



The Concept of the Single Global Hijri Calendar (KHGT) from the Perspective of the Lembaga Falakiyah of Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (LF PBNU)

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Abstract: *The establishment of a single global Hijri calendar is a topic of debate among international scholars and astronomers. A single global Hijri calendar is an attempt to create uniformity in the Islamic calendar throughout the world. However, this initiative has drawn criticism, especially from the Nahdhatul Ulama Executive Board, the central level organization that leads Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), one of the largest Islamic religious organizations in Indonesia. This article aims to examine the views of the LF PBNU the concept of a single global Hijri calendar, as well as understand the scientific basis for LF PBNU's criticism of the principles used in a single global Hijri calendar. This research method uses qualitative analysis through literature studies, documents or seminar materials presented by representatives of Lajnah Falakiyah PBNU. The research results show that the LF PBNU's main objection to a single global Hijri calendar lies in the differences in the hisab and rukyat methods used, as well as in the limitations of applying this calendar in the local Indonesian context. By understanding the concept of KHGT according to LF PBNU, this article contributes to academic discussions about efforts to harmonize the Islamic calendar to accommodate the plurality of views in the Islamic world.*

Keywords: *Beginning of the Hijri Month, Single Global Hijri Calendar, Lembaga Falakiyah Nahdhatul PBNU*

Abstrak: *Penetapan kalender hijriah global tunggal menjadi topik perdebatan di kalangan ulama dan ahli falak internasional. Kalender hijriah global tunggal merupakan upaya untuk menciptakan keseragaman penanggalan Islam di seluruh dunia. Namun, inisiatif ini menuai kritik, terutama dari Pengurus Besar Nahdhatul Ulama, organisasi tingkat pusat yang memimpin salah satu organisasi keagamaan Islam terkemuka di Indonesia (NU). Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pandangan LF PBNU mengenai konsep kalender Hijriah global tunggal, serta memahami landasan ilmiah kritik LF PBNU terhadap prinsip yang dipakai dalam kalender hijriah global tunggal. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan analisis kualitatif melalui studi literatur dokumen ataupun materi seminar yang pernah disampaikan oleh perwakilan LF PBNU. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keberatan utama PBNU terhadap kalender Hijriah global tunggal terletak pada perbedaan metode hisab dan rukyat yang digunakan, serta pada keterbatasan penerapan kalender ini dalam konteks lokal Indonesia. Dengan memahami konsep KHGT menurut LF PBNU, artikel ini berkontribusi dalam diskusi akademis tentang upaya harmonisasi kalender Islam yang mengakomodasi pluralitas pandangan dalam dunia Islam.*

Kata Kunci: *Awal Bulan Hijriah, Kalender Hijriah Global Tunggal, Lembaga Falakiyah PBNU*

A. Introduction

The establishment of a unified global Hijri calendar has become a subject of ongoing debate among scholars and international experts in Islamic astronomy. The Muhammadiyah Islamic Organization has now begun implementing the Global Unified Hijri Calendar (Kalender Hijriah Global Tunggal—KHGT). The adoption of the KHGT system coincided with the commemoration of the Islamic New Year, 1 Muharram 1446 Hijri, which fell on Sunday, 7 July 2024. This shift



simultaneously reflects a reconstruction of the *wujūd al-hilāl*¹ criterion previously applied by Muhammadiyah, which has now been replaced by the Global Unified Hijri Calendar system. Muhammadiyah regards KHGT as a visionary initiative aimed at presenting a universal Islamic calendar that can be applied uniformly across the world. This endeavor also represents a response to the need for certainty and accuracy in determining worship times that apply globally.²

From 1932 until mid-2024, Muhammadiyah consistently employed the *hisab hakiki wujūd al-hilāl* school of thought in determining the Hijri calendar. Although this method has provided significant contributions, its application has remained limited to the Indonesian context. Muhammadiyah identifies certain challenges, particularly concerning religious observances that depend on geographical differences, such as the fasting of Arafah, thereby creating a need for a more universal calendar system.³

The year 2007 marked the beginning of a significant transformation. In that year, Muhammadiyah initiated an international congress entitled “Endeavors to Establish a Unified International Islamic Calendar.” This forum later became an important foundation for several major decisions in the 47th Muhammadiyah Congress in 2015 and the 48th Congress in 2022, both of which underscored the urgency of unifying the Hijri calendar at the global level. Muhammadiyah’s commitment to implementing the Global Unified Hijri Calendar became particularly evident in the decision of the 47th Congress in Makassar, wherein the idea of a Global Islamic Calendar was classified as a strategic issue for the Muslim community. The editorial articulation of this decision can be found in the *Tanfidz* of the 47th Muhammadiyah Congress on page 117.

At the international level, according to Susiknan Azhari, from 1973 CE to 2014 CE, seventeen international meetings were held in various countries.⁴ These initiatives were expected to foster harmony among Muslims, both nationally and globally. However, the proposal has yet to reach a point of consensus, as no collective agreement has been achieved. Each Islamic organization still uses its own calendar as a reference.

Efforts to realize the Global Unified Hijri Calendar (KHGT) continue to receive serious attention. This is reflected in the International Congress for the Unification of the Hijri Calendar held in Istanbul, Turkey—widely known as the 2016 Turkey Congress—held on 28–30 May 2016 CE (21–23 Sha‘ban 1437 AH). The forum was attended by several Muslim-majority countries,

¹In the Muhammadiyah Astronomical Guidelines, it is explained that according to *hisab hakiki* using the *wujūd al-hilāl* criterion, the beginning of a lunar month is established when, on the 29th day at sunset, the following three conditions are simultaneously fulfilled: (1) conjunction has occurred, (2) the conjunction takes place before sunset, and (3) at sunset, the upper limb of the Moon is still above the horizon. If any of these conditions is not met, then the ongoing month is completed to thirty days, and the new month begins two days later. <https://muhammadiyah.or.id/2022/02/hisab-hakiki-wujudul-hilal-apa-dan-bagaimana/>. Diakses pada 20 Mei 2025

²Widhia Arum Wibawana. “Apa Itu Kalender Hijriah Global Tunggal? Kini Dipakai Muhammadiyah”. <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-7434417/apa-itu-kalender-hijriah-global-tunggal-kini-dipakai-muhammadiyah>. (Diakses pada 20 Mei 2025)

³Ilham, “Kalender Hijriah Global Tunggal: Lompatan Ijtihad Muhammadiyah” <https://muhammadiyah.or.id/2024/07/kalender-hijriah-global-tunggal-lompatan-ijtihad-muhammadiyah/>. (Diakses pada 20 Mei 2025)

⁴Susiknan Azhari, “*Penyatuan Kalender Islam Turki 2016*”, Seminar Nasional Kalender Islam Global Pasca Mukhtar Turki 2016 (Medan: OIF UMSU, 2016), hal.33, td



including Saudi Arabia and Egypt, as well as Malaysia and Indonesia. The main discussions of the congress revolved around two options: first, the two-zone calendar system based on *ijtima'* (pure calculation), which requires (a) dividing the world into two regions, west and east; (b) the start of the lunar month to be declared simultaneously in both regions if conjunction occurs before dawn in Mecca; and (c) if conjunction occurs between dawn in Mecca and 12:00 UT, then the beginning of the month for the western zone would start on the following day, while the eastern zone would be postponed by one day. The second alternative was the single global calendar system referring to the *imkān al-ru'yah* (crescent visibility) criterion, in which the new month begins if, at sunset, the moon's elongation reaches at least 8° and the crescent's altitude is no less than 5°. In this system, the new month is declared if crescent visibility is achieved anywhere in the world, provided that dawn has not yet risen in New Zealand.⁵

The conference ultimately recommended the adoption of a Global Unified Hijri Calendar (singular calendar), approved through a voting mechanism based on the principle of “one day, one date” for all Muslims worldwide. Through this system, Muslims in various regions are expected to begin lunar months simultaneously. However, this decision cannot yet be considered final, as it still lacks complete agreement among all stakeholders. Moreover, its implementation requires a meticulous verification process and long-term monitoring of the criteria to be used as the basis for determination.

To strengthen the foundation of this research, the author examined several relevant previous studies. These studies serve not only as reference sources but also highlight the distinctive position and specific contributions of this research compared with earlier works. One such study is by Amirah Himayah Husna, Shirly Ardini, and Siti Tatminul Qulub, through an article entitled “The Unification of the National Hijri Calendar from the Perspective of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU).” The article discusses the determination of the beginning of the Hijri months in Indonesia, which is closely related to the role of the two largest Islamic organizations, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. The issue arises because no agreement has yet been reached regarding a Hijri calendar system that could serve as a shared reference. The study recommends that, for unity in the determination of the Hijri months to be achieved, agreement should be reached on a single authoritative *mazhab*—namely, the *mazhab* of the state—based on the principle that “the judge's (state's) decision resolves disputes.” The importance of calendar unification is evident from the perspectives of both organizations, while its implementation can be carried out by

⁵Thomas Djamaluddin, “Kongres Kesatuan Kalender Hijri Internasional di Turki 2016: Kalender Tunggal,” dalam <https://tdjamaluddin.wordpress.com/2016/06/02/kongres-kesatuan-kalender-hijri-internasional-di-turki-2016-kalender-tunggal/>, (Diakses pada tanggal 5 Juni 2025).



involving Indonesian astronomical experts under the authority of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in formulating the necessary policies.⁶

Another study is by Ilham Majid, whose article compares KHGT with the Neo-MABIMS criteria used by Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs, examined from both *fiqh* and astronomical perspectives. His findings reveal fundamental differences in the parameters used: KHGT applies a global *matlak* with an elongation requirement of 8° and a minimum crescent altitude of 5°, whereas Neo-MABIMS uses a *wilāyatul hukmi matlak* with a crescent altitude of 3° and an elongation angle of 6.4°. These differences result in a tendency for KHGT to declare the start of the month earlier, which could influence the determination of major Islamic holy days. Nonetheless, *fiqh* analysis shows that both methods have justifiable foundations within Islamic legal scholarship.⁷

Meanwhile, Muhammad Arafat and Anisah Budiwati, in their article, examine Syamsul Anwar's efforts to promote the unification of the global Hijri calendar, which is crucial for harmonizing Islamic religious observances, including Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha. Their research shows that further studies and discourse are needed to reconcile these differences and to establish a unified Hijri calendar worldwide, thereby minimizing inconsistencies in religious rituals across the global Muslim community.⁸

The novelty of this research lies in its analysis of the concept of the global unified Hijri calendar from the perspective of the Falakiyah Institute of the Central Board of Nahdlatul Ulama (Lembaga Falakiyah Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama). Specifically, this study discusses the concept of the global Hijri calendar according to the Lajnah Falakiyah of the NU Central Board and analyzes the LF-PBNU's critiques of the parameters and principles used in the Global Unified Hijri Calendar.

B. Method

This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach. The selection of this method aims to critically examine the views proposed by the *Lembaga Falakiyah* of PBNU concerning the idea of a unified global Hijri calendar.

⁶Amirah Himayah Husna, Shirly Ardini, and Siti Tatmainul Qulub, 'Penyatuan Kalender Hijriah Nasional Dalam Perspektif Ormas Muhammadiyah Dan Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)', *AL - AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak Dan Astronomi*, 3.2 (2022), 171–88 <<https://doi.org/10.20414/afaq.v3i2.4772>>.

⁷Ilham Majid, "Studi Komparasi Konsep Kalender Hijriyah Global Tunggal (KGHT) Muhammadiyah Dan Kriteria Neo Mabims Di Indonesia: Perspektif Fiqh Dan Astronomi" *Jurnal Antologi Hukum*, 4, no. 2 (2024) : <<https://doi.org/10.21154/antologihukum.v4i2.4072>>

⁸Muhammad Arafat and Anisah Budiwati, 'Syamsul Anwar's Vision: Establishing a Unified Global Islamic Calendar', *AL - AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak Dan Astronomi*, 7.1 (2025), 67–83 <<https://doi.org/10.20414/afaq.v7i1.11438>>.



The research data consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained from documentation of seminars held by members of the *Lembaga Falakiyah* PBNU as well as their official statements regarding the issue of the global Hijri calendar. Meanwhile, the secondary data were derived from previous studies discussing similar topics, including journals, books, and scientific articles. The collected data were then analyzed using an inductive-descriptive approach to develop concepts and explain the dynamics of the debates, thereby producing comprehensive conclusions.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Concept and Urgency of a Unified Global Hijri Calendar

The concept of a Unified Global Hijri Calendar is designed to present a universal Islamic dating system that can be used by Muslims throughout the world. This idea is intended as a solution to the recurring differences in determining the beginning of Hijri months, particularly important months such as Ramadan, Shawwal (Eid al-Fitr), and Dhulhijjah (Eid al-Adha), which often result in variations in the timing of religious rituals and celebrations between countries.⁹

In its implementation, the unified global Hijri calendar adopts the principle of “one day, one date,” which means that a single calendar system applies uniformly across the globe, based on the alignment of day and date. Thus, if 9 Dhulhijjah is determined to fall on a Saturday in one region, the same date applies on Saturday across all parts of the world.¹⁰

According to its proponents, the Unified Global Hijri Calendar (KHGT) functions as an instrument to harmonize the observance of Islamic religious days, especially those connected to events occurring in a particular location but impacting worship practices in other regions. The most notable example is the recommended fasting on the Day of Arafah, the timing of which depends on events in Makkah, yet must be followed by Muslims worldwide. Through KHGT, Muslims can more consistently perform time-bound acts of worship because the determinations are based on a single, globally applicable calendar, thereby avoiding discrepancies in identifying significant religious dates.¹¹

⁹Ilham, “Kalender Hijriah Global Tunggal : Lompatan Ijtihad Muhammadiyah” , <https://muhammadiyah.or.id/2024/07/kalender-hijriah-global-tunggal-lompatan-ijtihad-muhammadiyah/>. Diakses pada 20 Mei 2025

¹⁰Ilham, “Kalender Hijriah Global Tunggal : Lompatan Ijtihad Muhammadiyah” , <https://muhammadiyah.or.id/2024/07/kalender-hijriah-global-tunggal-lompatan-ijtihad-muhammadiyah/>.

¹¹Ilham, “Kalender Hijriah Global Tunggal : Lompatan Ijtihad Muhammadiyah” , <https://muhammadiyah.or.id/2024/07/kalender-hijriah-global-tunggal-lompatan-ijtihad-muhammadiyah/>.



2. Parameter Kalender Hijriah Global Tunggal

Several parameters serve as the foundational principles in implementing the unified global Hijri calendar, referring to the 2016 International Hijri Calendar Unification Seminar in Istanbul, Turkey, as follows:

- a. The Entire World is One *Matlak*
The principle of a unified *matlak* means that the entire world is treated as a single zone. Thus, if *imkān al-ru'yah* occurs at any location, the determination is applicable across the globe, because the Earth's surface is viewed as one unified *matlak*.
- b. A New Month Begins When *Imkanur Rukyat* Occurs with a Crescent Altitude of at Least 5° and an Elongation of 8° ($IR\ 5^\circ + 8^\circ$) Anywhere on Earth Before 00:00 UTC (GMT)
- c. If *Imkanur Rukyat* ($5^\circ + 8^\circ$) Occurs After 00:00 UTC, the New Month Begins on the Same Day with the Following Conditions:
 - 1) The *imkanur rukyat* ($5^\circ + 8^\circ$) must have reached the landmass of the American continent.
 - 2) The conjunction (*ijtimak*) must have occurred before dawn in the eastern time zones of the Earth.

3. Response of the LF PBNU to the Unified Global Hijri Calendar Parameters

The LF PBNU holds a distinctive perspective regarding the concept of a unified global Hijri calendar, as an institution deeply concerned with both *shar'ī* and astronomical aspects. Below are the responses of LF PBNU to the KHGT parameters:

- a. The Entire Earth is One *Matlak*

To enforce a global *matlak* requires authority or conventions ratified by the majority of Muslim-majority states. Can such enforcement be carried out by an organization or individuals? If formal implementation is desired, it must be represented by a State or government. Who holds this authority? Has any convention been ratified by Muslim countries? If the answer is no, then the concept remains far from practical implementation.

Referring to the following historical note, it is important to remember that when administrative chaos emerged, Umar ibn al-Khattab initiated the establishment of the Hijri Calendar. Although lunar-based dating systems were known beforehand, he formalized it by assigning year numbers. This step marked a crucial milestone for calendar unification—which may, in the future, serve as a cornerstone for a global-scale system.¹²

LF PBNU further notes that Umar ibn al-Khattab was able to do this because he was the *Caliph* and held authority over his territory. Without assuming this role, he would not have been able to implement such a system.

One of the important policies implemented by the Prophet Muhammad after migrating to Madinah was establishing brotherhood between the *Ansar* and the *Muhajirun*. The *Ansar* were the

¹²Khafidh, “33 Catatan LFNU untuk Konsep KHGT”, Seminar Kalender Hijriyah Global Tunggal, Hotel Savoy Homann Bandung: Sabtu 18 Mei 2024 / 9 Dzulqo'dah 1445 H



residents of Madinah who welcomed the Prophet, while the *Muhajirun* were those who emigrated from Makkah with him. These groups were united on the basis of truth, equality, and the right to inheritance after death—a bond even stronger than kinship ties. The Prophet then reinforced broader unity among all his companions.

LF PBNU emphasizes that, as exemplified by the Prophet, unity must be pursued gradually based on the authority one possesses. Indonesia, having the authority to manage and provide *shar‘i* guidance for its Muslim citizens, should implement the Indonesian *Matlak Wilayatul Hukmi*. Nevertheless, regional unification is pursued through MABIMS¹³ with the hope of establishing calendar harmonization within the ASEAN region.

This statement highlights that agreements using the MABIMS criteria—being regional in nature—allow for unity within a limited geographical scope, but make it difficult for other regions to adopt due to their localized character. Conversely, a global calendar, despite requiring processes to unify Muslims at regional levels first, still holds potential for broader acceptance because its nature is global.

LF PBNU also reiterates that unity among Muslims in a single region, nation, or locality should be prioritized over global aspirations that may undermine unity within smaller communities. The global unification of Muslims is indeed a shared aspiration, but such hopes should not be pursued in a way that causes discord where unity could otherwise be achieved. Therefore, LF PBNU concludes that KHGT is currently not suitable for implementation in Indonesia.

b. A New Month Begins When *Imkanur Rukyat* Occurs with Minimum Crescent Altitude of 5° and Elongation of 8° (IR 5° + 8°)

LF PBNU notes that the KHGT concept does not use this *imkanur rukyat* criterion properly; instead, it applies it as though it were absolute and definitive (*qath‘i*) for determining the beginning of worship-related dates. As a result, KHGT neglects actual *rukayah* (crescent observation). LF PBNU rejects KHGT because it does not align with the Prophet’s ﷺ instruction to his companions: “Do not begin fasting until you see the crescent, and do not end fasting (Eid al-Fitr) until you see it. If clouds obscure it so that it cannot be seen, then complete the number of days.” (*Hadith narrated by Bukhari, No. 1906*).

As we know, the calculations of the Moon’s altitude and elongation can be performed using either the geocentric or topocentric system. Therefore, the LF PBNU notes that the coordinate system used must be clarified—whether it is geocentric or topocentric.

The first parameter of the KHGT refers to the concept of a global *matlak*, in which every point on Earth is assumed to have an equal status, including its contribution to the calculation of *imkanur rukyat*. However, the global *matlak* concept is not entirely consistent with the second parameter that is applied.

¹³ MABIMS merupakan singkatan dari Menteri Agama Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, dan Singapura yang bergabung dalam Komite Penyelaras Rukyah dan Taqvim Islam. Lihat Ahmad Izzuddin, *Fiqh Hisab Rukyah*, (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2007), hal. 159.



LF PBNU questions the origin of 00:00 UTC? as a basis for distinguishing regions in applying *imkanur rukyat* for determining the beginning of a month in the KHGT? The KHGT parameter state that: 00:00 UTC (GMT) = 07:00 WIB = 09:00 WIT.

Why 00:00 UTC? At the moment a region reaches 00:00 UTC (its local sunset), it is already morning—07:00 WIB—in western Indonesia. In other words, applying the concept of *rukya*t becomes impossible in Indonesia at that time. KHGT becomes purely a *hisab*-based system that disregards *rukya*t, so that regions in Indonesia must follow the date set even when sunset has not yet occurred, or when conjunction or the visibility of the crescent (*hilal*) has not taken place.

LF PBNU rejects the KHGT concept because when *imkanur rukya*t is fulfilled after 00:00 UTC (or 07:00 WIB), Indonesia is required—forced, even—to follow the KHGT without proper authority. Moreover, when it is 00:00 UTC, it is already 12:00 noon in Fiji.¹⁴

c. If the *imkanur rukya*t of $5^{\circ} + 8^{\circ}$ occurs after 00:00 UTC (GMT), the new lunar month begins *on that same day*, provided that:

- 1) *Imkanur rukya*t $5^{\circ} + 8^{\circ}$ reaches the mainland of the American continent, dan
- 2) Conjunction in the eastern time zones of the Earth occurs before dawn.

LF PBNU notes that this additional provision raises the question: why is the mainland of the Americas given special treatment? Is there any scientific or *fiqh*-based argument that justifies these parameters? Does the 00:00 UTC line have any relationship with this special treatment for the Americas?

Suppose a case occurs in which the mainland Americas do not meet *imkanur rukya*t, while Hawaii does. LF PBNU asks: Will Hawaii begin the new month the next day or the day after tomorrow?

On one hand, *imkanur rukya*t has already been met, especially if local Muslims are able to observe the crescent. On the other hand, according to KHGT, the criteria have not been fulfilled. What should the Muslims in Hawaii do?

This case emerges as a consequence of the additional requirement that refers only to the mainland of the Americas.¹⁵

¹⁴ Khafidh, “33 Catatan LFNU untuk Konsep KHGT”

¹⁵ Khafidh, “33 Catatan LFNU untuk Konsep KHGT”



There are also several principles that serve as the foundation for formulating the Single Global Hijri Calendar, including:

- 1) Acceptance and use of the *hisab* method
- 2) Application of the concept of *imkanur rukyat* transfer,
- 3) Implementation of a unified global *matlak*,
- 4) Standardization of the same date and day across all regions of the world, and
- 5) Determination of the beginning of the day based on the International Date Line.¹⁶

With regard to these principles, LF PBNU rejects them with the following considerations:

1) Acceptance and Use of Hisab

LF PBNU strongly agrees, and even believes that not only the KHGT but all calendar systems must use *hisab*. Even the *Urifi* calendar is calculated through *hisab*. However, the KHGT, being global in nature, should include maps to ensure more accurate conclusions. In this regard, LF PBNU has attempted to examine the KHGT map but has not found any comparative map issued by the proponents of KHGT.

2) Application of the Transfer of Imkanur Rukyat

LF PBNU cannot accept (rejects) the KHGT because it is inconsistent with NU's principle that a calendar must be verified through *rukyat*. This means it should not depend solely on *hisab*. In this context, it is not merely the transfer of *imkanur rukyat*, but rather the transfer of actual *rukyat* results within regions that share the same *matlak*, such as Indonesia. LF PBNU argues that transferring *imkanur rukyat* is not the same as transferring *rukyat*. If one relies only on the transfer of *imkanur rukyat*, then observing the crescent at the end of each Hijri month becomes unnecessary.

3) Application of a Unified Global Matlak

To understand the KHGT concept, built upon three pillars—parameters, conditions, and principles—LF PBNU notes that the stated principles overlap with the parameters that already mention the global *matlak*, which is repeated again under the KHGT conditions requiring a global orientation. According to LF PBNU, the KHGT should instead consist of: Clear criteria/parameters, A concept of authority, and Boundaries or a list of countries that agree to adopt the KHGT as a shared calendar system.

4) Standardization of the Same Date and Day Across the World

LF PBNU points out that “one day, one date” implies full adoption of the International Date Line and its day-change system. This principle disregards the established practice among the majority of Muslims, who begin the new day at sunset. The date line in the Islamic calendar is flexible and does not require strict adherence to the “one day, one

¹⁶Khafidh, “33 Catatan LFNU untuk Konsep KHGT”



date” principle. Thus, applying this principle cannot simply follow the Gregorian calendar but must be supported by clear and credible *fiqh* foundations.

5) Determining the Beginning of the Day Based on the International Date Line

LF PBNU raises an important concern: will the KHGT dynamically follow the potential changes to the date line that may continue to occur?

The International Hijri Calendar Congress was held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 28–30 May 2016, attended by 127 delegates who were astronomy experts (*ahl al-falak*) from 60 countries. The approval process for the KHGT was conducted through voting: 80 participants agreed, 27 chose the bi-zonal calendar system, 14 remained neutral, and 6 votes were deemed invalid. The voting was carried out without considering proportional representation among delegates from Muslim-majority countries.

In the KHGT congress, the criteria for determining the beginning of the lunar month—namely a crescent altitude of 5°, an elongation of 8°, and the application of a global *matlak*—were agreed upon, with an additional requirement applied when *imkanur rukyat* occurs after 00:00 UTC.

However, to this day, no country has officially adopted or implemented the KHGT. The consensus reached during the congress was not followed by the establishment of a convention formally ratified by the participating states. Therefore, the Istanbul version of the KHGT remains merely an agreement among congress participants.

Abdul Salam Nawawi, the Deputy Chair of the Falakiyah Institute of the Executive Board of Nahdlatul Ulama (LF PBNU), stated that Nahdlatul Ulama does not adopt the Single Global Hijri Calendar (KHGT) because the principles of legal jurisdiction (*wilāyah al-hukmi*) and the practice of moon sighting (*rukyatul hilal*) restrict its implementation. Therefore, NU remains consistent in using *rukyatul hilal* as the valid basis for determining the Hijri calendar. NU holds the view that determining the beginning of the month, or announcing the start of Ramadan and Shawwal based solely on astronomical calculation (*hisab*) prior to the official determination or announcement by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, is not permissible.¹⁷

Ahmad Izzuddin notes three aspects that must be considered in formulating the theoretical foundation of the *mathla'* (the geographical scope within which *rukyat* is applicable), namely:

- 1) It must consider public benefit (*maslahah*).
- 2) The validity of religious practice must remain attainable.
- 3) The scientific reasoning must be accountable.¹⁸

¹⁷<https://nu.or.id/nasional/alasan-nu-tidak-terapkan-kalender-hijriah-global-tunggal-breBn>, diakses pada 11 Desember 2025.

¹⁸Ahmad Izzuddin, “Metode Penentuan Awal Bulan Hijriyyah”, presented in the Bahtsul Masail session at Syahida Inn, Ciputat, South Tangerang, on Thursday. (28/11/2024).



Transferring *rukyat* results from other countries and applying them to Indonesia is an example of a process in determining the beginning of the Hijri month that cannot be justified scientifically, and whose validity in religious practice must be questioned.

There is no obligation to observe Eid al-Fitr or to begin the Ramadan fast on the same date worldwide. The obligation to perform fasting within a region—determined fundamentally by the observation of the crescent—is fulfilled when the *hilal* (the new moon) becomes visible in that region. Therefore, the discussion on *wilayatul hukmi* is crucial as a foundation for determining the beginning of the Hijri month.

The principle of *wilayatul hukmi* that has long been applied in Indonesia extends from Sabang to Merauke. Neighboring countries such as Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and Singapore may still be considered within Indonesia's *wilayatul hukmi*. Meanwhile, MABIMS (the Ministers of Religious Affairs of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore) have agreed on a minimum crescent altitude criterion of 3° with an elongation angle of 6.4°.

In the discussion of *wilayatul hukmi*, the deliberating scholars reached two conclusions *Wilayatul hukmi* encompasses the entire territory of Indonesia, and *Wilayatul hukmi* within Indonesia should be divided into several points based on fundamental considerations of regional division.¹⁹

4. Opinions of Fiqh Scholars on the Single Global Hijri Calendar (KHGT)

The issue of determining the beginning of the lunar month in classical and contemporary fiqh constitutes the normative basis for debates regarding the Single Global Hijri Calendar (KHGT). Although classical scholars did not explicitly discuss KHGT—due to the different social and geographical contexts of their time—their views on *rukyah*, *hisab*, and the concept of *wilāyah al-hukmi* (mathla' jurisdiction) provide a set of principles that serve as a reference for contemporary scholars and fiqh institutions.

In general, there are two major tendencies among the *fuqahā'* regarding the possibility of applying a global Hijri calendar:

a. The tendency that views moon sighting / the existence of the crescent as global (universal).

Some scholars, including those from the Ḥanafī tradition and certain Mālikī opinions, argue that once the crescent has been sighted in one place, the ruling on the beginning of the month can be applied more broadly. Their argument is based on the understanding that the existence of the crescent (*wujūd al-hilāl*) is an objective astronomical phenomenon; thus, moon-sighting testimony from one location may serve as valid evidence for other communities, especially when there is a *maṣlahah* in unifying religious observances across regions.

¹⁹<https://nu.or.id/nasional/penentuan-wilayah-hukum-dalam-awal-bulan-hijriah-harus-bisa-dipertanggungjawabkan-secara-ilmiah->, accessed on 10 Juni 2025



b. The tendency that maintains the relativity of local mathla‘.

The majority of Syāfi‘ī scholars and many other *fuqahā’* hold that determining the beginning of the month is a local matter, following each region’s legal authority (*wilāyah hukmiyyah*). This view primarily refers to the hadith of Kuraib, which records a difference between the moon sighting of the people of Syria and those of Madinah. This narration is understood as an indication that the ruling on the beginning of the month depends on the crescent sighting within each region, in accordance with its own astronomical conditions.

5. Relevant Fiqh Maxims

In formulating their stance on KHGT, contemporary *fuqahā’* and *mujtahidīn* refer to several key *fiqhiyyah* maxims:

a. الضرر يزا (Adh-dhararu yuzāl) — “Harm must be removed.”

This maxim is used to assess whether differing calendars cause significant social or religious harm such that unification becomes preferable (*maṣlahah*).

b. المصالح المرسلة (Al-maṣlahah al-mursalah) — “Public interest not contradicted by textual evidence.”

This is often invoked by proponents of KHGT, who view unification as a form of *maṣlahah ‘āmmah* (public welfare) for the Muslim world.

c. الحكم يتبع علته (Al-ḥukm yatba‘u ‘illatīhi) — “A ruling follows its effective cause.”

This maxim is frequently cited by those who reject KHGT. Since the ‘illah of establishing the beginning of the month is the sighting of the crescent—which is a local astronomical event (the moon’s position relative to the local horizon)—the ruling should follow the astronomical conditions of each region.

These maxims serve as a framework for weighing both scientific and sociopolitical arguments in determining positions on KHGT.

6. Fiqh Implications Regarding the Single Global Hijri Calendar (KHGT)

a. Consideration of Maṣlahah

If the primary objective of KHGT is to achieve tangible *maṣlahah*—such as unified worship practices and reducing disputes over the beginning of the month—then the maxim of *al-maṣlahah al-mursalah* may serve as a basis for its legitimacy. However, this requires demonstrating that the benefits outweigh potential harms.

b. The Status of Rukyah in the Sharī‘ah

If moon sighting is still regarded as the authoritative *shar‘ī* verification mechanism grounded in authentic hadiths, then implementing KHGT in a way that eliminates the role of rukyah will be difficult to justify without strong fiqh-based reasoning. A *shar‘ī* mechanism that can replace rukyah would be required, such as the use of definitive astronomical calculation (*ḥisab qat‘ī*) recognized by authoritative scholars.



c. The Role of Authority and *Ijtihād al-Ḥākim*

State or official authority is crucial. In fiqh, public matters such as the calendar fall under *taṣarruf al-imām* or *ijtihād al-ḥākim*. Therefore, any change to the calendar system should ideally be decided by an authority empowered to regulate the affairs of the community within a specific legal jurisdiction, or through agreement among Muslim countries if a global system is to be implemented.

D. Conclusion

From the overall notes provided by the Lajnah Falakiyah of the Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board regarding the concept of the Single Global Hijri Calendar, it can be concluded that LF PBNU rejects the concept due to the many issues requiring clarification. The Single Global Hijri Calendar cannot be sufficiently represented by civil society organizations alone; rather, it requires governmental authority from each country to agree on conceptual improvements that are acceptable to all parties and practically implementable.

If this concept is imposed in determining the beginning of the *Kamariah* months, the scientific reasoning presented would fundamentally contradict established scientific principles and the consensus among experts. Thus, the concept must be reexamined with considerations that ensure scientific accountability, expertise, and data validity.

According to Thomas Djamaluddin, a realistic effort to unify the Muslim community in determining the beginning of the Hijri months is to seek common ground between practitioners of *hisab* and practitioners of *rukyat*, rather than eliminating one or the other.

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