



The Hilal Advisory team Statement

Following confusion created after the recent circulation of an email and request from Moamineen for further investigations, The Hilal Advisory Team has been in touch with the office of His Eminence in Qum. It has also been in direct contact with Syed Jawad Shahristani (Wakeel e Mutlaq of Syed Seestani and Head of Qum office) and has now completed its investigations.

It has been confirmed that there has been NO change in Agha's rulings and that **Wednesday, 3rd September 2008 remains the 1st Ramadhan 1429.**

The Hilal Advisory Team has now got written confirmation from the office of His Eminence in Qum stating that the email circulating was referring to Agha's opinion for Najaf and the Middle East and NOT London, United Kingdom. **See Appendix 1 below**

The Hilal Advisory Team also sought written clarification on the date for the start of Ramadhan in the United Kingdom and following confirmation of the attached ruling, the Hilal Advisory Team reiterates its firm conviction on its deduction that Wednesday, 3rd September 2008 remains the 1st Ramadhan 1429 for Muqallideen of Ayatullah Syed Seestani. **See Appendix 2 and 3 below.**

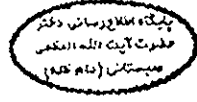
The Hilal Advisory Team had previously issued a statement detailing the methodology of its deductions. **See Appendix 4**

The Hilal Advisory Team wishes all moamineen to remember them in their duas' on the nights of Laylatul Qadr.

**The Hilal Advisory Team
The Council of European Jamaat
Wednesday, 15th Ramadhan 1429 , 17th September 2008**

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

[Amjad Shah (graphicdesign247@yahoo.co.uk
الجمعة، 14 رمضان، 1429 م. 07:08
sistani@sistani.org
st Ramadhan 1429]



Name : Amjad Shah
Country : England
City : Watford, Hertfordshire
Age : 39
Gender : Male
Language : English

Email address : graphicdesign247@yahoo.co.uk
Subject : 1st Ramadhan 1429

Question : Date: 5th September 2008/4th Ramadhan 1429 Dear Eminence, As-salaam
alaikum. I pray you are well and in good health. On Monday 1st September your liaison
office in London announced that 1st Ramadhan was on Tuesday 2nd September. The Hilal
Advisory Team of the Council of European Jamaats (COEJ) announced through your office
in Najaf via Qum that Wednesday 3rd September was the 1st Ramadhan. Can you please
advise which opinion is correct and should be followed. Thank you. Salaams and du'as
Amjad Shah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
ششمین روز سیدنا برادران بصره المبارک بود
مجلس اتحاد الكوچا في بريطانيا
مكتب لندن

Tuesday (2 September) was the first day of the Holy Month of
Ramadhan.

سلامین علیکم
آیا این بزرگوار لندن هم هست یا نه ؟
شدر بشورون ضرورت

Is this related to London or not?

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(KHOJA FEDERATION)

جواب فوق کہ قیلاً داره شده است
مربوط به نجف و شهرهای هم افق با آن است



The above reply that was answered
previously is related to Najaf and
Cities that share the horizon (with Najaf)



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جماعت های مسلمان شیعه اثنی عشری قوجه

سازمان خیریه ، شماره ثبت در انگلستان ۲۸۲۳۰۳

معاونت آموزش اسلامی

دفتر قم

Date :
Reference :
Attachments :

تاریخ :
شماره :
پیوست :

دفتر استفتائات حضرت آیت الله العظمی سیستانی (مد ظله العالی)

سلام علیکم

ضمن تبریک حلول ماه مبارک رمضان خدمت حضرت تعالی، معروض می دارد که :

برای مقلدین حضرت آیت الله سیستانی (مد ظله العالی) در شهر لندن، کشور انگلستان، آیا

روز اول ماه مبارک رمضان سال جاری، برابر با روز سه شنبه ۲ سپتامبر ۲۰۰۸ بوده یا

چهارشنبه سوم سپتامبر ۲۰۰۸؟

قبلا از بذل توجه حضرت تعالی کمال تشکر را دارم.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
رُخُولِ مَاهِ مَبْرُكٍ مَبْنُوطٍ اسْتَبَدَّ بِهُ لُودُنُ مَاهِ دَرِ افْقِ جَابِي
كَمْ مَكْلَفٍ بَاشَدُ بِهٖ نَحْوِي كَمْ قَابِلٍ رُؤْيِي بَاشَدُ بَاطْنِي
اعْتْيَادِي غَيْرِ مَسْلُحٍ .



Dar al-Zahra
No. 99, Street 5, Fatemi Road (Daur-e-Shahr)
Qum, Iran
Tel: +98 (0) 251 7832620 Fax: +98 (0) 251 7748431

ایران - قم
خیابان فاطمی (دور شهر) ، کوچه ۵ ، پلاک ۹۹
دار الزهراء

تلفن: +۹۸ (۰) ۲۵۱ ۷۸۳۲۶۲۰ فاکس: +۹۸ (۰) ۲۵۱ ۷۷۴۸۴۳۱

ieb-qum@world-federation.org



[Question]

The Religious Questions Office of His Eminence Grand Ayatullah Seestani (may Allah protect His Highness),

Salam alaykum.

With felicitations on the arrival of the blessed month of Ramadhan, it is respectfully submitted to His Excellency that:

For the followers of His Eminence Ayatullah Seestani (may Allah protect His Highness) in the city of London, England, was the first day of the blessed month of Ramadhan of the current year on Tuesday 2 September 2008 or on Wednesday 3 September 2008?

I offer in advance my utmost thanks to His Excellency for his attention.

[Answer]

In His name, the Most Exalted,

The advent of the new month is dependent upon the presence of the crescent on the horizon of the “Mukallaf” [one who has to observe Islamic laws] in a manner that it can be seen with ordinary unaided naked eye.

Stamped with the seal of the Board of Religious Questions of the Office of Grand Ayatullah Seestani, Qum.

Translated by:

The Hilal Advisory Team

The Council of European Jamaat

Wednesday, 15th Ramadhan 1429, 17th September 2008



Hilal Advisory Team Clarification Ramadhan 1429

Having received numerous requests from Moamineen, The Hilal Advisory Team of The Council of European Jamaats would like to elaborate on its reasoning in declaring Wednesday 3rd September 2008 as 1st of Ramadhan 1429.

According to Fiqh - Jurisprudence, it is the responsibility of every individual to ascertain the beginning of the month. The CoEJ Hilal Advisory Team is only an advisory body that is setting out guidelines to assist mo'amineen in this process. It remains the duty of every mo'amineen to acquire 'Itminan' – Certainty and then act accordingly. The Hilal Advisory Team sets out below the basis it has used in deriving its declaration:

The following are deductions as per the rulings of His Eminence Ayatullah Ali Al Hussain Al Sistani (may Allah prolong his life) **ONLY**.

As for Muqalideen of Ayatullah Khuei (RA), please see end of statement for further explanation.

Based on the principle of "*multiple curve sightings*" and backed by astronomical data in regards to the possibilities of sighting the New Crescent at sunset on Monday, 1st September 2008 in UK and most of Europe, was improbable. However The Hilal Advisory Team does alert mo'amineen in various parts of Europe to sight the crescent and declaration would then be made using witnesses whereas the astronomical calculations are used to provide guidance and indication of the same.

Sighting Possibilities – Monday 1st September 2008

The Hilal Advisory Team based its facts from the following data collated for various leading cities in UK and Europe to determine possible sightings:

LONDON (England):

Astronomical New Moon on 30 Aug 2008 @	8:59 pm
Sunset on 1 Sep 2008 (29 Sha'ban) @	7:46 pm
Moon Age @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	46hr 47min
Moonset on 1 Sep 2008 @	7:58 pm
Time Duration	12 min
Elongation @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	24° 19'
Crescent altitude @ sunset on 1 Sep 2008	1° 17'
Naked eye sighting is NOT POSSIBLE on Monday 1 September 2008 evening.	

BIRMINGHAM(England):

Sunset on 1 Sep 2008 (29 Sha'ban) @	7:58 pm
Moon Age @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	47hr 0min
Moonset on 1 Sep 2008 @	8:07 pm
Time Duration	9 min
Elongation @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	24° 26'
Crescent altitude @ sunset on 1 Sep 2008	0° 29'
Naked eye sighting is NOT POSSIBLE on Monday 1 September 2008 evening.	



PORTSMOUTH(England):

Sunset on 1 Sep 2008 (29 Sha'ban) @	7:49 pm
Moon Age @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	46hr 51min
Moonset on 1 Sep 2008 @	8:02 pm
Time Duration	13 min
Elongation @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	24° 20'
Crescent altitude @ sunset on 1 Sep 2008	1° 34'

Naked eye sighting is **NOT POSSIBLE** on Monday 1 September 2008 evening.

PARIS(France):

Sunset on 1 Sep 2008 (29 Sha'ban) @	8:32 pm
Moon Age @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	46hr 34min
Moonset on 1 Sep 2008 @	8:50 pm
Time Duration	18 min
Elongation @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	24° 10'
Crescent altitude @ sunset on 1 Sep 2008	2° 17'

Naked eye sighting is **NOT POSSIBLE** on Monday 1 September 2008 evening.

ZURICH(Switzerland):

Sunset on 1 Sep 2008 (29 Sha'ban) @	7:27 pm
Moon Age @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	46hr 29min
Moonset on 1 Sep 2008 @	7:34 pm
Time Duration	7 min
Elongation @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	24° 11'
Crescent altitude @ sunset on 1 Sep 2008	0° 39'

Naked eye sighting is **NOT POSSIBLE** on Monday 1 September 2008 evening.

STOCKHOLM(Sweden):

Sunset on 1 Sep 2008 (29 Sha'ban) @	7:49 pm
Moon Age @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	45hr 51min
Moonset on 1 Sep 2008 @	7:36 pm
Time Duration	-13 min
Elongation @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	23° 57'
Crescent altitude @ sunset on 1 Sep 2008	-1° 47'

Naked eye sighting is **NOT POSSIBLE** on Monday 1 September 2008 evening.

As expected, there was no reported sighting in any of these locations. In all cases the crescent altitude is well below even the most liberal criteria for possible sighting. According to most astronomers crescent cannot be sighted when the crescent altitude is less than 5° at sunset. Our community data collection over the years also suggests that there has not been a single occasion when crescent has been sighted with the crescent altitude at sunset has been under 5°.



Sighting using optical aid

According to the rulings of His Eminence, the use of optical aid is only acceptable for locating the crescent. However establishing it will need the crescent to be visible with naked eye.

The following is an excerpt from the questions sent to Najaf for further clarification of the said ruling.

Question

Some scholars espouse that there is not a single *riwāyah* that specifies the requirement of sighting the crescent by naked eye. What is your Eminence's expert opinion regarding the use of optical aid like:

- a) Low level binoculars
- b) Powerful binoculars
- c) Telescopes.

Answer

'Crescents were made for people to tell time' – as the Holy Quran stipulates. A crescent that can only be seen by aids cannot help the general public in telling time. Based on this, there is no consideration for a crescent sighted using optical aids like telescopes, etc. **(Response to questions seeking further clarifications from His Eminence office in Najaf, Original stamped copy available.)**

In addition to the above, there is a strong suggestion to the above view in his book 'A Code Of Practice For Muslims In The West'

Question

During certain months, it is declared that the sighting has been proven according to some religious scholars in some Eastern countries. This is based on the testimony of those who have sighted the new moon. Such declarations are usually coupled with the following facts:

- a. The witnesses who sighted the moon and who number around thirty, for example, are scattered in various cities such as 2 in Isfahan, 3 in Qum, 2 in Yazd, 4 in Kuwait, 5 in Bahrain, 2 in Ahsā', and 6 in Syria, etc.
- b. The sky was clear in a number of cities in the West, and the believers went out in the attempt to sight the moon; and there was nothing preventing the sighting.
- c. **The observatories in England announced that it was impossible to sight the new moon that evening in England except by using a telescope; and that its**



sighting with the naked eye would be possible only in the following night. So, what is the ruling in such a case? Please guide us, may Allāh reward you.

Answer

The criterion is the satisfaction of the individual himself [1] about the actual sighting [of the new moon] or [2] the proof of sighting without any counter claim. **In the case mentioned above, satisfaction is not normally achieved concerning the appearance of the new moon on the horizon in such a way that it could have been sighted by the naked eye. On the contrary, one is satisfied that it was not sighted** and that the testimony [of sightings in the Eastern cities] is based on illusion and error in sight. And Allāh knows the best. **(A Code Of Practice for Muslims in the West)** (<http://www.najaf.org/english/book/5/>)

Considering the data above, even if sighting was possible with optical aid it would not be sufficient in establishing the crescent, because crescent was not visible **with a naked eye** on 1st September 2008 in any of the locations stated above.

Sighting in Southern Europe

The following is the data for Madrid, Spain where there was clear visibility subject to perfect conditions.

MADRID(Spain):

RAMADHAAN 1429AH

Astronomical New Moon on 30 Aug 2008 @	7:59 pm GMT
Sunset on 1 Sep 2008 (29 Sha'ban) @	8:46 pm
Moon Age @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	46hr 49min
Moonset on 1 Sep 2008 @	9:21 pm
Time Duration	34 min
Elongation @ Sunset on 1 Sep 2008	24° 9'
Crescent altitude @ sunset on 1 Sep 2008	5° 38'

Naked eye sighting is **POSSIBLE** on Monday 1 September 2008 evening.

However this region could not be taken into consideration due to the range allowed by his Eminence in his following clarification

115.Question

If the **new moon** is sighted in the East, does it apply to us also in the West? And if it is sighted in America, does it apply to Europe also?



Answer

If the new moon is sighted in the East, it also applies to the West **as long as the latitude of the two locations are not greatly further away from one another**. If the new moon is sighted in the West, it does not apply to the East unless it is proven—even by the moon staying on the first [Western] horizon for the length of time that is longer than the difference between the sunset of the two locations. [For example, if the sunset in the Eastern city was half an hour before the Western city where the moon was sighted, and the moon stays on the horizon longer than half an hour—the Eastern city can follow the moon sighted in the Western city.]

Minhāju 's-Sāliheen, it says: “The new moon is proven through the knowledge acquired by sighting or recurring reports etc., and through credible reports of its sighting, etc.” In ruling No. 1044, it says: “If the new moon is sighted in a city, it is sufficient for other cities, provided they share the same horizon, in the sense that the actual sighting in the first city would necessarily be followed with the sighting in the second city if there were no barriers like clouds, fog, mountains, etc.”

In the light of what has been quoted, the following questions arise:

116.Question

Would the sighting of the new moon in cities in the East like Iran, Ahsā', Qatif [both in Arabia], other countries in the Gulf, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon necessarily be followed by its sighting in Western countries like England, France and Germany if there were no barriers like clouds and fog?

Answer

Yes, the sighting of the new moon in an area would necessarily be followed—provided there were no barriers—in places which are located to its west **as long as they are not far apart on the latitude lines**. (*A Code Of Practice for Muslims in the West*) (<http://www.najaf.org/english/book/5/>)

Further clarification stated the range of 880 kilometres to be the maximum distance in considering the establishment of the crescent.

سؤال: إذا ثبت الهلال في الشرق، فهل يثبت عندنا في الغرب؟ وإذا ثبت في أمريكا فهل يثبت في أوروبا كذلك؟

جواب: إذا ثبت الهلال في الشرق فهو ثابتٌ للغرب أيضاً، مع عدم ابتعاد المكانين في خطوط العرض كثيراً. وأما إذا ثبت في الغرب فلا يقتضي ثبوته في الشرق، إلا مع تقارب الأفقين في خطوط العرض ولم يكن بحسب الطول الجغرافي بعيداً عنه بأزيد من (880 كم). (www.najaf.org/arabic/book/6/).

Madrid is too far south with a distance of over 1200 kilometres, and could not be considered in the same horizon based on the above.



Therefore with no possibility of sighting with a naked eye in our horizon astronomically together with no credible reports of sighting, The Hilal Advisory Team concluded 2nd September 2008 to be the 30th Sha'baan 1429. With the early announcement from the website of Imam Ali (AS) Foundation in London, (www.najaf.org), The Hilal Advisory Team despite confidence in their deductions sought further clarifications from Najaf via Qum and advised mo'amineen to consider the following day as "Yaumu Shak" pending response from Agha's office.

Following response and guidance received from Agha's office in Najaf via Qum, a subsequent statement was issued by The Hilal Advisory Team of COEJ confirming that Wednesday, 3rd September 2008 as 1st Ramadhan 1429 for the Muqallideen of Seyyid Al Sistani.

Followers of Syed Khoei (RA)

For those who can still follow the late Grand Ayatollah Sayyid al-Khoei (may Allah bless his soul), based on the principle of "*sharing of the night*" to which he subscribed to, The Hilal Advisory Team received confirmed reports of sighting from South America on Sunday, 31st August 2008 which was also strongly possible as the New Crescent were high at sunset on Sunday 31st August 2008 in the South American region. Therefore, Monday 1st September 2008 was 1st Ramadhan 1429 for followers of Syed Khoei.

**The Hilal Advisory Team
The Council of European Jamaat
Friday, 3rd Ramadhan 1429 , 5th September 2008**