

# Four philanthropists here make Forbes Asia list

By **MARIA MALA YOGALINGAM**

FOUR Singaporeans have landed on *Forbes Asia's* 2013 list of top philanthropists in the Asia-Pacific.

They are:

- ◆ Claire Chiang, co-founder of Banyan Tree Hotel & Resorts;
- ◆ Sam Goi, owner of Tee Yih Jia, maker of springroll skins;
- ◆ Wong-Mah Jia Lan, who owned shipping, hotel and tin-mining businesses with her late husband Wong Kwok Leong; and
- ◆ Michael Ma, founder and owner of The IndoChine Group.

*Forbes Asia's* annual "Heroes of Philanthropy" list has 48 names on it – what it calls the region's "most remarkable givers".

Ms Chiang, 61, donated S\$320,000 from the sale of her memoir, *My Journey and After*, to the Asian Festival of Children's Content, to develop children's litera-

ture produced in and focused on Asia.

Mr Goi, 64 and known as the "Popiah King" here, gave US\$400,000 to the Lee Kuan Yew Fund for Bilingualism last year to raise the standards of teaching English and the three mother tongues in pre-schools.

As chairman of Dunman High School's advisory committee, he also donated US\$1.2 million to his former school.

Mrs Wong, 75, raised US\$650,000 in April by auctioning part of her collection of Chinese paintings and jewellery. The money will go towards setting up a youth leadership award tenable for trips overseas for students from schools that emphasise Chinese language and culture.

Last year, she donated US\$1.3 million to Singapore Management University to support its counselling centre. In 2006, she and her husband gave S\$1 million to the university to

start a scholarship for its needy students.

In 2010, she gave US\$40,000 to the National Heart Centre Singapore after being treated there.

The youngest of the Singapore recipients, Mr Ma, 44, donates roughly US\$250,000 a year to charitable causes, including the Red Cross and other aid groups. An ethnic Chinese born in Laos and now a Singapore permanent resident, he does this in memory of the financial difficulties his refugee family faced after fleeing Laos during the Cold War.

He also hosts the annual IndoChine Green Festival, which raises awareness and funds for environmental and social causes.

Other notable Asia-Pacific philanthropists on the list include India's biotech entrepreneur Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and Indonesia's Tahir, founder and chairman of the Mayapada Group.