



MEDIA AVAILABLE: Burmese-American Citizen returns from Homeland Merch Mission, reports ShelterboxUSA

For Immediate Release

BRADENTON, Fla./EWorldWire/June 3, 2008 --- When Cyclone Nagris hit Myanmar with devastating results on May 3, 2008, Leilei Nwe Thein - a U.S. citizen who has lived in the U.S. for 24 years and has worked as an environmental health and safety manager working at the University of San Diego for the past 15 years - immediately offered her help to the U.S. arm of the U.K.-based ShelterBox organization. Leilei is the wife of Aung San U, who is the oldest son of National Hero General Aung San; with her family background, she could exercise considerable influence, and her experience in Myanmar was instrumental in the early stages of the disaster relief program.

On May 8, the university gave her emergency time-off to travel to Myanmar to arrange and coordinate humanitarian aid work; in particular, with the U.K./U.S. ShelterBox organization. After two days spent traveling from the U.S., on May 11 Leilei arrived in Yangon - the capital of her homeland - and immediately began working non-stop, 24/7 for both her and everyone involved.

Leilei's considerable influence and experience in Myanmar was instrumental in the early stages of the disaster relief program. Before leaving the U.S., she arranged for Visas and the required permissions for U.K./U.S. personnel and for aid deliveries from the Myanmar embassy in Washington, D.C. She then arranged for initial shipment of ShelterBoxes and ShelterBox response teams (SRTs) to be allowed access to Yangon in anticipation of future shipments. Train-the-Trainer sessions were arranged and SRT volunteers trained over 200 Myanmar fire and rescue personnel in the use of ShelterBox tents and equipment, which were immediately dispatched to the disaster-affected areas on arrival.

Leilei also arranged for all ShelterBox aid to be allowed into Myanmar free of customs duty and control, including the arrival authorization of a chartered DC-10 from the U.K. carrying 1000 ShelterBoxes to land in Yangon.

Working tirelessly she used local contacts to provide warehousing and distribution of over 1600 ShelterBoxes, by way of private construction companies, by truck and boat to the disaster areas. During this time, Leilei traveled to the town of Bogale and nearby islands in the area to assess the cyclone damage and to see the ShelterBox tents in place and in use. All this activity occurred while other NGOs and foreign government aid was not being accepted.

Leilei's work and that of ShelterBox was and is being well-covered in the Myanmar national press/TV and by the world's media. She returned to the U.S. on May 24 and plans to assist further in ShelterBox work and the ongoing Humanitarian Aid work in Myanmar. With her help and coordination, a humanitarian aid delivery route into Myanmar remains open.

To learn more about ShelterBox and to support its activities, visit '<http://www.shelterboxusa.org>'.

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SOURCE: ShelterBox USA

AVAILABLE MEDIA: : Leilei Nwe Thein trip to Myanmar (size: 1.1 k)

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Leilei Nwe Thein humanitarian aid work in Myanmar

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