

Fatwa on Moon Sighting

(and Following Neighbouring Countries)

Presented at the Moon Sighting Conference, Croydon Masjid & Islamic Centre (UK)
by Mufti Ebrahim Desai (Mufti of Jamiat-ul-Ulama South Africa) on 19 August 2006

Question: Who should we follow?

Darul Uloom Deoband, India (دارالعلوم دیوبند الہند)

I have studied your queries very attentively. It has been written from here in the past, that announcements should be made for the sighting of the moon, based upon information of sightings from your close country, **Morocco**. It is incorrect to make announcements for Eid and Ramadan by following Saudi Arabia for the sake of ease. Even if a fatwa has been obtained for this purpose, it is against the principles of Shariah. There is a far greater distance between Britain and Saudi, whereas Morocco is a lot closer to Britain. To abandon a close country's sightings and to accept Saudi's sighting, is in contradiction with the principles of Fiqh. Thereafter, considering the state of the Saudi observations and the difficulties that are arising from them, which you have written and drawn attention towards. After reading them, no decision should ever be made blindly in accordance with Saudi observations. You should enforce with full strength the practice of following Morocco sightings. This is closest to the truth. And Allah knows best.

"To abandon a close country's sightings and to accept Saudi's sighting, is in contradiction with the principles of Fiqh."

Mufti Habibur Rahman, Mufti Darul Uloom Deoband.
18th Safar 1424 AH

Mazahirul Uloom, Sharanpur, India (مظاہر علوم السہارنپور الہند)

This answer is correct and is in accordance with the rulings of Shariah. The closest countries should be taken into account where there is less difference in the sunset etc.

Mufti Muhammad Tahir, Darul Ifta Mazahirul Uloom Sharanpur.
1st Sha'baan 1424 AH

Jamia Islamia Taleemud Deen, Dahbel, Gujrat, India. (جامعہ اسلامیہ تعلیم الدین ڈاہیل سملک گجرات)

I fully agree and I am satisfied with the above reply.

Mufti Ahmed Khanpuri Darul Ifta Jamia Islamia Dahbel.
2nd Rabius Thani 1424 AH

Khairul Madaaris, Multan, Pakistan (خير المدارس ملتان)

We have learned from very reliable sources that the thirty-two-year Saudi Calendar has been set according to Greenwich (London) and the announcements for Eid, Ramadan are made according to it and not by moons sighting or by following principles laid down in the Islamic Shariah.

- A basic proof of this fact is the statements made in the forward of the Saudi [Ummul Qura] Calendar.
- The second proof is that when officials of Wazaarat Ad-Diffa wat-Tairaan (Ministry of Defence and Aviation) were asked that on 21st of February 1993 it will be 30th of Sha'baan but is there actually a chance of sighting the moon; both ministries admitted that according to moons sighting calculations there was no chance of sighting yet Ramadan was announced in Saudi the next day.
- The third proof is that in Saudi moon sighting is not common amongst the common population despite clear horizons; no one can be presented in Saudi who has fasted upon sighting the moon himself even though in case of clear horizon, perpetual sighting is necessary.
- The fourth proof is that moon is generally sighted elsewhere 2-3 days later. Maulana Sameerudeen has noted many statements of people supporting this matter in his book, *Ru'yat-e-Hilal*.
- The fifth proof is that the phases of the moon are out of synch i.e. full moon is not seen on the fourteenth in Saudi etc. and this can be seen by anyone in Saudi.

Based upon this evidence it can be understood that moon sighting is not practiced in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, to make Saudi the basis of these decisions would be wasting your acts of worship and this is also the opinion of Mufti Taqi Usmani as well.

Mufti Muhammad Abdullah, Mufti Abdus-Sattar, Darul Ifta Khairul Madaaris, Multan.

24th Jamadius Thani 1424 AH

Jamiatul Uloom Islamia. Binnori Town. Karachi. Pakistan (جامعہ بنوری ٹاؤن)

It should be clear that it is duty upon Muslims living in non-Muslim countries to arrange for moon sighting in their country of residence and to place their trust in their own sighting as stated in the Ahadeeth to start and finish with moon fasting. If the moon cannot be sighted in one's own country, then the sighting of the closest Islamic country should be followed; the sighting of a distant country is not reliable. Therefore, in the following circumstances it is necessary for the Muslims in England to follow **Morocco** or Algeria which are closer to England in Shariah and to trust their moon sighting. It is not permissible to follow Saudi, Pakistan or any country which is far from England.

"the sighting of a distant country is not reliable"

Mufti Abdul Kareem Deenpuri, Darul Ifta Jamiatul Uloom Islamia, Binnori Town Karachi.

21st Ramadan 1424 AH

Darul Uloom Karachi, Pakistan (دارالعلوم كراچى)

You have discussed the problems of moon sighting in the United Kingdom. The decision of moon sighting based entirely on calculations is not correct according to Jamhoo-Ummat and I think that Shar'et communication should be established with **Morocco** and its moon sighting should be considered valid for the UK. Saudi moon sighting may also be valid (as a principle) according to Shariah but the system currently in place in Saudi Arabia makes it very difficult for other countries to place their trust in it.

Mufti Taqi Usmani, Daul Uloom Karachi. 19th Dhul Hijja 1412 AH

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I have replied to you letter and I hope that you have now received the earlier letter [above]. In summary, I would like to say that the inhabitants of Britain in the present circumstances should not consider the moon sighting of Saudi Arabia as sufficient and they should contact **Morocco** in case of the weather not being clear. In Saudi Arabia, the sighting of the moon has been accepted before even the birth of the moon on many occasions which is impossible in my view. I have discussed the situation with many Saudi Ulama and they are also disturbed with these occurrences however since this is in the hands of the *Majlisul Qadha Al-A'la* they are helpless.

Mufti Taqi Usmani Darul Uloom Karachi.

19th Rabius Thani 1413 AH

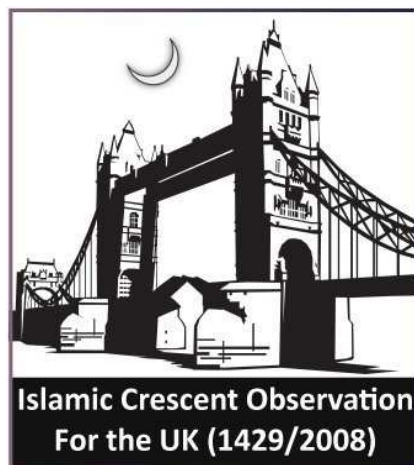
Related:

Regional Moon Sighting Criteria for the UK

<http://www.moonsighting.org.uk/en/uk-moon-sighting-criteria.html>

Frequently asked questions about Moon Sighting in Morocco

<http://www.moonsighting.org.uk/en/faqs-about-morocco.html>



Compiled by Eng. Qamar Uddin, ICOUK (www.moonsighting.org.uk) [Rabi-ut Thani 1438/January 2017]