

## Tour de Timor attracts Singapore women

ALL SHE knows about Timor Leste is that the roads in the capital Dili are well-paved, but that other roads are full of pot holes.

But that did not stop Jasmine Wong, and three other Singaporean women — none of whom have been to the country before — from signing up for Tour de Timor, a 450km mountain bike race across nine of Timor's 13 districts.

Dubbed "the race for peace" by Timor Leste President José Ramos-Horta the in-

augural event will be held on Aug 24 and Aug 25.

President Ramos-Horta, who was in Singapore on a brief stopover yesterday, said: "(This is) our effort to instill cultural peace ... to showcase Timor ... as (not only) a peaceful place for anyone to visit, but also to bring people together from different nationalities around the world."

The race carries a cash prize of US\$75,000 (\$106,000) but Ms Wong, 34,

a physiotherapist and ultra-marathoner, said: "I am in this to participate, not so much because of the prize."

With team mates journalist Tingjun Zhang, 27, lawyer Anina Boshoff, 35, and 24-year-old Alexandra Toh, a student at UniSIM, Ms Wong founded The Chain Reaction Project, from which she will raise \$16,000 to build homes in Timor Leste.

So far, 300 participants from around the world have signed up, including six other teams from Singapore.

KIERSTEN OW



President Ramos-Horta shaking hands with Ms Tingjun Zhang. WEE TECK HIAN