

Get your wands ready as magic fair comes to town

Krishnendu.Bandyopadhyay
@timesgroup.com

Kolkata: When was the last time you saw someone catch a bullet between his teeth, or were mesmerized by sleight of hand? Magic Fair 2019, arguably Asia's only, and the world's largest, magic fair in terms of participation and size, will definitely take you back to your childhood when you sat in the audience as a magician performed impossible tasks on stage.

Starting off with a blindfolded rally of cars and bikes at Mohar Kunja on March 28, the four-day event will be attended by more than 800 magicians from 11 states, as well as from countries like Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and the UK.

"This year's theme is 'no war, only peace'. There will be a dramagic — fusion of drama and magic — based on this theme, apart from a proper show. Magic is a great means of communicating with the masses and we will transmit the message of peace through magic without being didactic," said Sanjay Chatterjee, president of Federation of Indian Magic Associates, the fair organizer.

Sanjay Chatterjee, a technocrat, got interested in magic three decades ago after he bought a book, 'Jadu Bidya' by Ganapati Chakraborty. Since then, he has been working relentlessly to promote magic, which is a combination of science and entertainment. According to

ATTRACTIONS AT THE EVENT



The poster for the fair



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Sanjay Chatterjee | PRESIDENT, FIMA

➤ Magician **Prince Sil** to catch a fired bullet between his teeth

➤ **Museum of magic**, curated by magician **Sailseswar**

➤ A show by magician **Sourav Burman**, who usually performs aboard **ships**

➤ **Street magic** by octogenarian **Dipak Roychowdhury**

Also on offer

➤ Conjuring tricks, ventriloquism, hand-shadowgraphy, shops selling props, sand animation, fire acts, juggling and indigenous magic acts

Chatterjee, besides communication skills, a magician imbibes a lot of good things like discipline and confidence.

Worried by the waning popularity of magic and the difficulty in sustaining it as a means of livelihood, Chatterjee and his associates started the magic fair. It became an instant hit.

The show at Mohar Kunja will have an all-day workshop, as well as a museum of magic curated by magician Sailseswar, 75, who possesses a repository of props. "We have been trying to set up a permanent ve-

nue for the magic museum, the first of its kind in the country, but we are yet to get hold of suitable land," Chatterjee said.

There was a cloud of uncertainty over the biggest show at the fair — catching a fired bullet between the teeth — since Kolkata Police has confiscated all licensed guns ahead of the polls. "We made an appeal to Kolkata Police explaining how the spirit of the fair will be dampened without the event. Finally, we got permission and magician Prince Sil will perform the breathtaking show," said an organizer.