



## Asia's Leading Environmental Journalism Awards sees Jump in Quality and Participants

*Merit winners from previous years take limelight this year*

**Singapore, 20 October 2015** - Entries for this year's Asian Environmental Journalism Awards (AEJA) have yet again increased. Since 2012, the AEJA looks out for Asia's greatest environmental journalists, whose passion and perseverance bring creative and thought-provoking news and images. There was an increase of nearly 20% over last year with 175 entries by 129 journalists, photojournalists and bloggers from 21 countries. There was a record number of 57 entries from India, and 31 entries from Pakistan.

Former Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Minister's Special Envoy to the Middle East, Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed, oversaw the entire judging process and provided invaluable insights as AEJA's Chairman of the Judging Committee. "Environmental challenges are not limited to geographical boundaries. The quality of environmental journalism is abundantly clear in the entries received in this year's competition, from the methodical investigative reporting to the in-depth television coverage. Our judges were impressed not only with the high quality of journalism they saw but the courage, tenacity, enterprise and resourcefulness of the journalists who produced it," said Mr Zainul.

Mr Edwin Seah, Executive Director of SEC said: "Climate change didn't happen four years ago, but the AEJA did. And in the four years, we have seen a consistent effort on the part of the journalists to stimulate our sixth sense. Along with the passion and commitment, they can only get better year after year in the task, as shown in this year's results."

Three of the winners this year were merit winners from previous years. They are Mr Zsombor Peter from Cambodia (SEC Coca-Cola Environmental Story of the Year), Ms Wang Yan from China (SEC-CDL Environmental Journalist of the Year), and Mr Chaideer Mahyuddin from Indonesia (SEC Environmental Photograph of the Year).

"The calibre of entries for this year's Coca-Cola Environmental Story of the Year was exceptional and it's truly inspiring to see so many passionate journalists raising awareness about environmental issues in Asia. It was no easy task to choose a winner but Zsombor's story stood out for its depth of understanding on deforestation in Cambodia, balance of opinion and its fluid and engaging writing style. The bar has been set very high for future applicants to this category and Coca-Cola is proud to partner with SEC to recognise and reward such excellence in environmental journalism," said Ms Laura Davidson, Communications & Sustainability Manager, Coca-Cola Singapore and Malaysia.

Ms Esther An, Chief Sustainability Officer for City Developments Limited (CDL), said: "Journalists play an influential role in environmental advocacy. By interpreting complex and challenging environmental issues, they help to raise eco-consciousness in the community. Asia faces a range of diverse and

complex environmental issues that have strong impact on people and the community. It is heartening to see growing interest and depth in environmental reporting in the region. This year's SEC-CDL Environmental Journalist of the Year Award winner, Wang Yan, has demonstrated tremendous integrity, courage, and enduring passion for environmental reporting." Since the inaugural AEJA in 2012, Asia's leading eco-developer CDL has supported the push for high-quality coverage of environmental issues, as an extension of its corporate commitment to sustainability.

Noteworthy is the record number of entries from India and Pakistan, illustrating the will-power of the new generation who choose to direct their momentum and energy towards the noble cause of saving the environment. Mr Syed Muhammad Abubakar, the first Pakistani winner of an AEJA award will serve as an inspiration not only to his fellow countrymen, but all aspiring journalists.

"Toyota is pleased to present the SEC-Toyota Young Environmental Journalist of the Year Award to Syed Muhammad Abubakar. His submissions cast light onto pertinent environmental issues in both Pakistan and globally and aligns strongly with our vision in advocating the continuity of environment journalism to bring about greater awareness of these issues in the Asia Pacific," said Ms Kaye Lim, General Manager, Public Affairs Department, Toyota. "Toyota values educating the youth on environmental issues and remains committed to this cause as demonstrated through the various CSR programmes in the regions, including the Toyota Eco Youth Programme."

Thomson Reuters Foundation is the repeat winner of the SEC-Lee Foundation Excellence in Environmental Reporting by a Media Organisation Award 2015, which they won previously in 2013. Channel NewsAsia is the merit winner for this category. A past winner of AEJA, Ms Stella Paul from India clinched the Merit Award for the SEC Environmental Blogger of the Year this year, having won the SEC-Sky Creation Design Environmental Blogger of the Year in 2014 and Coca-Cola Environmental Story of the Year in 2013.

The winning image taken by Mr Chaideer Mahyuddin from Indonesia - Winner of the SEC Environmental Photograph of the Year, prompted us to question many aspects of our environment, and ourselves, thus heightening awareness on the real issues that are happening to our neighbouring countries.

An additional one-off award was presented, in celebration of the 20th Anniversary of SEC. The SEC Sustained Environmental Reporting by a Journalist title was awarded to Ms Jessica Cheam from Eco-Business for her efforts in contributing to environmental journalism over the last 20 years.

Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources & Ministry of Health presented the awards to all winners during the AEJA Ceremony at Orchard Hotel this afternoon. Please refer to **Annex A** for the list of award winners and **Annex B** for the Panel of Judges for AEJA 2015.

**\*\* END OF MEDIA RELEASE\*\***



### ABOUT THE ASIAN ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM AWARDS

The Asian Environmental Journalism Awards (AEJA) was introduced in 2012 to recognise and reward excellence in environmental journalism at all levels of society. From passionate citizen journalists, to outstanding professional journalists, to the environmental attitudes of overall media organisations, the AEJA highlight exceptional journalistic work, and encourage continued high-quality coverage of environmental issues in Asia. The awards are open to Asian journalists, as well as journalists working in and writing about Asian countries.


For more information about the Asian Environmental Journalism Awards, please visit [www.sec.org.sg/aeja](http://www.sec.org.sg/aeja)




### ABOUT THE SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL

Established in 1995, the Singapore Environment Council (SEC) is an independently managed, non-government organisation that nurtures, facilitates and co-ordinates environmental causes in Singapore. SEC's work is founded on three pillars of action – Firstly, partnership with the people, private and public sectors of Singaporean society, to nurture a culture aligned with sustainable development concepts. Secondly, SEC rewards environmental excellence through awards schemes and product endorsement programmes, such as the Singapore Green Labelling Scheme. Thirdly, the SEC collaborates with partners to develop and implement training and learning programmes to build competencies in environmental sustainability within companies, thus keeping our business leaders ahead of the curve. Visit our website at [www.sec.org.sg](http://www.sec.org.sg).

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## Asian Environmental Journalism Awards 2015 Winners

Category	Winners
SEC-Toyota Young Environmental Journalist of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Syed Muhammad Abubakar from Pakistan (Winner)</li> <li>❖ Kumar Sambhav from India (Merit)</li> </ul>
SEC Coca-Cola Environmental Story of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Zsombor Peter from Cambodia (Winner)*</li> <li>❖ Ryan Dagur from Indonesia (Merit)</li> </ul> <p>* Merit Winner of SEC Coca-Cola Environmental Story of the Year in 2014</p>
SEC-CDL Environmental Journalist of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Wang Yan from China (Winner)*</li> <li>❖ Nirmal Ghosh from Thailand (Merit)</li> </ul> <p>*Merit Winner of SEC-CDL Environmental Journalist of the Year in 2013</p>
SEC-Lee Foundation Excellence in Environmental Reporting by a Media Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Thomson Reuters Foundation (Winner)*</li> <li>❖ Channel NewsAsia, MediaCorp Pte Ltd (Merit)</li> </ul> <p>*Winner of SEC- Lee Foundation Excellence in Environmental Reporting by a Media Organisation in 2013</p>
SEC Environmental Blogger of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Stella Paul from India (Merit)</li> </ul>
SEC Environmental Photograph of the Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Chaideer Mahyuddin from Indonesia (Winner)*</li> <li>❖ Suvra Kanti Das from Bangladesh (Merit)</li> </ul> <p>*Merit Winner of SEC-CITIC Telecom International Environmental Photograph of the Year in 2014</p>
SEC Sustained Environmental Reporting by a Journalist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Jessica Cheam from Singapore (Winner)</li> <li>❖ Jayashree Nandi from India (Merit)</li> </ul>

**Asian Environmental Journalism Awards 2015 Panel of Judges**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation &amp; Company</b>
1	Mr Zainul Abidin Rasheed (Chairman of the AEJA Judging Panel)	Former Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Minister's Special Envoy to the Middle East
2	Mr Edwin Seah	Executive Director, Singapore Environment Council
3	Mr Gerard Christopher	Assistant Executive Director, Singapore Environment Council
4	Ms Esther An	Chief Sustainability Officer, City Developments Limited
5	Ms Laura Davidson	Communications and Sustainability Manager, Coca-Cola Singapore and Malaysia
6	Ms Kaye Lim	General Manager (Public Affairs), Toyota Motor Asia Pacific Pte Ltd
7	Mr Chua Chin Hon	Former Deputy Foreign Editor, US Bureau Chief and China Bureau Chief of The Straits Times