



The Validity of Hilal Sighting Testimony According to the Imams of the Madhhab: A Jurisprudential Study and Contemporary Issues

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Abstract: The determination of the beginning of lunar months, particularly Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhu al-Hijjah, is a crucial issue in the religious life of Muslims as it is directly related to the performance of worship. One of the critical aspects in this determination is the validity of testimony in the sighting of the new crescent moon (*rukyatul hilal*). This article aims to comprehensively examine the perspectives of the Islamic legal schools (*imam mazahib*) regarding the requirements, number, and admissibility of witnesses in *rukyatul hilal*, as well as to analyze their implications in a contemporary context. The research method employed is a library study with a comparative fiqh analysis approach, by comparing the opinions of the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali schools based on classical fiqh literature and modern fatwas. The findings indicate that there are fundamental differences among the schools concerning the number of witnesses, the acceptance of individual testimony, and the criteria of witness credibility. These differences stem from distinct methodologies of legal reasoning (*istinbat al-hukm*) and approaches to interpreting hadith. Contemporary analysis emphasizes that such differences should be understood as part of the richness of Islamic jurisprudence, while also opening new avenues of *ijtihad* for the unification of the Hijri calendar in Indonesia. Thus, this study is expected to contribute to strengthening the discourse on *hisab-rukyat* fiqh in the modern era.

Keywords: *rukyatul hilal* testimony, *imam mazahib*, *hijri* calendar.

Abstrak: Penentuan awal bulan kamariah, terutama Ramadan, Syawal, dan Zulhijah, menjadi isu penting dalam kehidupan keagamaan umat Islam karena terkait langsung dengan pelaksanaan ibadah. Salah satu aspek krusial dalam penetapan tersebut adalah validitas kesaksian rukyatul hilal. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji secara komprehensif pandangan imam mazhab mengenai syarat, jumlah, dan keabsahan saksi dalam rukyatul hilal, serta menganalisis implikasinya dalam konteks kontemporer. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi pustaka dengan pendekatan analisis fikih komparatif, yakni membandingkan pendapat mazhab Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi'i, dan Hanbali berdasarkan literatur fikih klasik dan fatwa ulama modern. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan mendasar antara mazhab terkait jumlah saksi, penerimaan kesaksian individu, serta kriteria keadilan saksi. Perbedaan ini berakar pada metodologi istinbat hukum dan cara penafsiran hadis yang berbeda. Analisis kontemporer menegaskan bahwa perbedaan tersebut perlu dipahami sebagai khazanah fikih yang kaya, sekaligus membuka ruang ijtihad baru untuk penyatuan kalender hijriah di Indonesia. Dengan demikian, kajian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi terhadap penguatan diskursus fikih hisab-rukyat di era modern.

Kata kunci: kesaksian rukyatul hilal, imam mazahib, dan kalender hijriah.

A. Introduction

The determination of the beginning of the lunar months—particularly the months of Ramadan, Shawwal, and Dhu al-Hijjah—constitutes a significant aspect of Muslim religious life, as it is directly related to the observance of obligatory and recommended acts of worship such as fasting, Eid al-Fitr, and the pilgrimage (*hajj*). The accurate establishment of these Hijri months is not merely a matter of calendrical calculation; rather, it carries social, legal, and communal implications for Muslim communities across different regions. In Indonesia, for instance, the



process of determining the beginning of the month often involves the observation of the crescent moon (*rukyatul hilal*) and/or astronomical calculation (*hisab*), conducted at both national and local levels.¹

In the tradition of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the method of *rukyatul hilal*—that is, the direct observation of the new crescent—has long been recognized as one of the valid means of determining the beginning of a lunar month.² However, its application raises an important question: what is the legal validity of the witnesses who perform the crescent observation, and what are the required criteria and minimum number of witnesses according to the various legal schools (*madhhabs*)? This question has become increasingly relevant in the contemporary context, where astronomical calculations and observational astronomy have developed significantly, and diverse practices exist at both national and international levels.³

The various schools of Islamic law—including the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi‘i, and Hanbali schools—present fundamental differences concerning the qualifications of witnesses for crescent observation, the minimum number of witnesses required, and the conditions under which sighting reports are accepted. For example, one study notes that the Shafi‘i school requires the witness to be just (*‘adl*), male, free, and legally mature (*baligh*), whereas the Hanafi school adopts a more flexible approach by accepting the testimony of women or even slaves under certain circumstances. Such differences are not merely technical matters of jurisprudence; rather, they stem from each school’s methodology of legal derivation (*istinbat al-ahkam*) and their respective interpretations of hadith and astronomical realities.⁴

¹ Kementerian Agama RI, “Kenapa Perlu Sidang Isbat Awal Ramadan, Syawal, Dan Zulhijjah: Penjelasan Kemenag,” Kemenag.go.id, 2024, <https://kemenag.go.id/nasional/kenapa-perlu-sidang-isbat-awal-ramadan-syawal-dan-zulhijjah-ini-penjelasan-kemenag-7x8Mb>; Ahmad Fadholi, “Sidang Isbat, Urgensi Dan Dinamikanya,” *Asy Syar’iyah: Jurnal Ilmu Syari’ah Dan Perbankan Islam* 4, no. 2 (2019): 147–69, <https://doi.org/10.32923/asy.v4i2.1000>; Misbah Khusurur, “Perpaduan Hisab Dan Rukyat Sebagai Metode Penentuan Awal Bulan Hijriyah,” *Jurnal Al-Wasith: Jurnal Studi Hukum Islam* 5, no. 2 (2020): 150–61, <https://doi.org/10.52802/wst.v5i2.76>; Ehsan Hidayat, “Sejarah Perkembangan Hisab Dan Rukyat,” *El-Falaky: Jurnal Ilmu Falak* 3, no. 1 (2019): 56–70, <https://doi.org/10.24252/ifk.v3i1.9777>; Ahmad Muslih dan Haryanto, “Hisab Dan Rukyat Dalam Penentuan Awal Bulan Qamariyah Di Indonesia,” *Al-Mu’tabar: Jurnal Ilmu Hadis* 3, no. 2 (2023): 74–89; Rudi Hartono dan Muhammad Yunus, “Analisis Penentuan Awal Bulan Hijriyah Dengan Metode Pendekatan Hisab Dan Rukyat,” *Al-Mizan: Jurnal Hukum Islam Dan Ekonomi Syariah* 12, no. 1 (2025): 17–32, <https://ejournal.unisai.ac.id/index.php/jiam/article/view/997>; Kementerian Agama RI, “Memahami Sejarah Hisab Rukyat Jadi Metode Penetapan Awal Hijriah Di Indonesia,” Kemenag.go.id, 2025, <https://kemenag.go.id/nasional/memahami-sejarah-hisab-rukyat-jadi-metode-penetapan-awal-hijriah-di-indonesia-55C3F>; R. Sudarmono, *Penetapan Awal Bulan Qomariyah (Ramadhan, Syawal, Dan Dzulhijjah) Di Indonesia Ditinjau Dari Sosiologi Hukum* (Pekanbaru: PTA Pekanbaru Press, 2025); Aris Tiono Hamdani, “Analisis Perspektif Empat Madzhab Terhadap Matla’ Dalam Penentuan Awal Bulan Hijriah,” *AL – AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak Dan Astronomi* 4, no. 1 (2022): 32–39, <https://doi.org/10.20414/afaq.v4i1.4187>.

² Wiwik Indayati, “Analisis Hukum Islam Terhadap Penerimaan Kesaksian Perempuan Dalam Rukyatul Hilal Oleh Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia Pada Tahun 1435 – 1444 H.” (UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2022).

³ STAIN Kepri, “Diskursus Kesaksian Perukyat Dalam Rukyatul Hilal: Menggali Perspektif Ilmiah Dan Syariah,” STAIN Kepri News Portal, 2024, <https://stainkepri.ac.id/berita/2631-diskursus-kesaksian-perukyat-dalam-rukyatul-hilal-menggali-perspektif-ilmiah-dan-syariah.html>; Yunus, “Analisis Penentuan Awal Bulan Hijriyah Dengan Metode Pendekatan Hisab Dan Rukyat”; Nurul Resky Ridhayanti, “Problematika Kesaksian Rukyatul Hilal Orang Non Muslim,” *AL – AFAQ: Jurnal Ilmu Falak Dan Astronomi* 4, no. 2 (2022): 181–91, <https://doi.org/10.20414/afaq.v4i2.5188>.

⁴ Ahmad Muhammad Musta’in Nasoha, “Perbedaan Madzhab Dalam Menentukan Awal Bulan Hijriah: Studi Krisis Atas Pendekatan Hisab Dan Rukyah,” *Litera: Jurnal Ilmiah Mutidisiplin* 2, no. 3 (2025): 290–301,



Furthermore, the issue of the validity of testimony becomes crucial when crescent sighting reports are either accepted or rejected by authorities responsible for establishing the Hijri calendar in a given country. In the Indonesian context, for example, the statement that “rukyyatul hilal is not merely an act of seeing, but a matter of verification” reflects the growing public and governmental attention to the evidentiary and scientific examination of crescent sightings. Differences in methodology, location, weather conditions, and witness criteria may lead to variations in the commencement date of the lunar month, which in turn can affect the unity of the Muslim community.

The contemporary context also presents new dynamics: advancements in Islamic astronomy (*‘Ilm al-Falak*), the use of telescopic technology, the availability of astronomical calculation data and observational records, and state regulatory frameworks aimed at establishing uniform Hijri dates. In modern fiqh discourse on *hisab* and *rukyyat*, it is often argued that calculation and observation can complement one another, thereby opening space for renewed *ijtihād* in pursuit of a unified Muslim calendar at the national or even regional level. In this regard, the discourse on crescent witnesses remains relevant, because although astronomical calculations can mathematically predict the position of the crescent, human testimony in crescent observation continues to serve as a Sharia-based benchmark in many juridical perspectives.⁵

More specifically, this study aims to comprehensively examine the views of the *imams of the madhhabs* regarding the requirements, number, and validity of witnesses in *rukyyat al-hilal*, as well as to analyze their implications in the contemporary context. Although studies on *rukyyat al-hilal* are abundant, most tend to focus either on astronomical aspects or on a single madhhab perspective, and thus do not provide a comprehensive comparative framework across different schools of thought concerning the criteria of testimony. Furthermore, studies that explicitly connect classical concepts—particularly the requirements and integrity (*‘adālah*) of witnesses—with modern institutional practices, such as verification mechanisms by state authorities or ministries of religious affairs, remain relatively limited.

Such a study is important to understand the diversity of practices in the field—for example, how witnesses are selected, how reports are received by state authorities or ministries of religious affairs, and how the integrity (*‘adālah*) of witnesses is evaluated in the modern era. Therefore, this research seeks not only to fill the gap in comparative analysis among the madhhabs, but also to offer a synthesis between classical Islamic jurisprudence and contemporary realities, thereby making its contribution more apparent in the development of Islamic legal studies and the practice of determining the beginning of the Hijri month today.⁶

<https://litera-academica.com/ojs/litera/article/view/163>.

⁵ Kementerian Agama RI, MABIMS Sepakati 8 Resolusi Falak, Indonesia Tuan Rumah Bimtek Hisab Rukyyat 2026, 25 Juli 2025. <https://kemenag.go.id/internasional/mabims-sepakati-8-resolusi-falak-indonesia-tuan-rumah-bimtek-hisab-rukyyat-2026-QqmEh>

⁶ Darma, URGENSI SAKSI RUKYYATUL HILAL DI ERA DIGITALISASI PERSPEKTIF ILMU FALAK, (Skripsi: UIN Alauddin Makassar, 2023), 54. Pengadilan Agama Kabupaten Kebumen, Petunjuk Pelaksanaan Tata Cara Sidang Isbat Kesaksian Rukyyat Hilal, 19 September 2024. <https://www.pa-kebumen.go.id/layanan-hukum/prosedur-berperkara/rukyyat-hilal>



The research method employed is a library-based study with a comparative fiqh analysis approach—namely, by comparing the opinions of the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi‘i, and Hanbali schools based on classical fiqh literature, contemporary scholarly fatwas, and current phenomena in Indonesia. Through this approach, the article attempts to present both a historical overview and the current dynamics surrounding crescent sighting testimony. Such an approach allows for the identification of points of intersection between the traditions of the legal schools and the demands of the present time.

The findings indicate that there are fundamental differences among the schools regarding the number of witnesses required, the acceptance of individual versus collective testimony, and the criteria of witness integrity. In this study, these differences are analyzed not merely as obstacles, but as part of the rich juristic heritage that can enrich contemporary *ijtihad*. In the Indonesian context, the analysis underscores the importance of understanding these differences in order to avoid oversimplification that generalizes a single model of practice across the entire Muslim community.

Finally, this article is expected to contribute to strengthening the discourse on *hisab-rukyat* jurisprudence in the modern era, particularly in reinforcing the legitimacy of crescent sighting testimony and in opening avenues for scientific–religious collaboration in establishing an inclusive and verification-based national Hijri calendar. Thus, this study is not only theoretically relevant, but also practically applicable in the development of regulatory frameworks and religious practices within modern Muslim societies.

B. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using a library research method, focusing on the analysis of classical and contemporary fiqh texts concerning *rukyatul hilal* (crescent moon observation).⁷ The primary sources consist of the works of scholars from the four major *madhhabs*, namely *Al-Mabsut* by al-Sarakhsi (Hanafi madhhab), *Al-Mudawwanah al-Kubra* by Imam Malik (Maliki madhhab), *Al-Umm* by Imam al-Shafi‘i (Shafi‘i madhhab), and *Al-Mughni* by Ibn Qudamah (Hanbali madhhab). Meanwhile, the secondary sources include modern literature such as academic journals, fatwas, and studies on Islamic astronomy published between 2020–2025. Data were collected through literature searches using online databases (Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and repositories of Islamic universities in Indonesia) in order to obtain juristic perspectives and contemporary analyses regarding the testimony of *rukyatul hilal*.

The data analysis is conducted using a comparative fiqh approach (*muqāranah al-fiqh*), namely by comparing the views of the *Hanafi*, *Maliki*, *Shafi‘i*, and *Hanbali* schools regarding the requirements, number, and validity of witnesses in *rukyat al-hilal*.⁸ Operationally, this research is carried out through several systematic stages. First, data collection is conducted by

⁷ Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2018); Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2018).

⁸ Achmad Sopian, Sahlan, “Muqoroh Al-Mazahib Dan Kondisi Bermazhab Saat Ini,” *Al-Afkar: Journal for Islamic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2022): 144–59, https://al-afkar.com/index.php/Afkar_Journal/article/view/297.



examining primary sources in the form of classical fiqh texts from each madhhab—*Hanafi*, *Maliki*, *Shafi’i*, and *Hanbali*—that specifically discuss *rukyyat al-hilal* and testimony (*shahādah*), as well as secondary sources such as contemporary books, scholarly journal articles, and relevant fatwas of modern scholars, including regulations and official practices in Indonesia.

Second, the collected data are classified based on key themes, such as the requirements of witnesses, the number of witnesses, the criteria of integrity (*‘adālah*), and the mechanisms for accepting testimony. At this stage, each madhhab’s opinion is identified both textually and contextually to ensure an accurate understanding of the evidences, methods of legal reasoning (*istinbāt*), and the intellectual background of each school.

Third, a comparative analysis is conducted using a thematic comparison framework, by examining the views of the madhhabs on each classified aspect. This analysis includes identifying points of agreement (*ittifāq*) and disagreement (*ikhtilāf*), as well as tracing the arguments underlying each position, whether derived from the Qur’an, hadith, *qiyās*, or considerations of *maṣlaḥah*.

Fourth, the results of the comparison are synthesized to identify general patterns, points of convergence, and the contemporary relevance of these differences. At this stage, a contextual analysis is also carried out by relating classical views to contemporary practices in Indonesia, such as the mechanisms for verifying testimony by official authorities and its integration with astronomical approaches.

Through these stages, the study does not merely present a descriptive comparison but also offers a critical analysis that bridges classical fiqh scholarship with the practical needs of modern Muslim society in determining the beginning of the Hijri month. Furthermore, the results of this comparison are contextualized within the practice of determining the beginning of the lunar month in Indonesia. With this approach, the research not only reveals theoretical differences among the madhhabs but also explores their relevance to efforts toward the unification of the Hijri calendar and the strengthening of the legitimacy of *rukyyat* testimony in the modern era.

C. Results and Discussion

1. The Views of the Madhhabs on the Validity of Crescent Sighting Testimony (*Rukyyatul Hilal*)

Testimony in *rukyyatul hilal* constitutes a crucial aspect in determining the beginning of the lunar month, as it is directly connected to the observance of major Islamic acts of worship such as the fasting of Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha. Within the corpus of classical fiqh, the leading imams of the madhhabs expressed differing opinions regarding the number of witnesses required, the conditions of integrity (*‘adalah*), and the legal validity of crescent sighting testimony. These differences stem not only from varying interpretations of the scriptural sources (*nusus syar’iyyah*), but also from differences in methodologies of legal derivation (*istinbat al-ahkam*) and the social contexts in which these opinions developed. Therefore, examining the perspectives of the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi’i, and Hanbali madhhabs is essential to



uncover their respective argumentative foundations, as well as to understand how such diversity has contributed to the development of Islamic law in the field of astronomy and lunar month determination.

a. The Hanafi Madhhab

The Hanafi madhhab holds that the beginning of Ramadan may be established based on the testimony of a single upright (‘*adl*) witness, whereas the beginning of Shawwal requires the testimony of two witnesses. This distinction is grounded in the differing legal character between the commencement and the conclusion of Ramadan. The entry into Ramadan pertains to an act of worship that is *ta‘abbudi* in nature—performed purely in obedience to divine command—thus allowing acceptance of a single testimony. In contrast, ending Ramadan, which entails terminating the obligation of fasting, requires a higher level of certainty and therefore necessitates two witnesses.⁹

This principle is explained in *Al-Mabsut* by al-Sarakhsi, where it is stated that one upright witness suffices to initiate fasting because it relates to exercising precaution in beginning an act of obedience (*ihtiyat fi al-ta‘ah*), rather than ending it. However, in establishing Eid al-Fitr, two witnesses are required since it involves lifting a legal obligation (*raf‘ al-wujub*), which demands stronger evidentiary certainty. Thus, the Hanafi madhhab emphasizes a balance between the principles of precaution (*ihtiyat*) and devotional submission (*ta‘abbud*) in matters concerning the crescent.¹⁰

Furthermore, Hanafi scholars stipulate that the witness must fulfill the criteria of ‘*adalah*—namely, possessing upright character, honesty, and abstaining from major sins or persistent minor sins. The testimony of women may be accepted under certain circumstances, such as extreme weather conditions that hinder observation, although this represents a minority opinion within the madhhab. Accordingly, the flexibility of the Hanafi madhhab operates within clearly defined legal principles.¹¹

In the contemporary context, the Hanafi position is often referenced by certain astronomical institutions in Central and South Asia that prioritize individual sighting reports. This aligns with the Sharia principle of removing hardship (*raf‘ al-haraj*) while maintaining precaution. Nevertheless, given the rapid advancement of astronomical technology, the acceptance of solitary testimony warrants reconsideration in light of modern standards of scientific verification.

In conclusion, the Hanafi madhhab may be categorized as moderate regarding crescent testimony: less stringent in initiating worship, yet more cautious in concluding it. This approach demonstrates Islamic law’s sensitivity to both the spiritual and social dimensions of Ramadan

⁹ Wahbah Al-Zuhaili, *Fiqh Al-Islam Wa Adillatuh*, 2nd ed. (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 1985), 601; Abu Muhammad Muwaffiq al-Din Abd Allah bin Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Qudamah, *Al-Mughni Li Ibn Qudamah*, 3rd ed. (Kairo: Maktabah al-Qahirah, 1968), 166.

¹⁰ Syamsuddin Al-Syarkhasi, *Al-Mabsuth*, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Ma‘rifah, 1989), 60.

¹¹ Mursyidul Wildan Furziah, “Kesaksian Perempuan Dalam Rukyatul Hilal Perspektif Keadilan Dan Kesetaraan Gender,” *Noura: Jurnal Kajian Gender Dan Anak* 6, no. 1 (2022): 25–32, <https://jurnal.lp2msasbabel.ac.id/nou/article/view/2603/1095>.



and Eid, while providing a foundation for harmonizing traditional sighting practices with modern scientific verification.

b. The Maliki Madhhab

The Maliki madhhab rejects the testimony of a single individual in crescent sighting, whether for establishing the beginning of Ramadan or Shawwal. According to Imam Malik in *Al-Mudawwanah al-Kubra*, a minimum of two witnesses is required in all circumstances of lunar month determination. This position is rooted in the principle of legal precaution (*ihtiyat*) and commitment to collective evidentiary justice (*al-bayyinah al-jama'iyah*). With two witnesses, the reliability of the sighting is strengthened and the possibility of individual error is minimized.¹²

This view is based on hadith emphasizing the importance of collective testimony and the principle that one should not begin fasting until the crescent is seen with certainty. Imam Malik maintained that reliance on a single testimony may generate doubt, whereas two witnesses provide stronger legal proof (*hujjah qati'ah*). Therefore, the Maliki madhhab tends to reject solitary observations lacking collective verification.¹³

Within the framework of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, this position also aims to preserve social stability. Establishing the beginning of the month based on collective testimony is believed to prevent division among Muslims resulting from differing fasting or festival dates. Thus, the principle of *al-bayyinah al-jama'iyah* is not merely legal but also social and ethical in orientation.¹⁴

The Maliki madhhab further stipulates that witnesses must be male, free, and reputable members of society. Female testimony in this matter is not accepted, as crescent sighting is regarded as a public affair requiring socially authoritative testimony. Nonetheless, some contemporary Maliki scholars have opened the door to *ijtihad* regarding scientifically based collective observations conducted by qualified Muslim astronomers.¹⁵

Accordingly, the Maliki madhhab prioritizes legal certainty and collective justice over individual flexibility. This principle remains relevant in the contemporary context, which demands collaboration between religious authorities and astronomers to ensure that decisions on lunar month determination are inclusive, valid, and socially accepted.

c. The Shafi'i Madhhab

The Shafi'i madhhab holds that a single upright witness suffices to establish the beginning of Ramadan, whereas two witnesses are required to determine the beginning of Shawwal. This opinion is based on the hadith of Ibn 'Umar, in which the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) accepted his solitary testimony to commence fasting. The Shafi'i madhhab considers this

¹² Imam Malik bin Anas Al-Ashbahi, *Al-Mudawwanah Al-Kubro*, 4th ed. (Beirut: Daar al-Kutub al-Ilmiah, 1994), 19.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁵ Muhammad Jawad Mughniyah, *Fiqh Lima Mazhab*, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: PT Lentera Basrimata, 1996), 171.



as specific evidence regarding Ramadan, given the significance of fasting as a fundamental religious obligation that warrants precaution in its commencement.¹⁶

Imam al-Shafi‘i in *Al-Umm* explains that the guiding principle in this matter is *al-yaqin la yazulu bi al-shakk* (certainty is not removed by doubt). As long as there is no conclusive proof that Ramadan has ended, the obligation to fast remains. Therefore, to terminate Ramadan and establish Shawwal, two witnesses are required to attain sufficient certainty. This position reflects a balance between precaution (*ihhtiyat*) and facilitation (*taysir*) in Islamic law.¹⁷

According to Shafi‘i jurists, a crescent witness must be upright, legally mature, Muslim, and possess sound eyesight. They also emphasize the necessity of verification by a qadi or religious authority before the testimony gains legal force. This underscores that crescent sighting is not purely individual, but must be institutionalized through formal legal mechanisms.¹⁸

The Shafi‘i madhhab has significantly influenced crescent sighting practices in Indonesia. Organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama and the Ministry of Religious Affairs frequently adopt Shafi‘i principles, particularly concerning verification procedures. Thus, this madhhab provides a strong jurisprudential foundation for lunar month determination practices in Southeast Asia.

Overall, the Shafi‘i madhhab integrates strong textual evidence from hadith with rational legal reasoning in addressing crescent testimony. This balanced approach between scriptural certainty and legal precaution remains highly relevant in the era of modern astronomical observation.

d. The Hanbali Madhhab

The Hanbali madhhab shares a similar position with the Shafi‘i madhhab, accepting the testimony of one upright witness for the beginning of Ramadan and two witnesses for Shawwal. However, it demonstrates greater flexibility in cases of necessity or difficulty in crescent observation. In *Al-Mughni*, Ibn Qudamah affirms that if weather conditions are unfavorable or the crescent is difficult to observe, the testimony of a single known upright individual may be accepted.¹⁹

The Hanbali madhhab is guided by the principles of removing hardship (*raf‘ al-haraj*) and establishing legal certainty (*ta‘yin al-yaqin*). Although two witnesses are preferable, one may suffice when empirical circumstances prevent broader verification. This reflects Islamic law’s responsiveness to social and geographical realities, especially in regions where astronomical observation is challenging.²⁰

¹⁶ Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Khatib Al-Sharbini, *Mughni Al-Muhtaj Ila ‘arifat ‘Ani Al-Fazi Al-Inhaj* (Beirut: Daar al-Kutub al-Ilmiah, 1994), 142-143.

¹⁷ Muhammad bin Idris Al-Syafi‘i, *Al-Umm*, 7th ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Ma‘rifah, 1990), 50.

¹⁸ Muhyiddin Abi Zakariya Yahya bin Syarof Al-Nawawi, *Minhaju Al-Thalibin Wa ‘Umdatul Muftin* (Jedah: Dar al-Minhaj, n.d.), 178.

¹⁹ Abu Muhammad Muwaffiq al-Din Abd Allah bin Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Qudamah, *Al-Mughni*, 4th ed. (Riyad: Dar Alam al-Kutub, 1997), 416.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 419.



In Hanbali jurisprudence, witness integrity (‘adalah) and clarity of testimony are strongly emphasized. The witness must be honest, socially recognized, and provide clear, non-contradictory testimony. In practice, sighting reports must be confirmed by a qadi or authorized institution to attain legal validity. Thus, the Hanbali madhhab assigns final authority to recognized legal institutions in accepting or rejecting testimony.²¹

In the modern context, Hanbali flexibility is particularly relevant in light of varying weather conditions, geography, and technological capacities across Muslim countries. This approach allows for the acceptance of sighting results from one location for broader regions, provided they are astronomically and legally verified. Consequently, the Hanbali perspective may be viewed as adaptive to contemporary efforts toward Islamic calendar unification.

In summary, the Hanbali madhhab presents a balance between adherence to Sharia principles and practical flexibility. By emphasizing witness integrity while accommodating empirical realities, it contributes significantly to modern fiqh discourse on *hisab* and *rukyat*, particularly in discussions concerning global Hijri calendar unification.

2. Comparative Analysis and Foundations of Legal Derivation (*Istinbat*)

The differences among the madhhabs in establishing the validity of crescent sighting testimony are rooted in their distinct methodologies of legal derivation (*istinbat al-ahkam*). Each madhhab adopts its own approach in interpreting the Prophetic hadith that serves as the principal basis for determining the beginning of the lunar month, namely: “*Shumu li ru’yatihi wa aftiru li ru’yatihi*” (“Fast upon sighting it and break your fast upon sighting it”). This hadith, narrated by Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim, constitutes the central textual evidence that has been interpreted variously through textual and contextual approaches by the four madhhabs.²²

The Hanafi madhhab, for instance, interprets this hadith through a predominantly *ta’abbudi* (purely devotional) lens, emphasizing the ritual dimension of worship. Consequently, a single upright witness is deemed sufficient to establish the beginning of Ramadan, as fasting is viewed as a personal act of devotion closely tied to individual intention and commitment. However, for the determination of Shawwal, the madhhab requires two witnesses as a precaution in ending the act of worship.²³ This distinction reflects a nuanced legal perspective between initiating worship based on confidence and terminating it based on stronger legal certainty.

In contrast, the Maliki madhhab employs a more rational and collective method of *istinbat*, rejecting the testimony of a single individual for all lunar months. Their foundational principle rests upon *al-bayyinah al-jama’iyyah*—collective testimony that ensures public justice.²⁴ For Maliki scholars, *rukyatul hilal* is not merely an individual matter but possesses a

²¹ Ibid., 419.

²² M. Hasbi As-Shiddieqi, *Pokok-Pokok Pegangan Imam Mazhab Dalam Membina Hukum Islam*, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1972), 177.

²³ Qudamah, *Al-Mughni Li Ibn Qudamah*, 166.

²⁴ Al-Ashbahi, *Al-Mudawwanah Al-Kubro*, 19.



social dimension, as it affects the religious observance of the entire community. Therefore, a minimum of two witnesses is required to guarantee objectivity and legal validity.

The Shafi'i and Hanbali madhhabs hold nearly identical positions in interpreting this hadith. Both accept the testimony of one upright witness for the beginning of Ramadan but require two witnesses for Shawwal. Their reasoning is based on the hadith of Ibn 'Umar, which reports that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) accepted the testimony of a single individual in commencing the fast.²⁵ However, regarding the end of Ramadan, they invoke the principle *al-yaqin la yazulu bi al-shakk* (certainty is not removed by doubt), thereby requiring additional witnesses to ensure legal certainty and prevent error.

Differences in the application of *qiyas* (analogical reasoning) also influence the legal conclusions among the madhhabs. The Hanafi madhhab tends to utilize rational analogy that considers public interest (*maslahah 'ammah*), whereas the Shafi'i madhhab exercises greater caution in employing *qiyas* in matters of pure worship (*ibadah mahdhah*). In the case of crescent sighting, Shafi'i jurists reject analogical comparison with criminal or civil testimony, arguing that such matters belong to distinct legal categories. Meanwhile, the Maliki madhhab shows greater openness toward contextual reasoning that incorporates social custom (*'urf*) and communal considerations.²⁶

The principle of *istihsan* (juristic preference) also plays a significant role in shaping these differences. Hanafi scholars, widely known for employing *istihsan*, maintain that under certain circumstances the testimony of a single witness may be accepted for the sake of public welfare and ease. This approach differs from the Maliki and Shafi'i madhhabs, which place stronger emphasis on textual evidence. In the contemporary context, *istihsan* may be associated with efforts to adapt Islamic law to modern crescent observation technologies, such as telescopes and digital imaging that provide objective visual data.²⁷ Furthermore, the concept of *'urf* (custom) influences legal derivation. In classical Islamic societies, direct visual testimony was the sole recognized means of verification. However, with the advancement of modern astronomy, prevailing custom has gradually shifted toward accepting astronomical calculation (*hisab*) and scientific observation. The Maliki and Hanbali madhhabs have gradually allowed *hisab* results to function as *qarinah* (supporting evidence) for crescent testimony, though not yet as an independent primary proof.²⁸

Regarding the assessment of witness integrity (*'adalah*), each madhhab applies distinct criteria. The Shafi'i madhhab demands a high level of moral and religious integrity, whereas the Hanafi madhhab emphasizes honesty and social reputation. These differences reflect an epistemological dimension within Islamic law: whether truth is grounded primarily in theological piety or in empirical observation. In the modern context, this discourse becomes

²⁵ Al-Sharbini, Mughni Al-Muhtaj Ila 'arifat 'Ani Al-Fazi Al-Minhaj, 142-143.

²⁶ Ahmad Masfufu Fuad, "Qiyas Sebagai Salah Satu Metode Istihsan," *Mazahib: Jurnal Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 15, no. 1 (2016): 42–60, <https://journal.uinsi.ac.id/index.php/mazahib/article/view/606>.

²⁷ Mursyid Musthofa An-Najmi, "Istihsan Dalam Pandangan Madzhab Imam Hanafi Dan Imam Syafi'i Dan Penerapannya" (UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2019), 79.

²⁸ Kholidah, "Otoritas 'Urf Dalam Penalaran Hukum Islam," *Al-Maqasid: Jurnal Ilmu Kesyarahan Dan Keperdataan* 8, no. 2 (2022): 242–54, <http://jurnal.uinsyahada.ac.id/index.php/almaqasid/article/view/6264>.



particularly relevant when considering whether digital evidence or photographic images of the crescent may substitute for human testimony.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that divergent interpretations of the hadith “*Shumu li ru’yat*” reflect the richness and breadth of Islamic legal heritage. Each madhhab strives to balance textual fidelity with social reality. In the contemporary setting, efforts toward global Hijri calendar unification likewise confront epistemic differences between *rukyat* (empirical sighting) and *hisab* (astronomical calculation). Therefore, this comparative study is essential for understanding the methodological roots of madhhab diversity and for fostering constructive dialogue.

In Indonesia and the broader contemporary Muslim world, these methodological differences influence the decisions of religious authorities, such as the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Tarjih Council of Muhammadiyah. Some institutions prioritize *hisab* based on the criterion of *imkan al-ru’yah* (the possibility of sighting), while others maintain empirical observation.²⁹ Understanding the foundational methodologies of the madhhabs can strengthen juristic arguments in the pursuit of Hijri calendar unification without neglecting classical traditions.

Comparative Table of Madhhab Views on the Testimony of *Rukyat al-Hilal*

Aspect	Ḥanafi	Maliki	Syafi’i	Ḥanbali
<i>Istinbāṭ</i> Approach	Rational + <i>ta’abbudi</i>	Collective + contextual	Textual (nash-oriented)	Combination of textual and precautionary
Beginning of Ramadan	One just witness is sufficient	Minimum two witnesses	One just witness is sufficient	One just witness is sufficient
Beginning of Shawwal	Minimum two witnesses	Minimum two witnesses	Minimum two witnesses	Minimum two witnesses
Hadith Interpretation	Viewed as individual devotional act (<i>ta’abbudi</i>)	Viewed as a public matter	Based on the hadith of Ibn ‘Umar	Similar to Shafi’i
Precautionary Principle	More flexible at the beginning, stricter at the end	Consistently strict	Strict at the end (<i>al-yaqīn lā yazūlu bi al-shakk</i>)	Similar to Shafi’i
Use of <i>Qiyās</i>	Flexible, based on <i>maṣlahah</i>	Moderate, contextual	Limited in purely ritual matters	Moderate
Role of <i>Istihṣān</i>	Prominent (facilitating ease)	Limited	Not prominent	Limited
Role of ‘<i>Urf</i> (Custom)	Not dominant	Considered	Minimal	Increasingly considered
Position of <i>Hisab</i> (Contemporary)	Can be considered	As <i>qarīnah</i> (supporting indication)	Generally not a primary proof	Supporting <i>rukyat</i>

²⁹ Nasoha, “Perbedaan Madzhab Dalam Menentukan Awal Bulan Hijriah: Studi Krisis Atas Pendekatan Hisab Dan Rukyah.”



Criteria of ‘Adālah (Witness Integrity)	Honesty and social reputation	Public credibility	High moral-religious integrity	Similar to Shafi‘i
Epistemological Orientation	Empirical-pragmatic	Socio-collective	Normative-theological	Normative with precaution

The table above shows that the differences among the madhhabs are not merely technical—such as the number of witnesses—but also reflect deeper epistemological and methodological frameworks in interpreting the sources. The Ḥanafī school tends to be more flexible through rational approaches and *istihsān*, while the Maliki school emphasizes collective considerations and public interest. Meanwhile, the Shafi‘i and Ḥanbali schools are more text-oriented (*nash*-based), with a stronger emphasis on precaution, particularly in determining the end of Ramadan.

In the contemporary context, these differences can be understood as forming a spectrum of approaches—textual, rational, and contextual. This opens space for an integrative *ijtihād* that enables dialogue between traditional *rukyat* practices and modern scientific approaches such as *hisab*, without undermining the foundations of classical Islamic

3. Issues in the Contemporary Context

The development of modern science and technology has brought significant impacts on how Muslims understand and implement the concept of *rukyatul hilal* (moon sighting). In the classical period, the testimony of *rukyah* was based entirely on direct visual observation. In the contemporary era, however, it faces the challenge of integration with *hisab* (astronomical calculation) systems and digital astronomical technology. This transformation requires a reinterpretation of the fiqh principles governing the validity of testimony, the authority to determine the beginning of lunar months, and the possibility of unifying the Hijri calendar. Therefore, discussing contemporary implications becomes essential in bridging the classical tradition of *rukyah* with modern scientific realities, ensuring that Islamic law remains relevant and functional amid scientific advancement and the dynamic religious life of today’s Muslim community.

a. Relevance within Indonesia’s Hisab–Rukyāt System

In the Indonesian context, the relationship between *rukyat* and *hisab* is a longstanding issue that continues to receive serious attention from scholars (*ulama*), astronomers (*ahli falak*), and authoritative institutions such as the Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia (Ministry of Religious Affairs) and the Majelis Tarjih Muhammadiyah. The system for determining the beginning of lunar months in Indonesia adopts the *imkan al-rukyat* approach, namely the criterion of crescent visibility based on a combination of empirical observation and astronomical calculation. This approach reflects an effort to harmonize traditional methods (*rukyat*) with modern ones (*hisab*).³⁰

³⁰ Kementerian Agama RI, “Memahami Sejarah Hisab Rukyāt Jadi Metode Penetapan Awal Hijriah Di Indonesia”; Hidayat, “Sejarah Perkembangan Hisab Dan Rukyāt”; Khusurur, “Perpaduan Hisab Dan Rukyāt Sebagai Metode Penentuan Awal Bulan Hijriyah.”



The integration of rukyat testimony with modern astronomical methods has become a necessity in the digital era. The use of optical instruments such as telescopes, CCD (Charge Coupled Device) cameras, and digital imaging enables the detection of the crescent moon with high precision, even below the threshold of naked-eye visibility.³¹ In this context, visual testimony is no longer limited to unaided human sight but can extend to scientifically based observational data.

Nevertheless, debates have emerged regarding the legal validity of such scientific observations within Islamic law. Some scholars argue that telescopic observations may be categorized as *syahadah mu'tabarah* (legally معتبر testimony) if they fulfill the requirements of honesty and data clarity. Others contend that modern instruments serve merely as *qarinah* (supporting indications), not as the primary proof for determining the beginning of the month.³²

These fiqh considerations indicate the need to redefine the meaning of rukyat itself. Should rukyat be understood literally as naked-eye sighting, or can it be interpreted as instrument-based visual-astronomical observation? Some contemporary scholars, such as Ahmad Izzuddin, maintain that the term rukyat remains open to contextual reinterpretation in light of scientific advancement.

In Indonesia, this integrative approach is accommodated through the *sidang isbat* (official determination session), which brings together jurists and astronomers. In this forum, manual rukyat observations are cross-checked against modern astronomical calculations. This mechanism reflects the principle of *ijtihad jama'i* (collective legal reasoning), whereby religious authorities and scientists collaborate to produce decisions that are both legally sound and scientifically accurate.³³

Thus, Indonesia's hisab-rukyat system represents a model of dialogue between tradition and modernity in Islamic law. This approach does not negate the authenticity of rukyat but rather strengthens it through scientific validation. Such integration may serve as an epistemological foundation for the development of a global Hijri calendar based on rational visibility criteria and Muslim unity.

b. Testimony in the Technological Era

Advances in astronomical technology have transformed the way humans observe the sky, including in the practice of rukyatul hilal. Today, crescent observation is no longer conducted

³¹ Thomas Djamaluddin, "Mengkaji 'Hilal Syar'i' Secara Astronomi," [tdjamaluddin.wordpress.com](https://tdjamaluddin.wordpress.com/2022/05/07/mengkaji-hilal-syari-secara-astronomi/), 2022, <https://tdjamaluddin.wordpress.com/2022/05/07/mengkaji-hilal-syari-secara-astronomi/>.

³² Muhammad Syakir NF, "Rukyat Dengan Teleskop Sah Jadi Dasar Penentuan Awal Bulan Hijriah," [nu.or.id](https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/rukayat-dengan-teleskop-sah-jadi-dasar-penentuan-awal-bulan-hijriah-8116B), 2025, <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/rukayat-dengan-teleskop-sah-jadi-dasar-penentuan-awal-bulan-hijriah-8116B>; Fiya Faridatul Afidah, "Implementasi Pendapat Ibnu Hajar Terkait Teknologi Rukyat Hilal Di Era Modern," *The Moon: Jurnal Ilmu Falak, Astronomi, Sains Dan Syariah* 1, no. 1 (2025): 14–23, <https://journal.adfi.or.id/index.php/themoon/article/view/2>; Desi Kristiane, "Penggunaan Teleskop Untuk Rukyat Al-Hilal: Analisis Pendapat Muhammad Bakhit Al-Muti'i Dengan Ibnu Hajar Al-Haitami," *Bilancia* 13, no. 2 (2019): 331–54, <https://jurnal.uindatokarama.ac.id/index.php/blc/article/view/498/338>.

³³ Muhammad Syakir NF, "Sidang Isbat Dihadiri Ormas, Dubes, DPR, Dan Ahli Falak," [nu.or.id](https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/sidang-isbat-dihadiri-ormas-dubes-dpr-dan-ahli-falak-gpILU), 2022, <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/sidang-isbat-dihadiri-ormas-dubes-dpr-dan-ahli-falak-gpILU>; Fadholi, "Sidang Isbat, Urgensi Dan Dinamikanya."



solely through conventional means but is supported by automated systems such as robotic telescopes and high-resolution digital cameras. With such technology, crescent images can be recorded, analyzed, and verified with unprecedented accuracy, opening new discourse on the validity of “digital testimony.”³⁴

In the *fiqh* context, this raises the question: can instrument-based observations be considered valid testimony (*syahadah*)? Contemporary scholars such as Wahbah al-Zuhayli argue that if such instruments are operated by trustworthy experts and produce clear data, their results may be accepted as a modern form of testimony. This view expands the meaning of *ru'yah basariyyah* (visual sighting) into *ru'yah hissiyyah mu'asirah* (modern empirical observation).³⁵

The Majelis Agama Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, dan Singapura (MABIMS) has also adopted crescent visibility standards based on scientific data measured through parameters such as crescent altitude and elongation. This demonstrates that Islamic regional authorities in Southeast Asia recognize the importance of scientific evidence as a complement to conventional testimony. Such an approach is considered relevant for ensuring uniform decisions at the regional level.

The Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) Fatwa No. 2 of 2004 and several recent *sidang isbat* decisions likewise acknowledge the role of astronomical data in supporting rukyat results. Although human testimony remains the primary legal element, scientific evidence—such as crescent photographs, telescopic images, and CCD data—is now regarded as a legitimate means of verification. Technology thus functions as *ta'yid* (reinforcement) of testimony rather than its complete replacement.³⁶

The use of scientific instruments also enhances transparency and accountability in the rukyat process. Observational data can be stored, re-verified, and published, thereby reducing the possibility of error or manipulation. This aligns with the legal principle *al-bayyinah 'ala man idda'a* (the burden of proof rests upon the claimant), requiring that testimony be empirically verifiable.

Therefore, the technological era brings an epistemological shift in understanding *syahadah*. Testimony is no longer confined to individual sensory experience but may be represented by instruments that record objective facts. This understanding opens new space for modern Islamic astronomy (*fiqh falak*) to harmonize legal authenticity with scientific accuracy.

c. Toward the Unification of the Hijri Calendar

³⁴ Ahmad Junaidi, “Syahadah Rukyatulhilar Using Astro Digital Imaging: From Subjectivity to Objectivity,” *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum Dan Syariah* 14, no. 1 (2022): 58–74, <https://ejournal.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/syariah/article/view/15062>.

³⁵ Kristiane, “Penggunaan Teleskop Untuk Rukyat Al-Hilar: Analisis Pendapat Muhammad Bakhit Al-Muti'i Dengan Ibnu Hajar Al-Haitami.”

³⁶ Arino Bem Sado, “Analisis Fatwa MUI Nomor 2 Tahun 2004 Tentang Penetapan Awal Ramadhan, Syawal, Dan Dzulhijjah Dengan Pendekatan Hermeneutika Schleiermacher,” *Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 14, no. 1 (2025): 64–84, <https://media.neliti.com/media/publications/41845-ID-analisis-fatwa-mui-nomor-2-tahun-2004-tentang-penetapan-awal-ramadhan-syawal-dan.pdf>.



Differences among the various schools of Islamic law (*madhahib*) regarding rukyat testimony should not be viewed as obstacles, but rather as a rich legacy of *ijtihad* that enriches Islamic legal discourse. In the context of unifying the Hijri calendar, this diversity of opinions can serve as a foundation for formulating cross-school *ijtihad jama'i* (collective legal reasoning).³⁷ This approach emphasizes collaboration and mutual recognition among religious authorities throughout the Muslim world.

In Indonesia, the Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia plays a strategic role as a mediator between religious authorities and Islamic astronomers (*ahli falak*). Indonesia's participation in the Majelis Agama Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, dan Singapura (MABIMS) forum represents a concrete step toward the unification of the Islamic calendar in Southeast Asia. This aligns with the aspiration to position Indonesia as a global model for implementing an integrated hisab–rukyat system.

The importance of scientific verification in calendar unification cannot be overlooked. Global astronomical data now allow for highly accurate predictions of crescent (*hilal*) visibility, which can serve as the basis for collectively determining the timing of religious observances. Through synergy between fiqh authorities and scientists, the unification of the Hijri calendar can be achieved without negating the principle of *syahadah rukyah* (crescent testimony).

Calendar unification also carries sociological and spiritual implications. Differences in the commencement of religious observances such as Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr often lead to confusion within the Muslim community. With a unified calendar, Muslims would possess a symbol of unity reflecting the spirit of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and harmony among Muslim nations.

Therefore, integrating the principles of rukyat and hisab within the framework of collective *ijtihad* represents a realistic middle path. With its long-standing experience in managing differences between hisab and rukyat, Indonesia has the potential to become a pioneer in this endeavor. The unification of the Hijri calendar is not merely an astronomical project, but a manifestation of Muslim unity rooted in the heritage of classical fiqh and modern scientific innovation.

D. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the differences of opinion among the leading jurists of the Islamic legal schools regarding testimony in *rukyatul hilal* reflect the breadth and depth of Islamic legal scholarship in responding to religious phenomena. The Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali schools each possess their own argumentative foundations in determining the requirements, number, and validity of witnesses. These foundations are rooted in their respective methodologies of legal derivation (*istinbat*) and differing interpretations of prophetic traditions (*hadith*). Such differences are not merely technical in nature; rather, they reflect the dynamism of *ijtihad* and the diversity of epistemological

³⁷ M. Ihtirozun Ni'am, "Signifikansi Ijtihad Kalender Hijriyah Global (Tinjauan Dari Aspek Syar'i Dan Ekonomi)," *Al-Mabsut: Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial* 10, no. 1 (2016): 1–21, <https://www.ejournal.iaingawi.ac.id/index.php/almabsut/article/view/101>.



approaches in understanding scriptural texts related to determining the beginning of lunar months.

In the contemporary context, these differences should be situated within the framework of *ijtihad jama'i* (collective legal reasoning) and an integrative approach between *hisab* (astronomical calculation) and *rukyat* (crescent sighting). Testimony of *rukyat*, which was once conducted manually, can now be reinforced through modern instruments such as telescopes, CCD cameras, and other digital devices. Therefore, the concept of *syahadah* (testimony) in crescent observation requires re-examination to ensure that it remains faithful to the principles of Islamic law while also being adaptive to scientific advancement. A *fiqh* approach that is open to scientifically verified observations can strengthen the authority of *rukyat* as a legitimate empirical basis for determining the beginning of the lunar month.

Finally, this research underscores the importance of synergy between religious authorities, astronomical institutions, and the scientific community in developing an integrated *hisab-rukyat* system. Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, holds a strategic position in promoting the unification of the Hijri calendar. This effort requires a solid scientific foundation and an inclusive juristic consensus so that the determination of the beginning of lunar months can be carried out uniformly without neglecting fundamental sharia principles. In this way, harmonization between the classical *fiqh* tradition and modern technology can serve as a key toward achieving the greater welfare (*maslahah*) of Muslims globally.

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