



Loo (front) and other NGO leaders hugging trees in support of their newly launched campaign, 'Our Trees, Our Legacy, Our Future' at Penang City Park. —Photo: ZHAFARAN NASIB/The Star

Tree-hugging challenge

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Social media campaign launched to preserve state's greenery

PENANG Gerakan Youth's Young Master Movement is taking to the social media to garner support for its campaign called 'Our Trees, Our Legacy, Our Future'.

Movement founder Jason Loo said the campaign was launched to save the green in the state from the current hill clearing crisis.

Loo, who is also Penang Gerakan Youth acting chief, together with several leaders of non-governmental organisations, hugged a tree each at the Penang City Park during the recent campaign launch.

He said a photo of him hugging a tree would be posted on his Facebook and three of his friends would be tagged, challenging them

to do the same in support of the campaign.

"We want to reach out to as many Penangites as we can to preserve trees in Penang.

"The social network will be the best platform to create the awareness. So, we decided to take it to the social media for support," he told reporters at the launch.

He said trees were being chopped down to make way for rapid development.

"Illegal hill clearings are also being carried out rampantly.

"Although mitigation works are being done at the hills where illegal clearings took place, this will take years as a tree needs at

least 50 years to grow.

"The more effective way of taking care of our trees is by preserving the old ones and not chopping them down," he said.

Loo also noted that there was a lack of awareness about preserving trees in Penang.

He said the number of trees taken down was far larger compared to the number of trees being planted.

"These old trees are our legacy, if these are chopped down, then what is left for the next generation?

"We need to stop losing the trees first rather than simply planting new ones," he added.