

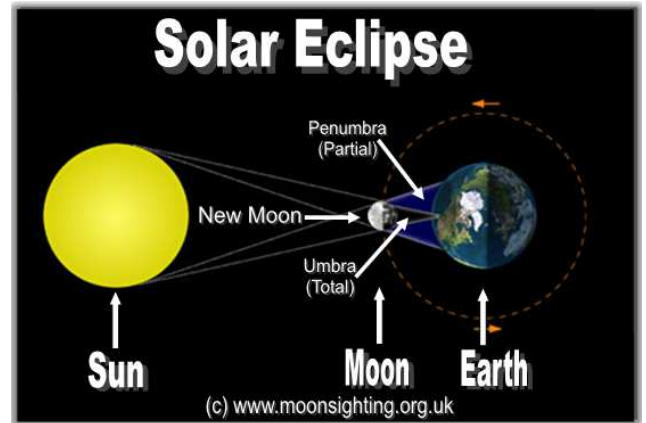
Solar eclipse proves the inaccuracy of the Saudi Ummul Qura calendar

Report by Qamar Uddin



On Sunday 3rd November 2013 there was a total solar eclipse in Africa and a partial one in the Middle East, where many thousands of people witnessed the birth of the moon by the human eye, without relying on astronomical calculations. It is well understood by the astronomy experts that the visibility of the moon is not possible in the same evening when there is a solar eclipse, as the moon is still in the hidden phase, called *Mahaq* in Arabic. A solar eclipse is visible when the sun, moon and the earth comes in one plane during daylight hours, as shown in the diagram below.

It is also well-known in Islamic history that there was a solar eclipse in Madinah at the time of Prophet Muhammad (*Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam*) in 10 AH when his son Ibrahim (*Radhi Allahu Anho*) died. This event happened on Monday 29th Shawwal 10 AH (27th January 632 AD) and the day of Dhul Qaidah 10 AH was started a day after and *not* on the same day as the solar eclipse. These dates were very accurately recorded by the Muslim historians, making the date of the Farewell Hajj to be on Friday 9th Dhul Hijjah 10 AH as mentioned in numerous authentic Ahadith.



Therefore, it is proven from the indisputable scientific data and also from the Islamic history that an Islamic lunar month cannot start from the evening of a solar eclipse under any circumstances, as the moon cannot be visible after sunset (in the same region). On 3rd November 2013, a Saudi astronomer, Khaled Al-Ajaji, from Riyadh has also photographed the moon, setting with the eclipsed sun as published on the ICOP website (see photo below).



However, the Saudi Ummul Qura calendar has started the lunar month from the same evening as the solar eclipse, since the condition of the criteria (i.e. moon set after sunset on Makkah horizon) was satisfied, even though the moon was impossible to be visible to the human eye under any circumstances. This incident proved beyond any doubt that the Saudi Ummul Qura calendar does *not* match the visibility of the moon, which has been falsely promoted as a religious calendar by some people in the UK and abroad due to their lack of understandings in these technical matters.

It is with a great pleasure (and relief) to advise our readers that the Riyadh Supreme Court (Saudi Arabia) has accepted the inaccuracy of their Ummul Qura calendar on this occasion and decided to delay the start of Muharram 1435 AH (Islamic New Year) a day later than the published Ummul Qura Calendar date, which made it possible for the lunar date to match with the actual visibility of the moon in the next evening, Alhamdulillah.

It is for this very reason that the astronomy/moon sighting experts from the International observatories as well as from within Saudi Arabia fully agree that the present Ummul Qura calendar criteria (i.e. moon set after sunset) should be changed to a visibility prediction (Imkan-e-Ruyat) model, as proposed in the One Eid Petition from our website at www.moonsighting.org.uk (or directly from tiny.cc/qws15w).

Dated: 20 November 2013 / 16 Muharram 1435 AH