

# Phnom Penh Post

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August 15, 1995

Dear Freedom Forum:

This letter is to recommend Mr. Sou Sophornnara for the Freedom Forum's International Professional Journalism Program for 1996.

Nara has been working as a journalist for the *Phnom Penh Post* since July 1994. In the last year he has shown extreme promise as an investigative reporter, covering a wide range of subjects related to the current situation in Cambodia.

In an extremely complicated political situation, Nara has not shied away from tackling sensitive issues, which is perhaps one of the best indicators of his commitment to a career in journalism, especially since in the last year three Cambodian journalists have been assassinated for writing about governmental corruption. To Nara's credit, he seems undaunted in the face of increasing governmental repression of press freedoms here in Cambodia.

Moreover, with minimal journalism training, Nara has acquired a fairly comprehensive grasp of the mechanics of journalism. He understands the need for balanced reporting, for multiple sourcing and for how to keep his eye open for good story ideas.

Nara could benefit immensely from overseas training and from an in depth exposure to the press environment in the U.S. He is a quick learner and I have full confidence in his ability to profit immeasurably from participation in a Freedom Forum Fellowship.

In this regard, Nara has my full endorsement for his enclosed application and, at the same time, I guarantee that his position with the *Post* would be secure upon his return from the U.S.

Please don't hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Sincerely,



Michael G. Hayes

Publisher & Editor-in-Chief