

Importance of Reporting Hilal Sightings

When Muslims go out for crescent moon (Hilal) observation, there are two possible outcomes:

1. They actually see the moon and report the result as a **positive** sighting.
2. They don't see the moon and report the result as a **negative** sighting.

It is *Sunnah* to look for the Hilal on the 29th lunar date and if there is a positive sighting then the new month begins from the next day.

However, if there are negative sightings then the new month begins from the day after the next day i.e. after completing 30-days.

Therefore, it is essential to report both positive and negative sightings to begin the new month on certainty and not in doubts.

Furthermore, negative sighting reports provide justification for completion of 30-days, hence it's important to report negative sightings (from all locations) just as positive sightings.

What if people don't report negative sightings?

The purpose of reporting Hilal sightings is to help the community (or nominated committee) to make rapid and accurate decisions to begin the new month.

When they see the positive sighting reports on the 29th day, they can decide to begin the new month from the next day with certainty.

Similarly, when they see the negative sighting reports, they can decide to complete 30-days of the month with certainty.

Some people only report the positive sightings and not the negative sightings. This is not helpful, because when the community (or the nominated Hilal Committee) don't see the negative sighting reports, they may fall in doubt and have to wait unnecessarily long to make a decision.

Furthermore, if lots of people report negative sightings and few people claim positive sightings, it will help them isolate mistakes easily than if no one reported negative sightings. This could happen when the moon is in the invisible phase (*Mahaq*) and something else is mistaken for the moon (e.g. Venus Crescent)!

Note that it is recommended to take photos of the horizon before and after sunset (with or without the Hilal) for supportive evidence. It could easily show the clarity of the horizons and weather conditions. However, observation reports can be submitted without photos, if they are not available!

Where should people submit the Hilal sighting reports?

Many organisations and individuals frequent the ICOUK website for reliable Hilal reports. Therefore, you should send your Hilal Sighting reports to the ICOUK website (bit.ly/SendObsReport) from the field in the first instance, which should take only about 1 - 2 mins the most (if you already have your login saved in your device). You should also SHARE it with your organisation (if any) and moon sighting groups on Social Media, as appropriate.

Checked by Shaykh Suliman Gani