

THE VISA D'OR NEWS AWARDED TO AFP PHOTOGRAPHER LUIS TATO

AFP's Spanish photojournalist Luis Tato on Saturday evening won the Visa d'or News, one of the most prestigious awards given to photojournalists worldwide and supported by the association Visa pour l'Image – Perpignan, for his work covering the Gen Z demos in Madagascar.

Luis Tato is a photojournalist based in Nairobi, Kenya. He joined Agence France-Presse (AFP) in 2023 as a staff photographer and now holds the position of chief photographer and photo coordinator for East Africa and the Indian Ocean.

In autumn 2025, he covered the demonstrations in Madagascar by the Gen Z collective, whose mobilisation drove President Andry Rajoelina from power. The movement was innovative: digital, attracting all social classes, and infused with the generation's cultural references, such as the manga "One Piece". It ended as episodes in Madagascar's political history often do: with military action.

"I think this global movement of young people who are trying to define the idea of democracy, to transform the context in which they live, is a very interesting dynamic which, as a photographer, I personally find fascinating," said Luis.



A student holds a flag bearing the logo of the popular Japanese manga One Piece, a symbol adopted by Gen Z protest movements worldwide, during clashes with Malagasy security forces amid a strike calling for constitutional reforms and the resignation of President Andry Rajoelina in Antananarivo, on October 9, 2025.
@ Luis Tato / AFP

Luis Tato spent several weeks covering the situation unfolding in Madagascar, which allowed him to become fully embedded with the demonstrators. "I felt very much in tune with this story. I must admit that sometimes, as a photojournalist, there are certain stories you feel more connected to than others." He was also able to gain access to various officials at a time when the country's fate was hanging in the balance.

"This award is a remarkable tribute to Luis's unique work, as he produced outstanding photos in often dangerous conditions," commented Claudia Rahola, AFP's deputy director of News, in charge of photo.

Phil Chetwynd, Global News Director, added: “It is also a tribute to the entire AFP East Africa team, who covered this major event in Madagascar with such dedication. AFP’s mission is to send journalists into the field to tell stories of public interest in every corner of the world. That mission has never been more crucial.”



Members of Madagascar’s Army CAPSAT unit ride in armoured vehicles while assuming a defensive posture as they leave the Presidential Palace in Antananarivo, October 14, 2025. An elite Madagascar military unit told AFP on October 14, 2025 it had taken power in the country after the national assembly voted to impeach President Andry Rajoelina for desertion of duty.

@ Luis Tato / AFP

At 37, Luis Tato has won his first Visa d’or News after already receiving the Visa d’or for Best Young Reporter in 2018. “I’m pleased to see that the jury decided to reward my story. In a way, for me, it’s also symbolic to see this prize awarded to something that perhaps wasn’t the world’s top news story last year.”

Luis is the 6th AFP photojournalist to win the Visa d’or News. The previous winners are:

- Visa d’or News 2003, Georges Gobet for his reporting on the civil war in Côte d’Ivoire
- Visa d’or News 2015, Bülent Kiliç for his work on Syrian refugees at the Turkish border
- Visa d’or News 2016, Aris Messinis for his work on the arrival of migrants in Lesbos (Scenes of war in a peace zone)
- Visa d’or News 2019, Guillermo Arias for his photographs of the “caravan”, the vast movement of men and women who crossed Mexico to escape poverty and violence and reach the United States at the end of 2018
- Visa d’or News 2024, Mahmud Hams for his photographs in Gaza

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