

Cities must make learning easier, says Najib

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SHAH ALAM: An ideal city is one which nurtures its dwellers, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said last night.

He urges policymakers and urban planners to provide physical infrastructure for the acquisition of knowledge.


"Then, cities must aggressively embark on initiatives that will attract value-added investments, bringing with them not just run-of-the-mill job opportunities, but also real technology transfer and skill enhancement for city-dwelling workers," he said.

Najib said this at the International Symposium on Knowledge Cities dinner organised by the Arab Urban Development Institute and Malaysian Institute of Planners.

Policymakers, Najib said, must also incorporate the culture of learning into planning and implementing policies, including providing incentives to private corporations.

He said city planners should encourage the growth of learning centres such as libraries and research facilities, especially for the underprivileged.

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*Datuk Seri Najib Razak
Deputy Prime Minister*

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Najib said decline of the Islamic world came about when Muslims lost their zeal for knowledge, became mired in their own politics and influenced by convoluted and misguided ideas about the religion.

"As Muslims began to subscribe to the idea that they had to learn only Islamic studies, fewer became pioneers and researchers.

"The Islamic world became weaker and weaker, as Europe began to rise."

Najib also believed that the management of cities must be carried out by those equipped with the right skills to meet the challenges.

Among the challenges and issues were poverty, pollution, overconsumption of natural resources such as water and energy, and accelerated solid waste generation.

"Cities can be either the bane or the boon of nations. If a city is well managed, planned and re-planned, it can become the nucleus of economic prosperity, not just for its dwellers but for the entire nation."