

Jaypuri, an Indian Rhinoceros, reached the end of a long journey on February 28. The young female is about to see her new home. Watching the unloading were Ben Cutshall, KFMB-TV (Channel 8) news photographer, Dr. Charles R. Schroeder, Zoo director, and George Munro, the exporter who brought Jaypuri from Assam.

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 CURATOR

SUNDAY, February 28, was a red-letter day, indeed, for the San Diego Zoo, since it marked the long-awaited arrival of Jaypuri, a female Indian Rhinoceros from the faraway grass jungles of Assam.

On October 12, 1963, sixteen months prior to Jaypuri's arrival, we were fortunate to acquire Lasai, a fine young male of this rare species, from Dr. Ernst M. Lang, director of the Basel Zoo in Switzerland. Lasai, a good-natured healthy youngster, grew by leaps and bounds, while a volume of correspondence reflected our efforts to obtain a mate for him.

A vanishing species, the Indian Rhinoceros is now estimated to number less than 500 individuals. In spite of efforts by the International Un-

ion for Conservation of Nature, as well as Indian conservation agencies, the future of this magnificent beast appears quite grim. Many complex, involved factors are responsible. Intensive poaching activities continue unabated, spurred on by fabulous prices still being paid for rhino horn because of the mistaken belief that powdered rhino horn is a powerful aphrodisiac. This widespread belief is so firmly ingrained in the minds of many Orientals that all efforts to debunk it as an "old wives tale" have failed. Other factors said to be contributing to the downfall of this species in recent years are border skirmishes centering in some of the rhino's last stronghold areas, and certainly the general human population explosion resulting in an ever-

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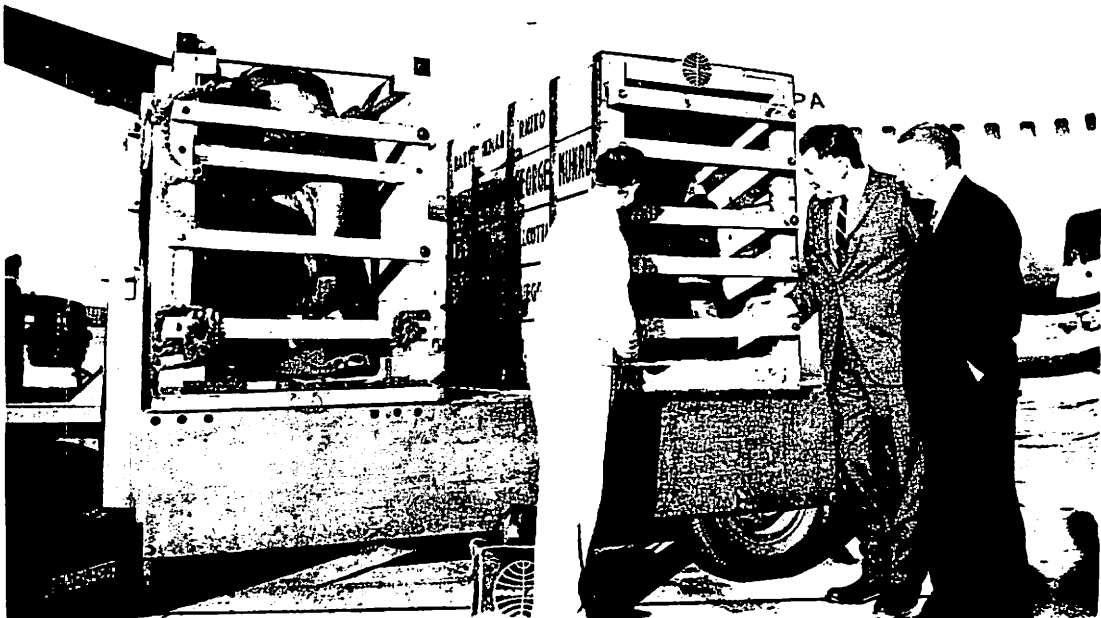
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Almost two thousand pounds of baby animals were stowed among the cargo of a Pan-American passenger plane flying between Calcutta and Los Angeles. The rhino, weighing 1,111 pounds, was the first to be put aground, the crate clearing the hatch by mere inches.

A baby Indian Elephant, *Elephas maximus*, weighing 775 pounds (left), was Jaypuri's traveling companion. George Munro (left), introduced his charges to George Gillespie, Zoo principal animal keeper (center), and Dr. Lester S. Nelson, veterinarian (right).



increasing appropriation of rhino habitat for human use.

In view of the rapidly diminishing numbers of Indian Rhinoceroses, our attempts to locate a suitable mate for Lasai seemed destined for failure. However, in November, 1964, a letter from George Munro, a Calcutta animal collector, changed the picture completely. Mr. Munro offered a female, born July 10, 1963, in Gauti, Assam, that would be ideal in age as a mate for Lasai, born August 31, 1962. Of course, a cable of acceptance was dispatched immediately.

The volume of correspondence increased. It was necessary to apply for and receive permission from Mr. P. Barua, Chief Conservator of Forests, Assam, before the animal could be exported to San Diego. This permit, in turn, depended on approval of the American Consul General in Calcutta. After several weeks of negotiations, the necessary details were completed, and accompanied by Mr. Munro, Jaypuri was placed aboard a Pan American plane bound for International Airport, Los Angeles. There she was met by a Zoo welcoming committee and escorted to her new home in San Diego.

We are most grateful for the fine assistance rendered by the Conservator of Forests and the American Consul General to bring this difficult

Food enticed Jaypuri to pose for a first photograph in her San Diego quarters.



Walter Bjornson, mammal keeper, makes a new friend.

venture to successful culmination, and look forward to the day when we can inform them of the first fine offspring born as a result of the union of Lasai and Jaypuri.

