A Tuaran-born gynaecologist is confirmed to have died in Thailand in the Dec. 26 catastrophic tsunami.

The remains of Dr Lim Fang Kan, 50, were positively identified on Saturday from dental records and were brought to Singapore, where he was a naturalised citizen, on Monday. His body was cremated in Singapore on Wednesday.

Dr Lim, the younger brother of former Chung Hwa Primary School (Likas) Principal, Lim Fang Yin, was on holiday with his two sons, nine-year-old Sheng Ren and Sheng Yuan, 11, in the southern Thai town of Khao Lak when the killer waves struck.

It was learnt that his wife and their elder child, a daughter, 12, returned to Singapore on Dec 26 while Dr Lim and two sons aged 8 and 10, were supposed to go back the following day (Dec 27).

As fate would have it, Tsunami struck on Dec 26, half a hour after the wife and daughter had left Thailand.

It was learnt that Dr Lim and Sheng Ren were swimming in the hotel's pool.

The boy was swept out to sea, where he was found clinging to a plank by a Thai fisherman a few hours later. His younger brother, Sheng Yuan, was swept up a hillside, where he was found shaken but safe.

Among those who attended Dr Lim's cremation ceremony on Wednesday were his 42-year-old Singaporean wife Pamela Chan, a psychologist, daughter Shu Hui and other family members.

Dr Lim, whose father was operating a coffee shop in Tuaran, won a Sabah State Government scholarship to study medicine at Universiti Malaysia before he went to England to do his post-graduate studies.

After graduation as a gynaecological oncologist, he worked in a government hospital in Singapore until last year when he went into private practice at the Mount Elizabeth Hospital.

Fellow gynaecological oncologist, Associate Professor A. Ilancheran, who had known Dr Lim since he was a trainee, said: "He was an excellent doctor and physician and did a lot of research into cancer patients, which was his main interest.

"Dr Lim's research into developing an early detection instrument for cervical cancer was almost complete at the time of his death, but had not been published," he added.