

Billionaire Boys' Club

MEXICAN tycoon Carlos Slim retained his position atop Forbes magazine's annual list of the world's billionaires yesterday with an estimated worth of \$69-billion, placing him ahead of Bill Gates at \$61-billion and Warren Buffett at \$44-billion.

Slim, 72, has taken the top spot for three years in a row, largely based on assets from his telecommunications empire.

The US again led the list with 425 billionaires.

Russia overtook mainland China for the No 2 spot with 96 compared with China's 95.

The year's biggest loser, with a \$10.4-billion drop in his fortune, is ArcelorMittal chairman and CEO Lakshmi Mittal (No 21), who failed to make the Top 10 for the first time since 2004.

Other notable drop-offs include JK Rowling, Jim Balsillie (Research in Motion, maker of BlackBerry) and Apple co-founder and CEO Steve Jobs, who died last year. —
Reuters, Staff reporter