

PRESS RELEASE

July 1, 2025

The Japan Times

The Japan Times receives Honorable Mention at SOPA 2025 Awards for Editorial Excellence

A longform feature on a Noto Peninsula community's recovery efforts following a magnitude 7.6 earthquake that struck the northern coast area on Jan. 1, 2024, written by staff writer Alex K.T. Martin and published by The Japan Times, Ltd. (President and CEO: Minako Suematsu) received an **Excellence in Feature Writing (Regional/Local), Honorable Mention** award from The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) at the SOPA 2025 Awards for Editorial Excellence.

The Excellence in Feature Writing category honors work that demonstrates high standards of reporting and writing to describe an idea, event, trend or personality, or explain a topic of significance.

SOPA is a Hong Kong-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to pursuing excellence in journalism. Said SOPA judges of The Japan Times entry, "Impressive reporting, with vivid scenes and insightful conversations from the front lines of the post-quake rescue. The reader is brought into the urgency of the effort with well-crafted, descriptive writing."

Martin commented, "I'm honored to be recognized for my work on the destruction wrought by the earthquake that struck the Noto Peninsula. The disaster exposed the challenges faced by rural communities with limited access to transportation and highlighted the growing vulnerability of Japan's aging population. I hope the story brings attention to the often overlooked process of recovery, and to the lives of those who continue to rebuild long after the headlines have faded."

Said Managing Editor Mark Thompson of the win: "This is a very meaningful award for us as several Japan Times staff covered the immediate aftermath of the Noto Earthquake and witnessed firsthand both the fragility of life and the resilience of communities in times of crises. We feel Alex did an excellent job of not only conveying the immediate situation on the ground but also the larger topic of isolated rural communities and the inevitability of major seismic events. Above all, he articulated the strength of grassroots support networks in the face of adversity."

Award winners were announced at the SOPA 2025 Awards for Editorial Excellence awards ceremony held in Hong Kong. A complete list of winners can be found [here](#).

Links: ['Noto is kind, right down to its soil': A community's long road to recovery](#)

About SOPA and the SOPA 2025 Awards:

The Society of Publishers in Asia (SOPA) is a Hong Kong-based not-for-profit organization founded in 1982

the japan times

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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 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.

www.sopasia.com

www.sopawards.com

About The Japan Times:

Serving as the nation's premier English-language news source since 1897, The Japan Times offers both a local angle and a global perspective, guided by the core values of independence and fairness. Readers now access our world-class journalism via newspaper, digital and newsletter form.

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