



## **SOPA Announces the Winners of its 2025 Awards for Editorial Excellence**

**Bloomberg's Mishal Husain delivered the keynote address about image, voice and trust in the age of AI**

HONG KONG, June 26, 2025—The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA), a Hong Kong-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to encouraging the highest standards in journalism, announced the winners of its prestigious annual Awards for Editorial Excellence. (full list of winners also available here: <https://sopawards.com/the-sopa-awards/award-winners/>)

The awards recognize outstanding journalistic work from the past year in the Asia-Pacific region and were given out at a celebratory dinner in Hong Kong on Thursday June 26, marking the 27th consecutive year of the awards.

Global, regional/local, and Chinese-language media outlets submitted more than 700 entries in 21 categories including Bahasa Indonesia, which has been part of the lineup for the past three years.

Submissions from regional and local publications rose substantially from a year earlier, showing the growing voices of smaller publications around the region. To help showcase grassroots coverage, SOPA offered reduced entry fees to small media outlets and first-time entrants from a dozen countries and regions. Several took home prizes including **Mekong Eye**, which won the top regional/local award in Investigative Reporting for Cattle Hustle, and Hong Kong's **HK Feature** got Honorable Mention in the Chinese-language Feature Writing category for 'Democracy pineapple' caught in political dilemma across the Taiwan Strait. **Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism** won the top regional/local award in Explanatory Reporting for Renewed Attention on Political Dynasties in the Philippines.

China's economy and tensions with the U.S. over technology continued to be a focus, while brewing issues on a number of fronts sparked an increase in India-related entries.

Here are some highlights:

### **EXCELLENCE IN REPORTING ON WOMEN'S ISSUES**

**The New York Times** with The Fuller Project won the top global award for The Brutality of Sugar, with judges calling it an "eye-opening" account "revealing the horrendous conditions facing women in India's sugar industry."

**The Wire** won the top regional/local award for Breaking The Nets, which the judges said offered "a fascinating insight into the knock-on effects of India's patriarchal society" and how women contend with them.



## EXCELLENCE IN AUDIO REPORTING

**Mongabay** won the top regional/local award for Wild Frequencies: How listening to India's animals inspires people to protect wildlife, which judges praised as showing how sounds are a clue to "whether an ecosystem is healthy or imperiled."

## EXCELLENCE IN HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTING

**The Collective HK** won the top Chinese-language award for Five Years After Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement: How are they?, which focused on four personalities in the 2019 social movement in Hong Kong and the judges said is "full of drama" without "emotive writing."

## EXCELLENCE IN FEATURE WRITING

**The Australian Financial Review** won the top regional/local award for Inside the 'unending chaos' at Andrew Forrest's Fortescue, which the judges called "an impressive portrait" of an Australian businessman involved in tackling climate change.

**Initium Media** won the top Chinese-language group award for Chinese Fighting for Russia: Money, Thrill and Becoming Influencers, which the judges noted had "sparked significant attention and discussion."

## EXCELLENCE IN TECHNOLOGY REPORTING

**Nikkei Asia** won the top global award for China's tech industry fights back, which the judges called "a well-reported exploration of China's drive for tech primacy in the face of U.S. restrictions."

## EXCELLENCE IN ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTING

**The Economist's 1843 Magazine** won the top global award for How I became the Taliban's portrait artist, which the judges called "a gripping account" of how the author's own kidnapping in Afghanistan showed an unexpected side of today's Taliban.

## EXCELLENCE IN REPORTING BREAKING NEWS

**Reuters** won the top global and regional/local award for South Korea's martial law crisis, which judges said, "kept global audiences informed about one of the biggest breaking stories last year."



## EXCELLENCE IN OPINION WRITING

Singapore's **The Straits Times** won the regional/local award for No country for young men: Where is Malaysia's next generation of leaders? The judges said it "demystifies the complex web of personalities shaping Malaysian politics."

The judges selected Qianer Liu of **The Information** for the SOPA Award for Young Journalist citing her "unique insights into the tech competition between the U.S. and China."

**The Wall Street Journal** won the coveted SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism for A Vicious New Scam Industry Metastasizes that detailed the brutal reality of the global criminal enterprise of "pig butchering" cyber fraud.

"Congratulations to all the winners, honorable mentions and finalists," said Bill Ridgers, Asia Digital Editor at The Economist and Co-Chair of SOPA's Editorial Committee. "The high quality of entries for the SOPA 2025 awards is proof that the media continues to perform a critical role in informing readers in Asia Pacific and elsewhere about this region and helping shape public discourse."

SOPA would like to thank Bloomberg's Mishal Husain who spoke on image, voice and trust in the age of AI. Her keynote address will be available on SOPA's YouTube channel from 28 June, 2025. (link: <https://www.youtube.com/@sopaasia>)

We also extend thanks to our nearly 120 volunteer judges and to Karen Koh for being our Master of Ceremonies, and to the University of Hong Kong's Journalism and Media Studies Centre, which has administered the awards since 2011.

Critical to presenting the awards are our sponsors. Factiva is an Associate Sponsor and Telum Media is a Supporting Partner.

Awards Ceremony Dinner photos can be accessed here:  
<https://sopawards.com/awards-dinner-photos/>

### About SOPA

The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) is a Hong Kong-based not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1982 to champion freedom of the press, promote excellence in journalism and endorse best practices for all local and regional publishing platforms in the Asia-Pacific region.

Today, SOPA is the voice of Asia's media and publishing industry, and continues to work to uphold media standards and freedoms while celebrating and supporting professional journalism and publishing. The SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence are the annual,



flagship awards, serving as a regional benchmark for quality, professional journalism and have been given out every year since 1999.

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