

The 1984 Moon Sighting Criteria Review

A critical analysis by Eng. Qamar Uddin, under the supervision of the ICOUK Ulama Panel (20/9/2026)

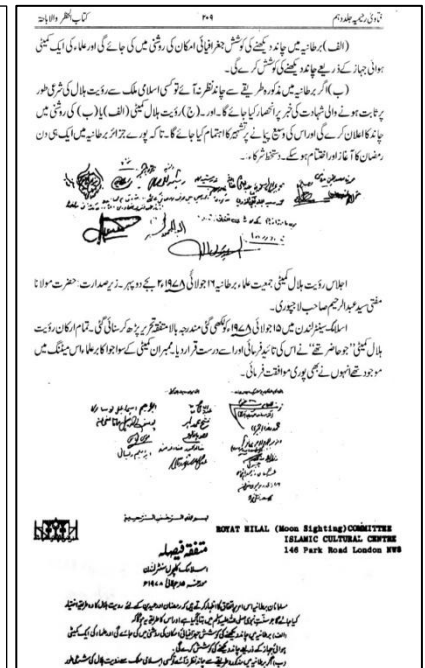
Over 350 senior Ulama from the UK and abroad attended a London conference in 1984 and agreed that all efforts should be made to sight the crescent moon on the UK horizon when there is a **geographical possibility**, as endorsed by the Grand Mufti of India, Mufti Abdur Raheem Lajpuri (RH), as stated below:

Summary of 1984 UK Moon Sighting Criteria: Dated 15 July 1978 / The Muslims of Britain express their agreement that the method of sighting the crescent for Ramadan and the two Eids will be adopted, which is stated in the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The method will be as follows.

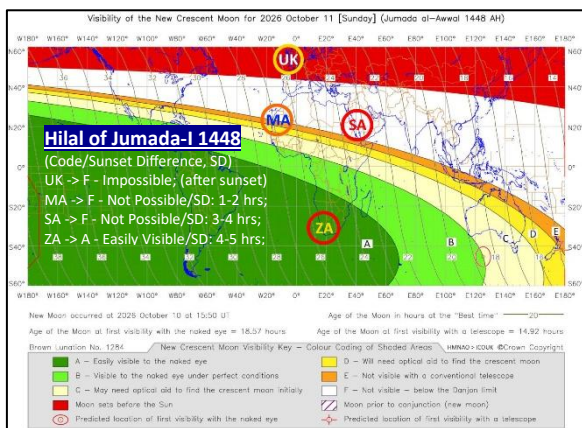
- An attempt to sight the crescent in the UK will be made in the light of **geographical possibility**, and a committee of scholars will attempt to sight the crescent by airplane [to go above the clouds – Editor].
- If the crescent is not sighted in Britain by the above method, then reliance will be placed on the news of a Sharia-compliant testimony of sighting the crescent from a [nearby] Islamic country. [Note: [Fatawa from 2022 advises following UK-only](#)].
- The Royat-e-Hilal Committee will announce the crescent in the light of (a) or (b) above and will arrange for its wide publicity. So that there will be a single sighting in the whole of the British Isles to begin and end the month of Ramadan.

ROYAT HILAL (Moon Sighting) COMMITTEE, ISLAMIC CULTURAL CENTRE,
146 Park Road. London NW8 / Unanimous Decision (Dated: 15 July 1978)

Ref: [Fatwa Rahimiyah \(v.10/p.209\)](#) by Mufti Abdur Raheem Lajpuri (RH)



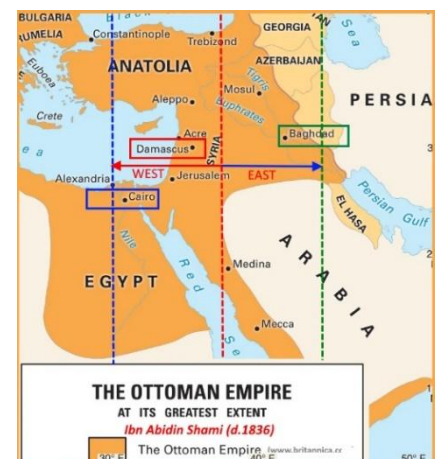
If the moon was not sighted (when it was possible), then and only then should the news from a nearby Muslim country be used, if it arrives in a Shariah-compliant way [provided it does not break the calendar rule of 6 x 29-day and 6 x 30-day months, as the case in all equatorial countries].



On Sunday, 11 October 2026, there is no possibility of sighting the moon on the UK horizon (as it's *moonset-before-sunset*). Hence, it's **against the principles of Shariah** (as stated above/see also *Tafseer Ibn Kathir 91:1-2 & 9:37*) to follow foreign news, such as from South Africa, Saudi Arabia, or Morocco (which may also lead to 28-31 days month, as explained on [the ICOUK website](#)).

Therefore, we urge all UK Muslims to stop following far-distant countries by **taking old Fiqh texts out of context** for a city (from the 14th century, as noted in *Fath al-Qadeer commentary of al-Hidaayah*¹) and causing confusion and divisions!

- The above statement (often quoted from Ibn Abidin Shami) from 18th-century Damascus (Syria) needs to be considered against the context or communication methods of that time and the furthest travel distance of 'sharing the night' (i.e., sunset to moonset)?
- What was the furthest distance from which Damascus city received news from the East (Baghdad) or the West (Cairo)? It was most probably from within the Damascus city borders (as stated in *Fath al-Qadeer* texts)!
- Furthermore, the original quotation is disputed as being from *Zahir Al-Riwayat* of Imam Abu Hanifah, as it's not found in any of his books (Ref: [Global Sighting is not proven in Hanafi Madhab](#), by Mufti Abdul Malek)



Conclusion: It is not permissible for UK Muslims to follow foreign countries like South Africa, Saudi Arabia, or Morocco.

¹ وَإِذَا ثَبَتَ فِي مِصْرَ لَرَمَ سَائِرَ النَّاسِ قِيْلُزَمُ أَهْلَ الْمَشْرِقِ بِرُؤْيَا أَهْلِ الْمَغْرِبِ فِي ظَاهِرِ الْمَذْهَبِ وَقِيلَ: يَخْتَلَفُ بِاخْتِلَافِ الْمَطَالِيعِ. (فتح القدیر)

If it is proven in a city, it is binding on all people, so the people of the East are bound to follow the sighting of the people of the West, according to the apparent doctrine. It was also said that it differs according to the difference of the horizons. (*Fath al-Qadeer commentary of al-Hidaayah*!)