

The monk's nature lesson

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I GO nuts whenever I look at life and death and the two sides of the same coin, so inseparable. Why is one hailed and the other dreaded? Whenever I am trapped in such a state of mind, I take refuge in great works of art and literature. They give one solace and lift up the reasoning mind. An artist's or a writer's exhibition of his intense passion through his work does make a difference in our outlook, if sincere.

After looking at the paintings, now on show in Delhi, of H.H. the 12th Tai Situ Rinpoche, a renowned Buddhist scholar and artist, I felt uplifted, for they teach how to appreciate the beauty of life and death. The Rinpoche does it very gently.

Every work of art of this 53-year-old soft-spoken monk exhibits the brilliance of nature and its bounties.

The Rinpoche asserts that it is not that wisdom can always be conveyed through dharma teachings. Visual media like paintings can awaken us in terms of wisdom and spirituali-

ty. In today's worsening environment, his paintings come out with a cry for a battle to restore sanity so that our environment, in which we can "sprout and thrive" is not disturbed. The monk's portrayal of nature, the setting sun, the lonely and yet graceful moon, the ducks merrily frolicking in a serene pond, remind us of the realities of life. If you are feeling sad and lonely, seek shelter in nature and its riot of colours. Nature, the "greatest doctor", instills in us rays of hope. According to an Arabian proverb, he who has hope has everything for the asking.

Life and death on this earth can be as colourful as the monk's paintings.

They remind us of the purpose of life, and how it can be cultivated in a manner that it "bears the sweetest fruits" Death, therefore, need not be so terrifying as we who cling to life make it.

It is but the natural outcome of being born. Let us live meaningfully so that we are unafraid of inevitable death.



**INNER
VOICE**