

26 bag prizes in science writing contest

Jose Hong

Noise pollution in the ocean may not seem an immediately appealing or worrying subject.

But the sounds created by humans can impact marine life in a negative way, said environmental policy researcher Tara Thean, 26.

Raising this issue in an essay titled *Blue Noise* has won the Malaysian \$5,000 in cash and a trip to Bintan.

Ms Thean, a research associate at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, was one of 26 winners of the Asian Scientist Writing Prize 2017, announced yesterday at Science Centre Singapore.

The prizes, which included cash and book vouchers, were worth more than \$16,000.

The second prize went to *The Red Tides Of Death*, an essay on harmful algal blooms that have hit Asian waters in recent years. It was written by Dr Daphne Ng, 31, a research fellow from Nanyang Technological University.



Ms Tara Thean's winning essay is on how sounds by humans can negatively impact marine life.

PHOTO: ASIAN SCIENTIST MAGAZINE

An essay about ants that live beneath the ground came in third. It was written by Mr Mark Wong, 26, a manager at National Parks Board.

The biennial competition, held for the second time, celebrates science writing relevant to Asia.

Participants had to write an essay of between 1,000 and 1,500 words. The contest drew 227 entries from 16 countries and territories.

It was sponsored by World Scientific Publishing and co-organised by Asian Scientist Magazine and Science Centre Singapore.

Science Centre Singapore chief executive Lim Tit Meng said: "Science and technology are important

components of nation-building, and they have to be communicated effectively to everyone... This creative science writing competition helps to inculcate a stronger sense of curiosity."

Dr Jorge Cham, creator of the comic strip *Piled Higher And Deeper*, who was a guest of honour, gave a speech on how scientists can communicate better with the public.

Minister for Education (Higher Education and Skills) Ong Ye Kung, who was the other guest of honour, gave out the prizes.

josehong@sph.com.sg