



PRESS RELEASE

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KASHMIR REPORTER AHMER KHAN WINS AFP KATE WEBB PRIZE

FREELANCE REPORTER AHMER KHAN HAS WON THE 2019 AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE KATE WEBB PRIZE FOR HIS COVERAGE OF THE RECENT SOCIAL AND POLITICAL UPHEAVAL IN INDIAN KASHMIR.



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.

Ahmer Khan, 27, was recognised for a series of video and text reports that vividly illustrated the impact of the Indian government's decision in early August to strip Muslim-majority Kashmir of its semi-autonomous status. The move was accompanied by a massive troop deployment and a communications lockdown that cut landline, mobile phone and internet services.

Despite curfews and a heavy security presence, Khan took to the streets with his camera to document the tensions, concerns and frustrations among the residents of Srinagar and other cities in Kashmir.

Unable to skirt the communications shutdown, he flew in and out of Delhi to file his stories for publications like the New York Times, Guardian, Der Spiegel and RFI.

"Reporting from Kashmir at this time has been extremely challenging for everyone, including the established foreign media," said AFP's Asia-Pacific regional director, Philippe Massonnet.

"For an independent, local journalist those challenges have been far greater, and it is to Ahmer's enormous credit that he managed to provide accurate, high-quality journalism when it was so sorely needed," Massonnet said.

"This is a real honour, and a huge motivation to carry on my work with enthusiasm and determination," Ahmer Khan said after learning he was the winner of the 2019 prize.

"I want to dedicate this award to the courageous and resilient journalists from Kashmir who have been reporting in extremely difficult conditions for the past six months. This is a collective award," he added.

The prize will be formally presented at a ceremony in Hong Kong later in the year.

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:

AFP is a leading global news agency providing fast, comprehensive and verified coverage of the events shaping our world and of the issues affecting our daily lives. Drawing from an unparalleled news gathering network across 151 countries, AFP also is a world leader in digital verification. With 2,400 staff representing 100 different nationalities, AFP covers the world in six languages, with a unique quality of multimedia storytelling spanning video, text, photos and graphics.

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