Looks like I made a mistake in some of my previous articles in regards to an Israeli strike on Iran. I had quoted an an article from Prison Planet on the remarks by a Russian politician, who stated he believed an Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear facilities would be carried out on March 28th. I should have read the date the article was published, February 2006. I came across the article a long time after that date. The strike did not happen on March 28th, 2006, but tensions are still increasing in the region. Iran captured 15 UK service men and women operating in Iraqi waters at the weekend, and is still holding them in custody in Teheran. The UK had urged Europe to intervene in the affair, and the British government has stated it wants to see a peaceful resolution to the situation. But Prime Minister Tony Blair says that if diplomatic efforts fail, the UK will seek other means of obtaining their release.

Quote: *""What we are trying to do at the moment is to pursue this through the diplomatic channels and make the Iranian government understand these people have to be released," Blair told GMTV television. "I hope we manage to get them to realise they have to release them. If not, then this will move into a different phase," he said.*

There is no doubt President Ahmadinejad intends to use the sailors as a bargaining chip over the Iranian nuclear crisis. Either their presence in Teheran will prevent an Israeli-US strike in the region, or Iran will agree to release the hostages in return for certain guarantees, or perhaps its purpose is to show the West what could happen as a result of a strike. This news comes as the US launches its biggest military manoeuvre in the Gulf to date.

Quote: *"The US Navy on Tuesday began its largest demonstration of force in the Persian Gulf since the 2003 invasion of Iraq, led by a pair of aircraft carriers and backed by warplanes flying simulated attack manoeuvres off the coast of Iran. The manoeuvres bring together two strike groups of US warships and more than a hundred US warplanes to conduct simulated air warfare in the crowded Gulf shipping lanes.*

Source YNet News , Jerusalem Post