

## US military build-up on Iran border: Russian Intelligence

Moscow, March 27 (RIA Novosti) Russian military intelligence services are reporting a flurry of activity by US Armed Forces near Iran's borders, a high-ranking security source said Tuesday.

'The latest military intelligence data point to heightened US military preparations for both an air and ground operation against Iran,' the official said, adding that the Pentagon has probably not yet made a final decision as to when an attack will be launched.

He said the Pentagon is looking for a way to deliver a strike against Iran 'that would enable the Americans to bring the country to its knees at minimal cost.'

He also said the US Naval presence in the Persian Gulf has for the first time in the past four years reached the level that existed shortly before the invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

Colonel-General Leonid Ivashov, vice president of the Academy of Geopolitical Sciences, said last week that the Pentagon is planning to deliver a massive air strike on Iran's military infrastructure in the near future.

A new US carrier battle group has been dispatched to the Gulf.

The USS John C. Stennis, with a crew of 3,200 and around 80 fixed-wing aircraft, including F/A-18 Hornet and Super hornet fighter-bombers, eight support ships and four nuclear submarines are heading for the Gulf, where a similar group led by the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower has been deployed since Dec 2006. The US is also sending Patriot anti-missile systems to the region.

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