

We are not hyphenated Americans but Americans: Bobby Jindal

25/06/2015 17:29 by admin

Washington: Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, while announcing his 2016 White House bid, today invoked the success story of his immigrant parents but once again distanced himself from his Indian roots by asserting that "we are all Americans" and not hyphenated Americans.

Forty four years ago, Jindal said, a young couple who had never before been on an airplane, left their home on the other side of the world to come to a place called America. Bobby Jindal was born in Baton Rouge, soon after his Punjab-born parents, Amar and Raj, came to the US, he said.

"They had never seen it. There was no internet to search, but they had heard the legend. There was a place in this world where people were free and the opportunities were real," Jindal said referring to the journey his parents made to the US from India.

"They weren't really coming to a geographical place. They were coming to an idea, and that idea is America. To them, America represented all that was good in the world, where you could get ahead if you worked hard and played by the rules. Place where what matters is the content of your character, not the colour of your skin, the zip code you were born in or your family's last name," he said.

Jindal highlighted that his father grew up in a house without electricity and without running water and was the only person in the family to get past the fifth grade.

"He (father) and mom they came to Louisiana because they believed in America and when they got here they found that the legend was true. They found that the people of Louisiana accepted them and they found that America is indeed the land of the free and the home of the brave," said the two-term Governor of Louisiana.

And 37 years after they came to the US, their eldest son became governor of Louisiana, he said. As he formally launched his presidential campaign, Jindal reiterated his remarks about de-hyphenating Indians and other ethnic groups from Americans.

"I am done with all this talk about hyphenated Americans. We are not Indian-Americans, African-Americans, Irish Americans, rich Americans or poor Americans. We are all Americans," he said amidst applause from the audience.

Jindal had this week featured on the Federalist Radio Hour and given his perspective on the state of the union.

He expressed frustration that President Barack Obama has "been trying to divide us...by gender, by race, by geography, and by religion."

"We're not hyphenated Americans anymore. We're not African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Indian-Americans or rich and poor Americans," he had said.

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