

Monday, 8 July 2013

Wednesday the first day of Ramadan in the Middle East



Arab Gulf states and Egypt have announced that the first day of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan will start the upcoming Wednesday.

“Nobody has reported having seen the moon of the new lunar month this evening, so it was decided to consider Tuesday, tomorrow, as the complementary day of the current month of Shaaban and that Wednesday will be the first day of Ramadan,” the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

People across the Islamic world have been preparing for the holy month, during which Muslims abstain from food, drinking, and sexual activity from sunrise to sunset.

A billion and a half Muslims globally are anticipating the beginning of the month-long fast, according to Reuters.

Some Syrian refugees in Lebanon are having their third Ramadan away from their homes.

Markets across the Jordanian capital prepared to meet the increased demand needed to prepare the feasts with which observant Muslims break the daily fast, amid consumer concerns over high food prices.

“The month of Ramadan is filled with blessings and benefits. I prepare according to my children’s preferences. But prices have increased; they raised prices of items like parsley and vegetables.” Um Ibrahim told Reuters, as she chose vegetables in an Amman market.

Consumers complain that businessmen take advantage of soaring demands on basic food products amid the government’s lack of strict price regulation.

As the countdown continues, many Muslims also buy ornaments to decorate their homes. Streets and houses are lit up with decorative lights and crescent shaped lanterns. The start date of Ramadan is decided according to the Islamic calendar. The Islamic calendar is a lunar calendar, in which the beginning of each month coincides with the sighting of the first crescent of a new moon. This year, the start of the month may fall on Wednesday.

(With Reuters)