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Hossan's turn as NDP host

BY LIM YI HAN

HE HAS hosted many shows and concerts but the big one eluded him.

Now, after 20 years in show business, comedian Hossan Leong will finally get his biggest stage and audience at the National Day Parade (NDP) on Aug 9.

The 45-year-old told My Paper: "I've always wanted to host it, (but) it's not something you put up your hand to say you want to do.

"Gurmit (Singh) has been doing a wonderful job, and he's been a wonderful host. But I'm glad I'm doing it this year. I really hope that I will host next year's as well."

When asked if he knew why he was finally chosen, he credited NDP 2014's creative director Dick Lee, who had noticed his talents when he hosted Singapore Day in Sydney last October.

"He said, 'I didn't realise you could host an open-air event with 5,000 people and everyone's hav-



FINALLY. After 20 years in show business, Leong is ready for his biggest stage and audience at this year's NDP.

ing fun.' I'm like, 'I've been in the business 20 years leh, Dick. You don't know me ah?' " said Leong with a laugh.

He will be one of the five emcees in charge of getting audience members on their feet and cheering.

The other emcees are actress Siti Khalijah, actor Ebi Shankara, and radio DJs Jean Danker and Joakim Gomez. All four have hosted the NDP before.

For Leong, this does not mean additional pressure, because "ultimately it's all about teamwork" and he always tells himself that he has to be "perfect".

"I always do my best. I believe you're only as good as your last show. If you screw up this show, you will never be hired again," he explained.

Hosting the NDP is also very different for the theatre veteran because it is "so intense".

"With the theatre, it's a controlled environment. This is open air, and it's so technically heavy. It's all about being on your feet, on your toes," he said.

While this may be his first time hosting the NDP, he already has loftier ambitions – to be its creative director one day.

He said: "Every year, I get this little bird going, 'They never ask you to direct?' I say, 'Slowly, I can (do it) step by step, host first.'

"It would be a great honour to direct the National Day Parade one day; it's amazing to see how things work behind the scenes."

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