



### The third question of Fatwa no. 319

**Q 3: It is impossible to see the new moon with the naked eye before 30 hours of its birth. After this period, it is impossible to see it because of the weather conditions. If this situation is taken into consideration, is it possible for the inhabitants of England to use astronomical information for this country in calculating the probable time of sighting the new moon and the beginning of the month of Ramadan, or must we see the new moon (with naked eye) before starting to fast the blessed month of Ramadan?**

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**A:** It is permissible to make use of observation instruments to sight the new moon, but it is not permissible to rely on astrological sciences in confirming the beginning or end of the month of Ramadan. Allah has not legislated it either in His Book or in the Sunnah of his Prophet (peace be upon him). Rather, Allah has legislated for us to establish the beginning and end of Ramadan through sighting the new moon; to begin Sawm by seeing the new moon of Ramadan and to end Sawm by seeing the new moon of Shawwal and to gather to perform the Prayer of 'Eid-ul-Fitr (the Festival of Breaking the Fast). Allah has made the new moons to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for performing Hajj. So, it is not permissible for a Muslim to use any other method to determine the times for acts of worship such as fasting of Ramadan, celebrating the Two 'Eids, going on Hajj, fasting as a Kaffarah (expiation) for killing by mistake or for committing Zihar (a man likening his wife to an unmarriageable relative) and so on. Allah (Exalted be He) says: **«So whoever of you sights (the crescent on the first night of) the month (of Ramadan i.e. is present at his home), he must observe Saum (fasts) that month»** Allah (Exalted be He) also says: **«They ask you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) about the new moons. Say: These are signs to mark fixed periods of time for mankind and for the pilgrimage.»** The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: **«Start Sawm (fast) when you see it (the new moon of Ramadan) and stop Sawm when you see it (the new moon of Shawwal); but if the sky is overcast (and you cannot see it), complete the number of days (of Sha'ban to thirty days).»** On this basis, it is obligatory upon those who do not see the new moon in their sighting place where the sky is cloudy or clear to complete thirty days of Sha'ban, unless it is seen in another place. If the new moon is confirmed in another place, they have to follow the decision of the Muslim ruler of their country; whether to start Sawm (Fasting) or not, because his view in this issue puts an end to any disagreement among the Fuqaha' (Muslim jurists) concerning the issue of different locations of sighting the new moon.

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If their ruler is a non-Muslim, they should act according to the ruling issued by the concerned Islamic center in their country; whether to fast following the sighting of the new moon in another location or not to start fasting, considering the disagreement in different locations of sighting the new moon.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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**Source: Fatwas of the Permanent Committee**