

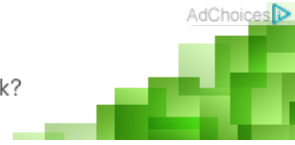


H&R BLOCK

START NOW >

Why second guess when you can Second Look?

AdChoices



Like

TI M P I 20.6°

FOLLOW@THEDAILYBEAST

Search The Daily Beast

SEARCH



HOME

POLITICS

BUSINESS

VIDEO

ENTERTAINMENT

FASHION

BOOKS

ART

WOMEN IN THE WORLD

Newsweek



Featured: OSCARS • THE ROYALIST • THE DISH • HOWARD KURTZ • DAVID FRUM • GREEN RANKINGS

SUBSCRIBE

WORLD NEWS

CHANGE TEXT SIZE - +

AUTHOR

Jaime Cunningham

FOLLOW@NEWSWEEK

In Newsweek Magazine

Nuclear Power Games

Jul 31, 2010 4:00 AM EDT

Share

Like

Tweet



0



Saudi Arabia wants to go nuclear. Like many developing nations, the kingdom has seen its electricity demand soar in recent years—more than 8 percent annually—and is actively searching for alternatives to fossil fuels. Enter nuclear power: last month Saudi Arabia announced a joint initiative with Japan's Toshiba and American firms the Shaw Group and Exelon to build and operate at least two nuclear power plants in the country. This comes on the heels of the establishment in April of the King Abdullah City for Nuclear and Renewable Energy, an organization to manage future energy sources.

Of course, Saudi Arabia's hardly alone in the Middle East in its desire for nuclear power. But unlike its poorer neighbors, it's got the money to see its plans to fruition. However, the country's legendary secrecy about its internal workings has some analysts worried about its nuclear ambitions. Unlike, say, the United Arab Emirates—which is quite transparent about its own \$40 billion nuclear-power program and has even signed a bilateral agreement on nuclear cooperation with the U.S.—Saudi Arabia is unlikely to follow suit and show all its cards.

While Saudi Arabia says its interest in nuclear power is for future energy security, looming over its endeavor is the threat of a nuclear Iran. Though Western analysts are unsure about the extent of Iran's alleged weapons program, the chance that Tehran could go nuclear in the next few years surely has Saudi Arabia worried. "There are both political and economic drivers for nuclear power in Saudi Arabia," says Mark Hibbs, senior associate of the nuclear-policy program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "The country's appetite for electricity is growing fast. It has to be concerned that if it doesn't diversify its economic base away from fossil-fuel exports, it will be taking risks." But the country also wants to "challenge Iran's nuclear leadership in the region. That doesn't have to mean Saudi Arabia will try to develop nuclear weapons. But a nuclear-armed Iran would be a direct threat to Saudi Arabia," says Hibbs, who calls the Saudi nuclear-energy program a "long-term hedge against that outcome."

Western officials also fear that Saudi Arabia could join a nuclear defense pact with Pakistan (both Sunni majority countries) in order to protect against intimidation from Shiite-majority Iran. Adding to that concern is the fact that European and American officials believe Saudi Arabia may already be contributing money to Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. Peaceful or no, Saudi Arabia's nuclear program will surely have a very big impact in the Middle



THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

The Last Dive?

MORE FROM NEWSWEEK

Newsweek Is All Digital! Print subscribers: Please click here for important information about digital access.

RELATED VIDEO



Jimmy Saville 'preyed on 450 children'

Commander Peter Spindler, head of the inquiry into Saville's sexual abuse...

STORIES WE LIKE

BUZZFEED Guess the Real Names of These Celebrities

ROLLING STONE Everything You Need to Know About Filibuster Reform

HUFFINGTON POST POLITICS House Republicans Poised to Spend Millions in Defense of DOMA

RI177FFFD

Web2PDF

converted by Web2PDFConvert.com

East and abroad.

GET NEWSWEEK ON YOUR TABLET →

Like [The Daily Beast on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#) for updates all day long.

For inquiries, please contact The Daily Beast at editorial@thedailybeast.com.

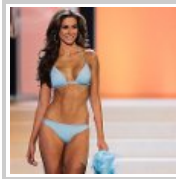


TAGS: World News, Diplomatic Relations, Iran, Saudi Arabia

YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE



Paid Distribution
How Republican are you? This short quiz will tell you. (Patch)



Katherine Webb, Model Girlfriend of Alabama QB A.J. McCarron, Steals Show (The Daily Beast)



Paid Distribution
Chinese Military On "High Alert" After It Scrambles Fighter Jets To "Counter" Japanese Jets (InvestingChannel)



The Mad One (The Daily Beast)

COMMENTS

Sign in

2 people listening

Comment input area with a text box, a toolbar containing icons for edit, mention, and social sharing, and a red 'POST COMMENT AS...' button.

SORT: [NEWEST](#) | [OLDEST](#)

Powered by Livefyre

What if Grease Was Cast Today?

HUFFINGTON POST TECH
NRA Releases Shooting Game Exactly One Month After Newtown

BUZZFEED
Jon Huntsman Can't Stop Talking About The Republican Party

HUFFINGTON POST POLITICS
Chuck Hagel Promises To Extend Benefits To Gay And Lesbian Military Families

ROLLING STONE
'American Idol' Is Back: 5 Reasons to Watch

YOURTANGO
How to Stop Fighting About Money Now

MOST POPULAR

Government Shutdown Insanity

Inside Scientology's Secret World

The Feds Who Wouldn't Budge

I Was Deluded to Believe Lance

The Jon Stewart/Paul Krugman Smackdown Over a Trillion-Dollar Coin

H&R BLOCK At Home **FILE FREE ONLINE** >
Get your maximum refund at maximum speed.

OTHER NEWS

ENTERTAINMENT

WONDERWALL

Hookup rumor du jour: Russell Crowe dating

ENTERTAINMENT

EW.com
ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

'Vote for the Worst' 'Idol' website shutting

ENTERTAINMENT

BuzzFeed

A Search Engine For Your Friends

POLITICS

TAEGAN GODDARD'S POLITICAL WIRE

The Republicans' Plan for the New President

Web2PDF

converted by Web2PDFConvert.com

Dita Von Teese?

The Shortlist for Jan. 15

2013 Golden Globe Awards afterparties

[Get More from Wonderwall](#)

down

Piers Morgan tries to talk gun control on 'Colbert' — VIDEO

'The Walking Dead': Prison plotline Minimates toys to be released this spring — EXCLUSIVE

[Get More from EW.com](#)

Mitt Romney Knew About The Brewing Mali Conflict Before You Did

New Planned Parenthood Ad Cites Limits Of Abortion "Labels"

[Get More from Buzz Feed](#)

Bachmann Had "Unnatural" Relationship With Debate Coach

The Inside Story of Obama's Last Campaign

[Get More from Political Wire](#)



[HELP](#) | [ABOUT](#) | [CONTACT US](#) | [JOBS](#) | [ADVERTISE](#) | [PRIVACY](#) | [COMMUNITY POLICY](#) | [TERMS OF USE](#) | [FINANCIAL DISCLAIMER](#) | [COPYRIGHT & TRADEMARK](#)

Sections: [HOME](#) | [ELECTION](#) | [ENTERTAINMENT](#) | [BOOKS](#) | [VIDEO](#) | [WOMEN IN THE WORLD](#) | [ANDREW SULLIVAN'S THE DISH](#) | [PRESS](#) | [NEWSWEEK](#) | [SUBSCRIBE](#)

Featured: [OSCARS](#) | [THE ROYALIST](#) | [THE DISH](#) | [HOWARD KURTZ](#) | [DAVID FRUM](#) | [GREEN RANKINGS](#) | [NEWSWEEK SUBSCRIBER HELP](#)

Partners: [EXPEDIA](#) | [HOTELS](#) | [HOTWIRE](#) | [MERCHANTCIRCLE](#) | [REFERENCE](#) | [THESAURUS](#) | [URBANSPOON](#)

Weather data provided by Weather Underground, Inc.

 [MOBILE SITE](#)

 **NEWSWEEK IS ALL DIGITAL**
SUBSCRIBERS, CLICK FOR DETAILS

[GET EMAIL UPDATES](#) [SIGN UP](#)

Sign up for daily email updates from The Daily Beast

© 2012 The Newsweek/Daily Beast Company LLC