



# Islamic Crescent Observation for the UK

## المراقبة الإسلامية للأهلة في المملكة المتحدة

إحياء السنة النبوية في رؤية الهلال - Reviving the Sunnah of Moon Sighting



## Ummul Qura Change Petition

We, the Muslims of the UK and our friends/supporters around the world, would like to request and require Your Excellency, King Salman bin Abdul Aziz, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques in Saudi Arabia, to change the Ummul Qura Calendar criteria to a Predicted Crescent Visibility (Imkan-e-Ruyat) model for the following reasons:

1. There are over 3 million Muslims living in the UK from different cultural backgrounds, who depend on reliable/verified moon sighting news to start the holy month of Ramadan and the celebration of the two Eids. Unfortunately, due to the adverse weather conditions in the UK, it is not possible to sight the crescent moon on the UK horizon for many consecutive months. Hence, we have to look for reliable/ verified moon sighting news from countries in the east of the UK/Morocco, including Saudi Arabia.
2. It is well known in Islamic Jurisprudence that any reliable moon sighting news from the east must be able to be verified by all other locations to the west, especially when the sky conditions are clear. Unfortunately, the moon sighting news from Saudi Arabia cannot be verified from other countries in the west of Saudi Arabia (such as in North Africa, Europe and the Americas), many hours later in the same evening. This difference in moon sighting reports causes a division, disunity and chaos amongst Muslims in our communities, not only in the same city, but within the same family! This sad state of affairs has been happening in our Muslim minority countries for many years.
3. The authors of the Ummul Qura calendar at the King Abdul Aziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) in Riyadh admit that the calendar is only for civil use and may not match the actual visibility of the moon, which is necessary for the start of the religious months. However, it is also accepted that since all announcements made from the Supreme Court in Riyadh to look for the crescent moon is on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of the Ummul Qura calendar, it psychologically biases the witness towards it due to the high expectation to match the calendar. This bias is unanimously agreed by all moon sighting/astromy experts from the International observatories as well as many experts from within Saudi Arabia.
4. The present Ummul Qura calendar model is based on moon set after sunset at Makkah, after the New Moon Conjunction, which does not guarantee the visibility of the moon to the human eye. With the recent advancement in technology where high powered computers have become accessible to many moon sighting researchers at low cost, means that new models have been developed that can match the actual visibility of the crescent moon by the human eye to a high degree of accuracy, such as the model by Dr Bernard Yallop, a former Superintendent of HM Nautical Almanac Office (HMNAO). This model was an improvement to the earlier version developed by Dr Mohammad Ilyas, a Professor of Astronomy at the University of Science Malaysia. Other models have also been developed by Eng Khalid Shaukat (USA) and Eng Mohammad Odeh (UAE) in recent years that also needs consideration.
5. We welcome the improvement made to the Ummul Qura calendar criteria at the start of 1420 AH (April 1999) and 1423 AH (March 2002), which has significantly reduced the moon sighting report differences between Saudi Arabia and other nearby countries from two days to one day. However, we strongly believe if the Ummul Qura calendar criteria can be improved once more to a Predicted Crescent Visibility model at Makkah sunset (e.g. Yallop Code A or B), then the present causes of division, disunity and chaos amongst the Muslims in our communities at the time of Ramadan and two Eids will be minimised, Insha-Allah.

We ask Allah Almighty to accept your efforts to benefit the nation, spread goodness at your hands and place these efforts in the scale of your good deeds (Ameen).

This petition was written on behalf of the Islamic Crescent Observation for the UK (ICOUK) members and supporters around the world.

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