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THE CRASH HAS ARRIVED AT THE LIVING DESERT!
THE ZOO'S NEWEST RESIDENTS, A PAIR OF BLACK RHINOS, ARRIVED SAFELY

Rhinos Jaali and Nia Will Make Their Public Debut on Friday, November 12.

PALM DESERT/INDIAN WELL, CA – (October 22, 2021) – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is excited to share that Jaali and Nia have arrived safely at the Zoo. Beginning their cross-country trip on Monday, October 18, the transport team drove the pair of black rhinos across 10 states and arrived Wednesday morning, October 20. Through a collaborative team effort, Jaali and Nia were then safely moved into their new barn in the Rhino Savanna.

“Jaali and Nia are both settling in well. They are eating, drinking, and acclimating to their new space, while also getting acquainted with their animal care team,” said Jared Moeller, Animal Care Curator of Rhino Savanna. “Over the next few days to weeks, Jaali and Nia will continue to get comfortable with their new home and will then be introduced to their new habitat.”

To ensure a safe and smooth transport, The Living Desert’s team of RoxAnna Breitigan, Director of Animal Care, Dr. Andrea Goodnight, Head Veterinarian, and Heather Down, Animal Care Curator caravanned with the experienced transport team, who specializes in moving rhinos. Throughout the journey, Jaali and Nia were closely monitored via constant video surveillance and regular physical checks, in addition to multiple stops to provide food and water to ensure their health and wellbeing.

“This was a day we have been waiting and planning for, so I could not be more excited that Jaali and Nia are here – safe and sound,” said RoxAnna Breitigan, Director of Animal Care. “We had great weather, no traffic issues, and smooth travels across the country. The move into their new barn was a team effort across the organization, and I am so grateful that everything went according to plan.”

Nia (pronounced Ny-a), a three-year old female black rhino, and Jaali (pronounced Jolly), a nearly two-year old black rhino, will now make their home at The Living Desert’s new Rhino Savanna. Set to open November 12, this four-acre multi-species habitat will be home to a variety of African wildlife including black rhino, waterbuck, klipspringer, and pelican. Black rhinos are solitary species, except for breeding and rearing young, so Jaali and Nia will each have distinct spaces throughout the Rhino Savanna habitat.

“The arrival of Jaali and Nia is a perfect representation of how Association of Zoo and Aquarium (AZA) accredited organizations work together to protect endangered species,” said Allen Monroe, President/CEO. “Their arrivals are based on the AZA’s Species Survival Plan (SSP) breeding recommendations that were set earlier this year. Furthermore, we are looking forward to sharing the important conservation stories about these critically endangered animals with our guests very soon.”

The Living Desert participates in several conservation initiatives that support black rhinos in Eastern and Southern Africa. Currently listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), black rhino numbers are staggeringly low – there are just 5,600 individuals in Africa. Black rhinos’ main threats are humans, and in particular, the rampant poaching of their horns for ill-perceived medicinal cures.

Jaali and Nia will make their public debut when the new Rhino Savanna habitat opens Friday, November 12.

The Living Desert is open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with last admission at 4p.m. For more information visit LivingDesert.org.

Photos Attached

[Video - YouTube](#)

About The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens:

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit, accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, ensuring the highest standards of all aspects of animal care, education, conservation, public service, and operations. The Zoo is active in conservation research, habitat protection, breeding programs and education initiatives around the world, as well as in its own community. The Zoo has been a top destination in the Palm Springs area for over 50 years. The Living Desert is located at 47900 Portola Ave, Palm Desert, CA 92260. For more information: (760) 346-5694 or visit livingdesert.org.