpindi. The President approved Rs. Fifty million grant for his Endowment. He received the amount through Prime Minister, Shaukat Aziz. The amount was deposited in fixed deposit in a bank bringing in Rs. 4.5 lacs a month. That amount has enabled him to pay better salaries to the school and college staff.<sup>58</sup>

### **Langlands in the Eyes of the Community**

People of Chitral, belonging to all shades of opinion, hold Langlands in high esteem. The writers tried to ascertain views of people who knew him in one way or another. They include opinion makers, gentry, students and co-workers of that extraordinary man. A high ranking bureaucrat of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa government, Motasim Billah Shah who remained District Coordination officer of Chitral paid rich tributes to Langlands. He termed the British educationist as a living legend. He said that Langlands has made extraordinary contribution towards education. He said that Langlands has exhausted his God-gifted faculties for the benefit of people.<sup>59</sup>

Interestingly principals and owners of other private schools, despite being competitors, had all praises for Langlands. They included Israr Ali, principal Pamir Public School and College Booni, Sadd Roomi principal Islamia Model School Bumbagh and Shuja uddin lecturer in Aga Khan Higher Secondary School Kuragh. Mr. Israr said that it would be height of thanklessness if we down play Langland’s contribution to education in Chitral. He said that the elderly British visionary is a beacon of light for those who chose the field of private education.<sup>60</sup> Mr. Sadd Roomi is of the view that Langlands is a great man and great source of sincerity. He has produced scores of talented students who are contributing in the development of Pakistan.<sup>61</sup> Shuja who taught in Langlands school and college for quite some time, closely observed Langlands’s personality. He expressed his views about his former boss as:

*“This man, I think is extra ordinary during my teaching career in his school I learned a lot from him. He was always ready to help and always advised us to wtork hard with the students and forbid us to speak in Chitrali after entering the college.*

*Mandatory English speaking enabled me to improve my own. I think he is the one who is sincere with his work and feels happy in doing something for humanity.”<sup>62</sup>*

Mr. Syed Tanweer Hayat, currently teaching English in Qurutuba University Peshawar showered praises on Langlands. He said that Langlands is an emblem of commitment and dedication. He tremendously contributed to education in Chitral and other parts of Pakistan. Thousands of his students have been rendering services in various government, semi government and private sector organizations. He dedicated his life to Chitralis for which we are indebted to him.<sup>63</sup>

Syed Muzammil Shah hailing from Chitral, has recently completed bachelor degree from Comsats Institute of Information Technology, Islamabad, said he learnt mathematics from Langlands. He said that the WWII veteran was a great source of inspiration. He enormously contributed to the uplift and growth of the education sector in Pakistan.<sup>64</sup> Another two alumnus of Langlands School and College, Syed Tahir Hussain said that it was a rare honour for him to learn from a dedicated teacher like Langlands. He said that not only his students but the whole nation should be thankful to that man for his meritorious services. Syed Ghulam Mujtaba, who remained on the roll of Langlands School and College, said:

*“Langlands is one of the most learned, kind and outstanding educators of Pakistan. I am proud to be his student. He totally changed my perception about life. He is an aged man but he worked like a young man and was regular in his duty especially taking classes. He is a great man whose contributions to education in Chital cannot be forgotten.”<sup>65</sup>*

The girl students were not lagging behind in paying tributes to Langlands. Yumna Ahmad, a student of grade 10<sup>th</sup> at the college, said:

*“I greatly appreciate the government of Pakistan for nominating our Principal Langlands for civil award. He has sacrificed his comfortable life in UK and decided to spread the light of education in this far flung and backward part of Pakistan. He gave the real identity to Chitrali youth, particularly the girls, by introducing modern education there”<sup>66</sup>*

Another former student Langlands School and College Miss Komal Shah, resident of Drosh was also admirer of Langlands. She said:

*“He was an amazing human being, very different from any one else. He was quite extra ordinary and I remember him as someone incomparable to any of the staff at my school. He was our principle, but that authority never got to his head. He was always humble and very down to earth which is very uncommon. Typically, the possession of authority tends to make one proud and arrogant but these qualities do not match his description. Simply he was great and others should follow his example. We need more figures like principle Langland in order to improve our educational environment.”<sup>67</sup>*

Miss Komal described an event happened to her in school. Once, due to her mischief, she upset one of her teachers who was naturally unhappy with her. The situation took an ugly turn when two other teachers took side of their colleague.

The three teachers escorted her out of class in a quite rude manner though her fault was not so serious. She reveals

*“I was extremely hurt by this and had shared my complaint with my principle. He immediately solved the problem and advised them not to behave such harshly with children. It was the first time that any authoritative figure had considered my feelings. He made me feel on top of the world. At such a young age, those things leave extraordinary impact on one’s personality.”<sup>68</sup>*

Langlands has been administrative head of the School and College in Chitral. It is very difficult for a discipliner like him to keep his subordinate happy. However, his colleagues recognize his abilities and good behaviour. The Vice Principal of Langlands School and College Chitral, Mr. Abdullah said that he enjoyed working with Langlands. He termed him the most genius person he ever worked with. Abdullah added that Langlands is a kind hearted, loving and hard working person.<sup>69</sup> Mr. Yousuf, teacher of the same school and college, was totally satisfied with Langlands’ administration and felt proud to teach under him. He said, as Principal, he meted out equal treatment to all the employees<sup>70</sup>

The authors feared that religious-minded people may be against Langlands as they are generally averse to Western thoughts and icons. However, surprisingly they too were admiring him. Those who spoke highly of him were Qari Fida Muhammad, Mulana Jamshid Khan, Nisar Ahmad, Zaheeruddin and Maghfirat Shah. Mr. Maghfirat Shah remained district Nazim Chitral during General Musharraf rule. He belongs to religious party Jamaat-e-Islami.<sup>71</sup> Qari Fida Muhammad said that in the beginning some owners of private schools felt threatened when Chitralis thronged

to Langlands School and College seeking admission for their children. The school owners, therefore, started smearing campaign against Langlands accusing him of spreading obscenity but all those allegations proved baseless.<sup>72</sup>

Besides commanding respect among his colleagues, students and civil society, Langlands has been popular among successive governments in Pakistan. As mentioned earlier, many politicians, legislators, ministers, prime ministers and even a Pakistani president were his students. On visit to his simple and small residence in Chitral, one can see his carefully framed photographs with army generals and heads of state particularly General Ziaul Haq, General Fazli Haq and General Pervez Musharraf. The Pakistani government recognized his commendable services by awarding him with prestigious civil awards. In 1987, President General Zia-ul-Haq decorated him with *Sitara-e-Pakistan*. In 2004 he received the same award from President General Pervez Musharraf. On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011, President Asif Ali Zardari awarded him *Hilal-e-Imtiaz*. This award was given to him for his services in the field of education.<sup>73</sup>

### **An Estimate of Langland**

The foregoing details Langlands bear testimony to the fact that he is an extraordinary man. He has been selflessly promoting education in Pakistan, tribal areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He was brought up in hard situation deprived of parents' love and patronage. Imagine a child who wished to buy those things which a child of his age wanted but due to lack of money those were not in his reaching. He had little food to eat. He had a dream to go to a good school, but due to his weak financial position, it was impossible to realize. The positive aspect of that difficult situation was that he felt realities of life from a very close distance and developed stupendous endurance to take on future responsibilities. In his military career he earned for himself unique honour to be World War II veteran. He has an unmatched infatuation for teaching and overwhelming part of his life spent in imparting knowledge. He owes learning and building of his future to teaching. To a question during interview that he taught in Atchison, Razmak and Chitral, and then which place fascinated him, his response was logical "I love teaching and it makes no difference where am I teaching". Courage and commitment to the cause are the dominant attributes of his personality. Opting to remain in Pakistan during its turbulent early days, hiking in the mountains of Karakoram range, serving in Razmak Cadet College,

where he was kidnapped and finally settling in Chitral were not easy things to do. Remaining bachelor for ever was another hard decision he took willingly. He himself disclosed that he tried to marry someone in Pakistan, but every one was interested to settle in England while he had decided to remain in Pakistan for ever. His devotion earned for him respect among his students, colleagues and society at large. The way government of Pakistan rewarded him for his selfless service was really praiseworthy. He leads simple life and even at the age of 95, he is healthy and fit. He lives in a small house built in a narrow lane of Chitral city<sup>74</sup>, but people living in palaces might be envious of the love and respects he commands among thousands of Pakistanis.

Langlands avoids unnecessary criticism of political and educational systems of Pakistan. Nevertheless, when insisted by interviewers, he put forward two suggestions for improving education in Pakistan. The first and foremost advice from him is that, teachers should not be transferred frequently. They should be given enough time to remain in the same school. The longer teachers remain in a school, the more he can develop acquaintance with pupils, he argued. The second problem area of Pakistani education to him is learning of English language. He suggested that English teachers must be bound to teach in English and avoid explaining thing in native language.<sup>75</sup>

To conclude, it may be said that G D Langlands is a living legend and hero of a success story. We need to learn from him the art of making way for himself in the odds of life and once realizing cherished dreams, serving humanity to last breathe.

## Notes & References

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<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey Douglas Langlands, *Report on Langlands School and College*, (Chitral 2011), 1

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Interviews with Mr. G.D Langlands, at his office Xhang Bazaar Chitral city September 22, 2011 and 15<sup>th</sup> September 2012,(henceforth it will be signified as Langlands, interview)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Geoffrey Douglas Langlands, *Report on Langlands School and College*, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Interviews with Mr. G.D Langlands, op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Geoffrey Douglas Langlands, *Report on Langlands School and College*, op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Interviews with Mr. G.D Langlands, op. cit.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.timetoast.com/flash/TimelineViewer.swf?passedTimelines=45589>

<sup>21</sup> Mark Donnelly, *Britain and Second World War*, 1999, 11 New Fetter Lane London EC4P 4EE, p.5

<sup>22</sup> Geoffrey Douglas Langlands, *Report on Langlands School and College*, op. cit., 2

<sup>23</sup> Interviews with Mr. G.D Langlands, op. cit.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Geoffrey Douglas Langlands, *Report on Langlands School and College*, op. cit.

<sup>30</sup> Interviews with Mr. G.D Langlands, op. cit.

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.pakdef.info/pakmilitary/army/>

<sup>32</sup> Sayed Qasim Mahmood, *Encyclopedia Pakistanica* (Lahore: Shahkar Book Foundation,1998), 274

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.chitraltimes.com>

<sup>34</sup> F.S Aijaz-Ud-Din, *Aitchison College Lahore: 1886-1986*, (Sotheby Parke Bernet, publishers 1986), 40.



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- <sup>35</sup> Interviews with Mr. G.D Langlands, op. cit.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>37</sup> Geoffrey Douglas Langlands, *Report on Langlands School and College*, op. cit.
- <sup>38</sup> Interviews with Mr. G.D Langlands, op. cit.
- <sup>39</sup> Geoffrey Douglas Langlands, *Report on Langlands School and College*, op. cit.
- <sup>40</sup> Sher Nawaz Khan Dawar, "Education in North Wazioristan", MA Thesis, Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar, (2002-2004), 98
- <sup>41</sup> Interviews with Mr. G.D Langlands, op. cit.
- <sup>42</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>43</sup> "Meet the 92 year-old teacher finally calling it a day", *BBC*. Available at: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8664333.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8664333.stm)
- <sup>44</sup> Interview with Professor Arif Mahmud, at his office Islamia College University Peshawar, (June 10, 2011)
- <sup>45</sup> Geoffrey Douglas Langlands, *Report on Langlands School and College*, op. cit.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup> Interview with Taiba Kausar, Jekhur Chitral (August 9, 2012)
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid
- <sup>49</sup> Naveed Iqbal, *Land and People of Chitral*. MA thesis Pakistan Study Centre University of Peshawar, (2003), 81
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., 82
- <sup>51</sup> Dr. Sufiana. K. Malik, A Study of Contribution of AKES Pakistan for Primary Education, Islamabad, (2011), 135.
- <sup>52</sup> Naveed Iqbal, op. cit., 82
- <sup>53</sup> Interview of Mr. Shah Fahad, at Benazir Bhutto Shaheed University, Chitral Campus (October 22, 2011).
- <sup>54</sup> Geoffrey Douglas Langlands, *Report on Langlands School and College*, op. cit.
- <sup>55</sup> G. H. Farooqui, "Human Rights Group Criticizes Private School", *GroundReport*, (February 2, 2009). Available at: <http://groundreport.com/human-rights-group-criticizes-private-school/> (accessed on March 21, 2011)
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>57</sup> Interviews with Mr. G.D Langlands, op. cit.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>59</sup> Interview with Motasim Billah ex-District Coordination officer District Chitral.
- <sup>60</sup> Interview with Israr Ali, at Pamir Public School and College Booni Chitral, (March 8, 2012).
- <sup>61</sup> Interview with Mr. Sadd Roomi, at Islamia Model High School Bumbagh Chitral, (March 10, 2012).
- <sup>62</sup> Telephonic interview with Mr. Shuja-Ud-Din, lecturer Aga Khan Higher Secondary School Kuragh Chitral, (April 4, 2012).

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- <sup>63</sup> Interview with Syed Tanweer Hayat, at Muhammadan Private Hostel Canal Town Peshawar, (April 20, 2012).
- <sup>64</sup> Interview with Syed Muzammil Shah, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Islamabad, (September 12, 2011)
- <sup>65</sup> Interview with Syed Tahir Hussain, at Professional Development Centre Danin Chitral, (November 16, 2011).
- <sup>66</sup> Interview with Yumna Ahmad, Chitral, (August 28, 2011)
- <sup>67</sup> Interview with Komal Shah at Darosh, (July, 10, 2012)
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>69</sup> Telephonic interview with Mr. Abdullah, Vice Principal Langlands School and College Chitral, (November 15, 2011)
- <sup>70</sup> Telephonic interview with Mr. Yousuf, teacher at Langlands School and College Chitral, (October 15, 2011)
- <sup>71</sup> Qari Fida Muhammad, Mulana Jamshid Khan, Nisar Ahmad, Zaheeruddin and Maghfirat Shah were interviewed by Dr. Fakhr-ul-Islam (September 15, 2012)
- <sup>72</sup> Interview with Qari Fida Muhammad at Chitral Youth Complex Chitral (September 15, 2012).
- <sup>73</sup> <http://www.chitralnews.com/News-LanglandsAwards-26-Mar-11.htm>
- <sup>74</sup> The authors visited his residence in Xhang Bazar Chitral in September 2011 and 2012
- <sup>75</sup> Interviews with Mr. G.D Langlands, op. cit.