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Najib: Mindset must change

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KANGAR: The multi-billion-ringgit Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER) development plan must go in tandem with a change in the people's mindset, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said.

He said the people had to change their thinking and attitude towards work to ensure the NCER and other regional

development plans were successfully implemented.

He said this paradigm shift was crucial so that the people could reap benefits from the mega-development plan, the second regional blueprint launched after the Iskandar Development Region in Johor.

"It is not about the huge capital or funds, but about the change that we bring upon ourselves, our values and culture. If these are developed in tandem with material development, then God willing, we

will succeed.

"Now, we have to ask ourselves, are we ready to undergo a paradigm shift?"

Najib was speaking to some 1,000 people at the opening of the Arau Umno division meeting in Dewan 2020 yesterday.

He said the development plans were an opportunity for the people in every corner of the country to participate in the "wave of globalisation".

Najib said the paradigm shift applied to everyone, including farmers, school

leavers and traders.

He cited as example padi farmers who would be merging into an estate system outlined under the NCER.

Najib also urged school leavers to become professionals or strive to improve their qualifications.

He said the strategy of previous prime ministers to bring progress to all parts of the country was being continued by Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Meanwhile, Najib, also the

Umno deputy president, said the party was devoted to upholding the purity and holiness of Islam by ensuring that Muslims would progress.

"Islam is about the substance as articulated by Islam Hadari. It is not about rituals or how long your *janggut* (beard) is."

Najib said Pas was now irrelevant.

"After 17 years of ruling Kelantan, it has gone nowhere. There is nothing that it can be proud of."