

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) ON MOON SIGHTING

25 March 2022

Asalaamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

WHO DECIDES ON THE MOON SIGHTING?

It is the Hilal Committee in consultation with the Ulema Board of NZ

WHO IS ON THE HILAL COMMITTEE?

The current members of the Hilal committee include:

- Sk. Mohammed Amir (Chairperson)
- Sk. Mohammad Anwar Sahib
- Sk. Khalil Nadat
- Sk. Alaa Mubarak
- Dr Anisur Rahman (technical advisor)
- Br Jasim Adam (technical advisor)
- Br Arif Syam (technical advisor)
- IWCNZ Representative (tbc)

WHAT IS THE MOONSIGHTING PROCESS?

STEP 1: PREPARING FOR MOONSIGHTING

- The Hilal Committee has a list of contacts from each Muslim organisation throughout New Zealand (Please check you are on the contact list by sending email to info@fianz.com).
- During the last week of each lunar month, the Hilal Committee sends a notice to those on the contact list and as well as the Secretaries of Local Associations/ Trusts advising them that the 29th will fall on such day/date and requests that Muslims in their area look for the new crescent.
- Sighting for the new moon will take place within the timeframe of visibility specified by scientific and astronomical calculation.

STEP 2: COLLATING INFORMATION

- The FIANZ office remains open on the 29th of the month and the Chairman of the Hilal Committee is in contact with the office to obtain updates regarding the sighting of the new crescent. The FIANZ office number is: 04-3878023.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) ON MOON SIGHTING

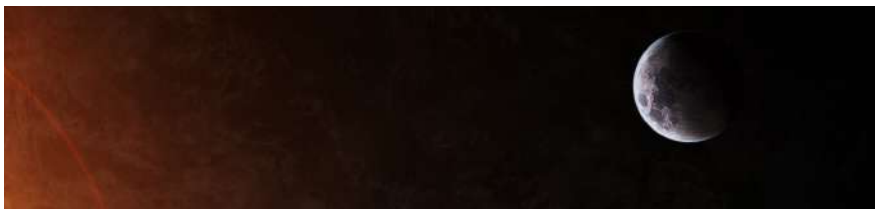
- The FIANZ Hilal Committee shall work towards issuing a confirmed announcement within a 3-hour period from the time of sunset on the day of sighting. (Unless exceptional circumstances arise).
- It should be noted that previously we would wait until very late in the evening however the community requested that the announcement be made as soon as possible after sunset.
- If no information regarding sightings is received, the Chairperson shall contact the Hilal Committee designated contacts around the country.

STEP 3: CONFIRMATION

- If no sighting is reported as a result of these enquiries, an announcement shall be issued on the FIANZ website and via FIANZ social media within a 3-hour period after sunset advising the community that the current month shall consist of 30 days.
- If a sighting is reported to the FIANZ office, the Chairperson of the Hilal Committee undertakes verification in consultation with the other Committee members. At this time all necessary Shariah rulings, scientific, and astronomical information are taken into full consideration in reaching a decision.

STEP 4: ADVISING THE COMMUNITY

- Once a decision has been made, an announcement will be issued on the FIANZ website and via FIANZ social media within 3-hour period after sunset advising the community about the sighting of the new moon.
- A circular is also sent to those on the contact list, local associations/trusts and our Pacific neighbours.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) ON MOON SIGHTING

DO YOU CONSULT ANY OTHER COUNTRIES OR ORGANISATIONS?

The Hilal Committee has decided in its meeting held on 17 March 2022 that it will rely primarily on the moonsighting from within New Zealand only.

Reference may be made to sightings confirmed by the Fiji Muslim League, as Fiji is considered to be in the same time and visibility zone as New Zealand.

Acceptance of any sighting from Fiji shall be at the sole discretion of the NZ Hilal Committee who will consider all necessary Shariah rulings, scientific and astronomical information. These will be taken into full consideration in reaching a decision.

WHY DO YOU CONSULT THE FIJI MUSLIM LEAGUE?

This has been a historic tradition over the last 42 years and is based on the fact that Fiji is located in virtually the same longitude as New Zealand. This means the moon sighting would occur at about the same time.

NZ longitude = 174.885971 (approximate) and
Fiji longitude = 178.0650 (approximate)

"Fiji has Muslims spread throughout the country which enhances chances of local sightings."



TELL US MORE ABOUT THE FIJI MUSLIM LEAGUE AND OUR COMMUNITY IN NZ?

We have a long standing relationship of cooperation and close support on a wide variety of matters. With respect to moon sighting we consult and complement each other. However, it should be noted that each country makes their own independent decision. A few years ago, whilst we sighted the moon in NZ, Fiji decided not to follow NZ and vice versa. So ultimately each country makes their own decision and we mutually respect this approach.

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WHO ELSE DO YOU CONSULT ?

As a result of community recommendations, we also have a small technical cohort who advises us on such matters as the astronomical status of the moon. They utilise official astronomical information and relate that to us.

DOES THIS MEAN YOU ARE USING SCIENTIFIC METHODS AND NOT THE SUNNAH?

We follow the sunnah but we also consider scientific information. This is consistent with Islamic principles.

WHAT IS THE ASTRONOMICAL AND SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE?

The Hilal Committee has been tracking hilal sightings in New Zealand for several decades and has records of every Islamic month since 2009. The statistics we have captured align with agreed-upon scientific evidence for hilal visibility across the world. The general minimum criteria required for the hilal to be visible is as follows:

1. The moon needs to have an angular separation (elongation) from the sun of around 10 degrees in order to have enough reflection of sunlight to be seen from the Earth.
2. At the time of sunset, the moon needs to be 7 to 8 degrees above the horizon in order for it to be outside of the sun's glare.
3. Points 1 and 2 above will usually mean that the moon needs to set at least 40 minutes after the sun and
4. Normally be at least 18 or so hours old before it can be seen.

It is worth noting that the accepted world record for the youngest moon being sighted by the naked eye was just over 15 hours and 30 minutes. And the world record for the youngest moon sighted using a telescope was 11 hours and 40 minutes.

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HOW LONG DOES THE MOONSIGHTING PROCESS TAKE?

The FIANZ Hilal Committee shall work towards issuing a confirmed announcement within a 3-hour period from the time of sunset on the day of sighting. (Unless exceptional circumstances arise).

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WILL WE BE ABLE TO WATCH THE MOONSIGHTING PROCESS TAKING PLACE?

You are invited to follow a live stream of the Hilal sighting on 29 Shaban/Ramadhan on the FIANZ Facebook page.

WHO CAN I TALK TO IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WOULD LIKE FURTHER INFORMATION?

FIANZ welcomes constructive input and any communication regarding this matter may be referred to: Sheikh Mohammed Amir, Chairperson, FIANZ Hilal Committee, Email: info@fianz.com

MOONSIGHTING PROCEDURE IN NZ

- The Federation of Islamic Association of New Zealand (FIANZ) is the umbrella national organisation responsible for making decisions and announcing to the Muslims of Aotearoa New Zealand matters related to the appearance of the new crescent (Hilal) and the start of the Islamic Months.
- FIANZ delivers this responsibility through its Hilal Committee.
- The Hilal Committee consists of members who have religious, scientific and/or astronomical knowledge to carry out the task.
- The current members of the Hilal Committee include:
 - o Sk. Mohammed Amir (Chairperson)
 - o Sk. Mohammad Anwar Sahib
 - o Sk. Khalil Nadat
 - o Sk. Alaa Mubarak
 - o Dr Anisur Rahman (Technical Advisor)
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- If no sighting is reported as a result of these enquiries, an announcement shall be issued on the FIANZ website and via FIANZ social media within a 3-hour period after sunset advising the community that the current month shall consist of 30 days.
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- The Hilal Committee has decided in its meeting held on 17 March 2022 that it will rely primarily on the moonsighting from within New Zealand only.
- Reference may be made to sightings confirmed by the Fiji Muslim League, as Fiji is considered to be in the same time and visibility zone as New Zealand.
- Acceptance of any sighting from Fiji shall be at the sole discretion of the NZ Hilal Committee who will consider all necessary Shariah rulings, scientific and astronomical information. These will be taken into full consideration in reaching a decision.

وصلى الله وسلم على نبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين



The Federation of
Islamic Associations
of New Zealand (Inc.)

اتحاد الجمعيات الإسلامية النيوزيلندية

SINCE 1979

MOONSIGHTING PROCEDURE IN NZ (INFOGRAPHICS)

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FIANZ HILAL
COMMITTEE

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FIANZ.COM



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RAMADAN
MUBARAK