



## PRESS RELEASE

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### PAKISTAN REPORTER ASAD HASHIM WINS AFP KATE WEBB PRIZE

**FREELANCE REPORTER ASAD HASHIM WINS THE 2018 AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE KATE WEBB PRIZE FOR HIS COVERAGE OF THE PLIGHT OF ETHNIC PASHTUNS AND BLASPHEMY ISSUES IN HIS NATIVE PAKISTAN.**



The prize, with a 3,000 euro purse, honours journalists working in perilous or difficult conditions in Asia, and is named after a crusading AFP reporter who died in 2007 at the age of 64, after a career covering the world's troublespots – including Afghanistan.

Asad Hashim, 33, was recognised for a series of articles on ethnic Pashtuns and other groups caught up in the Pakistan military's fight against the Pakistan Taliban.

These included an investigative report into enforced disappearances allegedly conducted by the military and a reporting mission to the South Waziristan tribal region – birthplace of Pakistan's Taliban – to look into the deadly civilian toll from landmine explosions.

The award also recognised his work on other highly sensitive issues, such as Pakistan's blasphemy laws and the country's judicial system.

"These are challenging times for journalists in Pakistan and Asad Hashim's work stands out for the kind of courageous, independent reporting the Kate Webb Prize was created to recognise," said AFP's Asia-Pacific regional director, Philippe Massonnet.

"His deeply-researched articles tackle sensitive subjects with an admirable balance of passion, commitment and journalistic detachment," Massonnet said.

"I am honoured by the jury's decision to select my work this year," Asad Hashim said after learning he was the winner of the 2018 prize.

"I consider the award not just a recognition of my work, but of all Pakistani journalists, who have been working in an increasingly restrictive reporting environment over the last year," he added.

The prize will be formally presented at a ceremony in March.

#### *About the Prize*

Born in New Zealand, Kate Webb earned a reputation as a fearless reporter while covering wars and other historic events in Asia during a career spanning four decades. She made her name in Vietnam and also worked in Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, India, South Korea and the Middle East. She was known for her kindness and compassion and became a mentor to younger Asian journalists. The prize is administered by AFP and by the Webb family. It was first awarded in 2008.

#### *About AFP:*

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