

Nuclear technology can solve future power needs

The GCC is in discussions with the IAEA, while the UAE is talking to nations to export nuclear technology. (AFP)



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Future power demands of the region will only be solved by the implementation of nuclear technology, experts said. Delegates at the Utility Expansion and Investment Congress in Dubai yesterday hailed moves by the GCC states to work towards peaceful nuclear power as one.

But the experts also urged individual countries to negotiate with nuclear powers unilaterally.

Yousuf Ahmed Janahi, Chairman of Gulf States Electrical Interconnection Authority, told Emirates Business that the GCC was in discussions with the International Atomic Energy Agency while countries such as the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia were talking to nations with the technology to export nuclear technology.

"There was a meeting of the GCC committee and it was approved to proceed with the feasibility study to set up a nuclear power plants at the GCC level," said Janahi. He said the study would include issues such as the location where the plant could be set up, the number of plants to be established, its capacity and mechanism for sharing power.

"There are a lot many issues such as training of qualified engineers and managers to manage the plants. Even for the plans to become operational it would take almost a decade.

"Meanwhile we should adopt plans to train staff and engineers," he said.

The two-day congress has gathered up to 150 decision-makers from EPC (engineering, procurement, and construction) contractors, public and private utility companies with financiers, manufacturers and suppliers in the power, water as well as gas industries.

"As the Gulf's utilities industries are at an important juncture, the discussions on nuclear or renewable energy are very timely. The biggest challenge has always been about meeting explosive demands for power, and the Gulf has always been looking at energy conservation and renewable schemes to help meet its needs," said Saudin Dungog, the event producer of Utility Expansion and Investment Congress.