

Your fasting times are wrong

Why it is not permissible to follow the *salah* timetable devised by Hizbul Ulama UK

Mufti Sajid Patel, 11 August 2011, London (muftisajid@hotmail.co.uk)

For the past 20 years, a large number of *masajid* in London (especially in and around Newham) and in Lancashire have been following a *salah* timetable devised by Hizbul Ulama UK allegedly based on a series of “observations” (*mushahahadah*) in Blackburn, Lancashire in 1988. On the basis of these “observations”, Hizbul Ulama UK devised a set of times for all *masajid* in the UK. These times are however inconsistent with Hizbul Ulama UK’s own “observations”, completely different from innumerable observations performed by *ulama* in the UK and around the world, and inconsistent with scholarly consensus on the subject throughout the history of Islam. After carefully studying the timetable, senior *muftiyaan-e-kiraam* in the UK and abroad have condemned it as unreliable and the result of a lack of understanding, expertise and experience.

In this leaflet we will explore a few of these errors and show that the Hizbul Ulama UK timetable does not match their own “observations”. These and other errors are not a simple a matter of differ-

ence of opinion, but render the timetable unequivocally void.

First we need to define *fajr*. There are two opinions for the start of *fajr*:

1) First speck. This is the time the first glimpse of light is seen. The *fuqaha* have overwhelmingly preferred this view for the start of *fajr*.

2) *Tabayyun*. This is the time when white light has spread across the horizon. Very few *fuqaha* have preferred this view.

There is no third opinion for *fajr*.

Hizbul Ulama UK vs Hizbul Ulama UK

A major issue with the Hizbul Ulama UK timetable is that their published timetable does not match their own “observations” of first speck or *tabayyun*.

Look at these examples of “observations” in May (see Figures 1 and 2):

May 15th

Observed first speck to sunrise: 1h 55m

Observed *tabayyun* to sunrise: 1h 33m

Time given to *masajid*: 1h 48 min

May 21st

Observed first speck to sunrise: 2h 22m

Observed *tabayyun* to sunrise: 1h 32m

Time given to *masaajid*: 1h 51 min

May 25th

Observed first speck to sunrise: 2h 24m

Observed *tabayyun* to sunrise: 1h 44m

Time given to *masaajid*: 1h 54 min

Here neither first speck or *tabayyun* are given to *masaajid* to use for *fajr* but rather a completely random time. This is not the time of *fajr* according to any jurist or opinion in any of the four schools of thought.

This trend continues. In June Hizbul Ulama UK only managed two observations:

June 6th

Observed first speck to sunrise: 2h 58 m

Observed *tabayyun* to sunrise: 1h 43 m

Time given to *masaajid*: 2h

June 13th

First speck to sunrise not seen

Observed *tabayyun* to sunrise: 1h 54m

Time given to *masaajid*: 2h 4min

In the month of July Hizbul Ulama UK did not manage any successful observations (as with January).

Only two successful observations were managed in August (see Figures 1 and 2):

August 7th

Observed first speck to sunrise: 1h 55 m

Observed *tabayyun* to sunrise: 1h 23 m

Time given to *masaajid*: 1h 43m

August 16th

Observed first speck to sunrise: 1h 54m

Observed *tabayyun* to sunrise: 1h 24m

Time given to *masaajid*: 1h 40min

These two August times currently form the basis of the fasting times used by many *masaajid* in London.

Almighty Allah tells us in the Quran, “Eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread”. (surah Al-Baqarah 2:187)

Hizbul Ulama UK say they “observed” the white thread of dawn becoming distinct from the black thread at 1 hour 54 minutes before sunrise on the 16th of August, but then went on to recommend that people carry on eating for another (completely random) 14 minutes! With this, Hizbul Ulama UK have through a lack of understanding and expertise in this field, invented something new which has never before been approved by any jurist in the history of our religion.

Hizbul Ulama UK vs Ulama

Hizbul Ulama UK claim that their timetable was agreed by *ulama* at a meeting in Blackburn in 1988. They fail however to mention that many *ulama* subsequently retracted their support and that the method of construction they described to the *ulama* was not used.

In their book “Fajr and Isha Times and Twilight” (p112-113) they write: “At this meeting the following was agreed: For May and June, *fajr* beginning time be set at the recorded time of ‘*tabayyun*’ as is permitted by *muftiyan-e-kiram*.”

This shows that Hizbul Ulama UK had agreed to produce a timetable for May and June in which *fajr* was according to “*tabayyun*”. However, we’ve seen that this was not honoured. In May and June, neither first speck or *tabayyun* was used.

Figure 1: The individual raw "observations" published by Hizbul Ulama UK

مشاہدہ کے مطابق وقت فجر
ہیک بزن شہر - لنکاشائر - یو کے

تاریخ	وقت فجر	وقت مشاہدہ	وقت تبایون	وقت نماز	وقت صبح	وقت ظہر	وقت عصر	وقت شام	وقت رات	وقت فجر
۲ مئی	۵-۲۲	۲-۲۱	۲-۵۲	۱-۲۴	۲-۵۴	۲-۵۲	۲-۲۱	۵-۲۲	۲-۲۱	۲-۲۱
۲ مئی	۵-۲۶	۲-۱۹	۲-۴	۱-۲۲	۲-۲۳	۲-۴	۲-۱۹	۵-۲۶	۲-۱۹	۲-۱۹
۱۰ مئی	۵-۱۸	۱-۵۰	۲-۲۸	۱-۲۴	۲-۲۱	۲-۲۸	۱-۵۰	۵-۱۸	۱-۵۰	۱-۵۰
۱۵ مئی	۵-۹	۲-۱۴	۲-۱۴	۱-۵۲	۲-۱۴	۲-۱۴	۲-۱۴	۵-۹	۲-۱۴	۲-۱۴
۲۰ مئی	۵-۱	۲-۳	۲-۳	۱-۵۸	۲-۳	۲-۳	۲-۳	۵-۱	۲-۳	۲-۳
۲۱ مئی	۵-۰	۲-۱	۲-۱	۱-۵۹	۲-۱	۲-۱	۲-۱	۵-۰	۲-۱	۲-۱
۲۵ مئی	۴-۵۴	۲-۵۲	۲-۵۲	۲-۲	۲-۵۲	۲-۵۲	۲-۵۲	۴-۵۴	۲-۵۲	۲-۵۲
۶ جون	۴-۴۳	۲-۲۲	۲-۲۲	۲-۲۱	۲-۲۲	۲-۲۲	۲-۲۲	۴-۴۳	۲-۲۲	۲-۲۲
۱۲ جون	۴-۲۹	۲-۹	۲-۹	۲-۳۰	۲-۹	۲-۹	۲-۹	۴-۲۹	۲-۹	۲-۹

جولائی کے مہینہ میں مشاہدہ نہیں کیوجہ سے نہ ہوگا

تاریخ	وقت فجر	وقت مشاہدہ	وقت تبایون	وقت نماز	وقت صبح	وقت ظہر	وقت عصر	وقت شام	وقت رات	وقت فجر
۴ اگست	۵-۳۲	۲-۳۱	۲-۲	۱-۴۰	۲-۵۲	۲-۲	۲-۳۱	۵-۳۲	۲-۳۱	۲-۳۱
۱۶ اگست	۵-۳۹	۲-۱۲	۲-۳۶	۱-۱۶	۲-۱۶	۲-۳۶	۲-۱۲	۵-۳۹	۲-۱۲	۲-۱۲

"Observed" first speck to sunrise times

"Observed" tabayyun to sunrise times

"Observation" date

An example:
On May 21st Hizbul Ulama UK "observed" the time between first speck and sunrise as 2h 22m, and the time between *tabayyun* and sunrise as 1h 32m. However a time of 1h 51m was given to *masaajid*.

An example:
On August 16 Hizbul Ulama UK "observed" the time between first speck and sunrise as 1h 54m, and the time between *tabayyun* and sunrise as 1h 24m. However a time of 1h 40m was given to *masaajid*.

TIME TABLE OF SUBHA SADIQ IN UK

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	1-40	1-40	1-40	1-35	1-41	1-57	1-59	1-45	1-35	1-31	1-40	1-45
2	-	-	-	-	-	1-58	1-58	-	-	-	-	-
3	-	-	-	-	1-42	-	-	1-44	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-	-	1-59	1-57	-	-	-	1-41	-
5	-	-	-	-	1-43	-	-	1-43	-	1-32	-	-
6	-	-	-	-	-	2-00	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	-	-	-	-	1-44	-	1-56	-	-	-	1-42	-
8	-	-	-	-	-	2-01	-	1-42	-	1-33	-	-
9	-	-	-	-	1-45	-	1-55	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	-	-	2-02	-	-	-	-	1-43	-
11	-	-	-	-	1-46	-	-	1-41	-	1-34	-	-
12	-	-	-	-	-	2-03	1-54	-	-	-	-	-
13	-	-	-	-	1-47	2-04	-	-	-	-	1-44	-
14	-	-	-	-	-	-	1-53	1-40	-	1-35	-	-
15	-	-	-	-	1-48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1-34	-	1-45	1-44
17	-	-	-	-	1-49	-	1-52	1-39	-	1-36	-	-
18	-	-	-	1-36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	-	-	-	-	1-50	-	1-51	-	1-33	-	-	-
20	-	-	1-39	-	-	2-03	-	1-38	-	-	-	1-43
21	-	-	-	1-37	1-51	-	-	-	-	1-37	-	-
22	-	-	1-38	-	-	-	1-50	-	1-32	-	-	-
23	-	-	-	-	1-52	2-02	-	1-37	-	1-38	-	-
24	-	-	-	1-38	1-53	-	1-49	-	-	-	-	-
25	-	-	-	-	1-54	-	-	-	1-31	-	-	-
26	-	-	1-37	-	-	2-01	1-48	1-36	-	1-39	-	1-41
27	-	-	-	1-39	1-55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
28	-	-	1-36	-	-	2-00	1-47	-	1-30	-	-	-
29	-	-	-	-	1-56	-	-	1-35	-	1-40	-	1-40
30	-	-	-	1-40	-	-	1-46	-	-	-	-	-
31	-	-	1-35	-	1-57	1-59	-	-	-	-	-	-

Times given to masaajid in the UK

Figure 2: The published times given by Hizbul Ulama UK to masaajid

Source: Hizbul Ulama

Not only have Hizbul Ulama UK made a mistake in the construction of their timetable, but they have also erred in their raw “observations” of first speck and *tabayyun*.

A *fatwa* issued by Darul Uloom Karachi and signed by Mufti Taqi Uthmani, comments on this thus: “these errors (in the Hizbul Ulama UK times) came about due to a lack of knowledge with regards to *subh-sadiq*.” (13/6/1411)

A *fatwa* against the use of the Hizbul Ulama timetable was also issued by Mufti Ismail Barkodrawi (chief *mufti* of Darul Uloom Kanthaaria).

Indeed, other publicly published observations by independent groups of *ulama* in the same area have confirmed that the raw “observations” of Hizbul Ulama UK are mistaken and likely the result of a lack of understanding, expertise and experience.

Did Mufti Mahmood Hasan give leeway to follow the Hizbul Ulama timetable?

No. The opposite is true. Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi, in a meeting with *ulama* in the UK, set *fajr* time at 18°. He stated that times which go as low as 12° (such as those of Hizbul Ulama UK) are “completely wrong.”

What about Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi?

No. The *fatwa* in Imdadul Fatawa (v1 p100), referenced (wrongly) by Hizbul Ulama UK in defense of their work, is actually about observing moonset times on days in which moonset corresponds with *subh-sadiq* in Thaana Bahwan (which incidentally matches 18°). Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi has never allowed con-

structing a timetable by making random observations and arbitrarily interpolating them in a way that the original “observations” do not remain. Moreover, in Imdadul Fatawa (v1 p113) he recommends 18° *fajr* to a questioner from Scotland.

So which timetable should I follow?

Not only is it compulsory for every individual to know how to pray, but it is also compulsory for every individual to know when to pray. It is not sufficient to rely on the timetable issued by our local *masjid*.

Ulama around the world have, after innumerable observations, said that *fajr* enters when the sun is 18° below the horizon. Mufti Taqi Uthmani has said in a *fatwa* published on albalagh.net that, “After a good deal of research and continuing observation my father Mufti Muhammad Shafi as well as other 99% of the *ulama* in Pakistan and India are unanimous on the point that the time of *isha* and *fajr* begins when the sun is 18° below the horizon.”

In the UK, 18° *fajr* is used in almost all the *masajid* in Leicester, Batley, and Dewsbury. It is used by senior *ulama* like Mufti Sacha, Mufti Shabbir (Darul Uloom Bury), Mufti Ismail Kacholwi (Bradford), and Maulana Saleem Dhorat (Leicester).

This is not only a contemporary opinion but one which has been the staple of scholars for as long as we can verify.

Mufti Shafi Uthmani, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi, Maulana Khaleel Ahmed Saahaaranpuri, Sheikh ul Hind, Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi, Allamah Shami and many others have set *fajr* at 18°.

May Almighty Allah guide us all to the straight path. *Ameen*.