



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **US Expert: Washington should help India develop next-gen aircraft carriers**

**New Delhi, May 1, 2015:** "The United States and India have agreed to form a working group to explore the joint development of India's next-generation aircraft carrier. While the Indian Navy has already begun design work, wide-ranging cooperation with the United States has enormous potential and offers India the opportunity to acquire the most capable warship possible. Such collaboration would increase the Indian Navy's combat power and would resonate throughout the Asian continent to India's strategic advantage. The most valuable U.S. contributions are likely to materialize in the fight, possibly in the move, and hopefully in the integrate functions."

Offering such insights from his latest paper, *"Making Waves: Aiding India's Next-Generation Aircraft Carrier"*, **Mr. Ashley J Tellis**, *Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (U.S.)*, engaged in a conversation today on this possible landmark bilateral collaboration with **Admiral Arun Prakash**, *Former Chief of Naval Staff, Indian Navy*.

Underscoring the growing Chinese clout in the Indian Ocean, Tellis asserted it was imperative for India and the US to collaborate on developing New Delhi's naval capability by developing next-generation aircraft carriers.

*"For India, the novel challenge of the future will be to tackle the Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean. In recent years, China's activities have been scaled up, and it is clear that Beijing is looking at a long-term presence in the Indian Ocean. On the other hand, the US has a strategic interest in ensuring that the Indian Navy's hold in the Indian Ocean remains unchallenged. We must look at creative ways to harness the opportunities presented by friends and allies,"* **Tellis said** at a special discussion hosted by the Ananta Aspen Centre.

*"India has never built a large scale CATOBAR carrier, and it is very difficult to build a CATOBAR carrier of 65000 tonnes. On the other hand, the US Navy has been making such carriers for the past 30 years. There is clearly a synergy between the need in India and availability in the US. It is also in India's interest to have a fifth-generation aircraft on its carriers, since China deploys late fourth generation aircraft,"* he added.

*“India did get an aircraft carrier in 1961 and another in 1980. During this time, we built some warships, but the choice of aircraft in carriers remained a dilemma. Till quite recently, we had no hope of getting a catapult mechanism from the US and no hope of using western fighter planes. However, there is now an opportunity that may be explored,”* **observed Adm. Prakash.**

### **About Ananta Aspen Centre**

An independent and not-for-profit organization, Ananta Centre – formerly part of Aspen Institute India – is registered under the Indian Trust Act. It engages the civil society, inclusive of business, NGOs, Governments and other stake holders on issues of importance to India’s development and national security. Ananta Centre holds discussions on key foreign policy issues as well as security matters and strategic affairs pertaining to India through regular public sessions and round tables. The Centre is based in New Delhi.

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