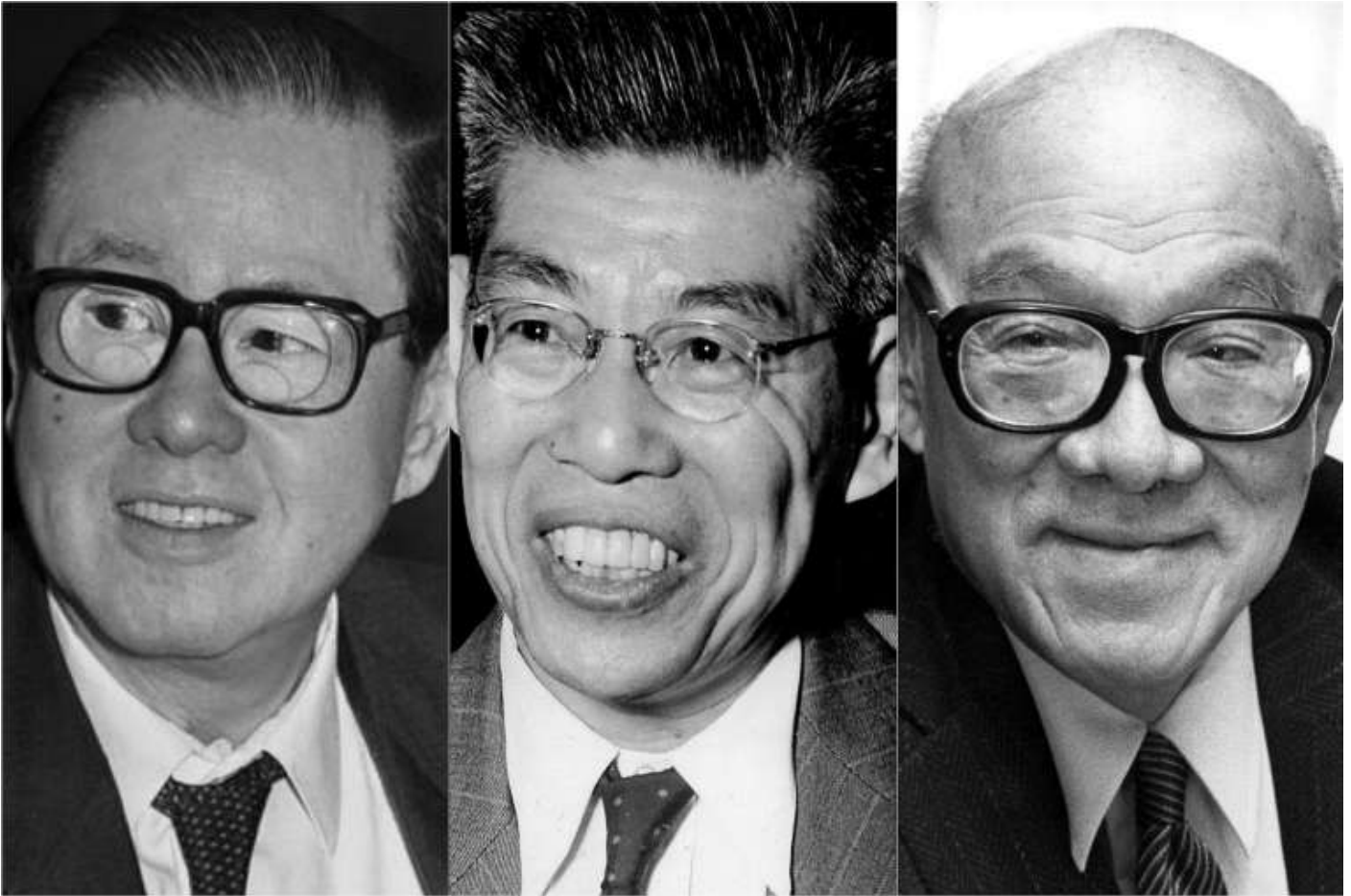


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Long-time givers: Who's who



(From left) Khoo Teck Puat, Lee Kong Chian and Tan Chin Tuan. PHOTOS: ST FILE

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Singapore's new foundations might be up-and-coming, but they are little match for the deep pockets of the long-established groups.

Take the Khoo Teck Puat Foundation. The foundation and the estate of the late Mr Khoo have given more than \$360 million to charity in the past decade, its spokesman told The Sunday Times.

This includes \$100 million to build the Khoo Teck Puat Hospital in Yishun and \$80 million to fund medical research at the Duke-NUS Medical School.

Mr Khoo was once Singapore's richest man, having made his fortune from banking, hotels and real estate. He started the foundation in 1981 with \$20 million. It funds healthcare and educational causes, which he was passionate about. When he died in 2004, it is understood that he left a substantial part of his wealth to the foundation.

The Khoos have more than one charitable organisation. Mr Khoo's children, who include film-maker Eric Khoo, registered the Rose Marie Khoo Foundation as a charity in 2009 in honour of their late mother.

The Lee Foundation, meanwhile, is known to give tens of millions a year to almost all sectors, including education, health, welfare and religious groups. Major gifts in recent years include \$150 million for Nanyang Technological University's medical school.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong noted after the death of its chairman Lee Seng Gee last month that the foundation had given nearly \$1 billion to charity.

Mr Lee Seng Gee's father, rubber tycoon Lee Kong Chian, started the foundation in 1952 with \$3.5 million. The foundation declined to be interviewed.

Dr Della Suantio, Mr Lee Seng Gee's wife, set up her own DS Lee Foundation in 2004. It helped fund the purchase of a trio of dinosaur skeletons now displayed at the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum. The Lee Foundation donated \$25 million to building the museum.

Another long-established group is the Shaw Foundation. Brothers Runme and Run Run Shaw, who started film company Shaw Organisation, set up the foundation in 1957 with a \$10 million endowment.

The foundation declined to be interviewed. In 2007, reports said it had donated more than \$350 million to charity since its inception.

The Tan Chin Tuan Foundation, set up by banker Tan Chin Tuan in 1976, is among the few to use hired staff; it has seven employees. Most foundations have family members or board members, who are volunteers, handle their work.

Ms Chew Gek Khim, who is the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation's deputy chairman and the late Mr Tan's granddaughter, says: "With a professional team and a CEO, we are able to not only review grants and evaluate charitable causes, but also kick-start initiatives that allow us to be catalysts and drivers."

Besides supporting education and community development projects, the foundation has kick-started programmes to introduce children from disadvantaged backgrounds to the arts.

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