



Reuters Wins SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism for Story on the Rohingya Crisis

- *Awards for Excellence in Business Reporting go to Financial Times, Frontier Myanmar and Caixin*
- *Keynote speaker Rappler CEO Maria Ressa discusses the rollback of press freedom*

Hong Kong, June 14, 2018 – The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA), a Hong Kong-based not-for-profit organization, named Reuters as the winner of the SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism for its reporting on the Rohingya crisis. The announcement was made at the SOPA 2018 Awards Gala Dinner on Wednesday evening.

Now in its 20th year, the SOPA Awards are widely considered the most prestigious in the Asia-Pacific publishing and media industry. This year, the SOPA Award for Public Service Journalism replaces Journalist of the Year as the top award in an effort to honour outstanding work by individuals and teams that make an exemplary contribution to public service in the region.

One of the journalists in the winning team is currently being detained in Myanmar as a result of his work covering the Rohingya crisis, which shows the ongoing challenges facing the media, the strong commitment and courage of journalists as well the need for the whole community to stand up for press freedom.

Awards for Excellence in Business Reporting across the three award categories – global, regional and local media – went to the Financial Times (“Unravelling the mystery of China’s HNA”), Frontier Myanmar (“Funny money”) and Caixin Global (“*穿透安邦魔术*” or “A Maze of Capital Leads to Anbang’s Aggressive Expansion”).

These awards were among the 95 SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence across 17 categories announced at the event (see the full list [here](#)). This year, SOPA saw the highest number of entries since the launch of the awards in 1999, with more than 850 English- and Chinese-language submissions by international, regional and local media in the region.

The entries were assessed by a judging panel appointed by the Journalism & Media Studies Centre (JMSC) of the University of Hong Kong. Led by Jeffrey Timmermans, SOPA Awards Head of Judges and Associate Professor at JMSC, the panel comprised more than 100 media professionals, including journalists, editors and columnists from some of the region’s most influential publications, along with academics from a number of Asia’s leading journalism schools.

“Congratulations to all the winners! Competition was especially fierce this year, with a record number of entries and extremely high standards. The winning entries covered a wide range of crucial issues, from the Rohingya crisis to the assassination of Kim Jong-nam. By recognising their excellence, we hope to inspire and encourage journalists to keep producing work of the highest quality,” said Cliff Buddle, Chair of the SOPA Editorial Committee.



The keynote speaker at the dinner was Maria A. Ressa, former bureau chief in Manila and Jakarta with CNN, and now CEO and Executive Editor of Rappler, a Philippines-based social news network that connects factual reporting with public opinion to foster conversation and drive social change.

Addressing the gathering, Ressa shared her thoughts on the rollback of press freedom globally and specifically in Southeast Asia, the threat to journalism with a particular focus on the Philippines, as well as the challenges faced by media in the age of social media.

About 300 media executives, editors, journalists and industry practitioners attended the gala event. They came from across the region, including mainland China, Myanmar, Australia, the Philippines and Taiwan.

The SOPA 2018 Awards for Editorial Excellence are supported by Facebook and Google (both are Platinum Sponsors). FleishmanHillard, Media OutReach and High Technology Printing Group Limited provide SOPA with support respectively on public relations, newswire and printing services.

Event highlights, photos and judges' comments, plus the video of Ms. Ressa's speech, can be found on: <https://www.sopawards.com>.

About SOPA

The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) 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. SOPA is a not-for-profit organization based in Hong Kong and representing international, regional and local media companies across Asia. The Society of Publishers in Asia is also host to the prestigious annual SOPA Awards for Editorial Excellence, which serve as the world-class benchmark for quality journalism in the region. www.sopasia.com; [SOPA LinkedIn](#).

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