A SPIRIT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP: IOBM STUDENTS LOOK BEYOND THE ‘NINE-TO-FIVE’.

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For the country that stands at an economic crossroads, there are emerging youth that believe in the spirit of entrepreneurship, providing employment for society, instead of seeking the comfort of nine-to-five jobs.

At the 17th convocation of the Institute of Business Management (IoBM) on Sunday, many among the 850 young men and women being awarded degrees in business management and its allied disciplines manifested this vision as they prepared to take their final walk as students.

Dressed in blue and beige, the graduating students strode up to the stage one by one to receive their degrees and awards from IoBM chancellor Illahi Buksh Soomro, IoBM president Shahjehan S Karim, Engro Corporation CEO Muhammad Aliuddin Ansari and provincial education minister Nisar Ahmed Khuhro, who was the chief guest.

“Young entrepreneurs can be a catalyst for economic development, and this is what IoBM grooms us for,” said Shayan Rizwan, business administration graduate working for GlaxoSmithKline Pakistan. “A quarter of my class is enthusiastic about venturing into this realm.” He added, however, that corporate exposure of at least three years was essential before graduates could undertake entrepreneurship.

“We must understand contemporary corporate culture as well as how a business evolves in the face of emerging societal needs,” he told The Express Tribune.

Omair Ahmed Khan, another business major, appeared to be on the same page as he asserted that the perception of business graduates having a predisposition for nine-to-five jobs did not quite hold true for his batch. “We recognise our potential to become job-creators instead of choosing traditional career paths that satisfy a mental stereotype.”

However, a remarkable resilience should be expected from the students that make this choice, especially in the face of an economic downturn that propels even the best graduates into the safer realm of salaried employment.

For the IoBM president, the conscious efforts made by one of the country’s premier business schools were beginning to reflect in the endeavours of its students as they seek to make a positive impact on the economy by setting up their own businesses. “We wish to see our graduates rising, glowing and shining towards a better and brighter Pakistan,” he said.

“This institution has given us the skills we need to take the job market by storm; the confidence to meet challenges head-on; and memories to cherish for a lifetime,” said class valedictorian Areeba Zaidi, echoing the sentiments of her classmates. “As we move forward, we become the overseers of our responsibilities and the masters of our destiny.”