

# Frequently asked questions about Hari Raya Aidilfitri

## Why is the celebration called Hari Raya Aidilfitri?

Aidil means 'return' while fitri means 'natural disposition' (fitrah semulajadi). It celebrates the conclusion of the fasting month and signifies that a person who has fully observed the month of Ramadan is like a newborn.

## Why do Muslims perform the solat sunat Hari Raya Aidilfitri?

It is an act which is required in Islam as a mark of a servant's gratitude to God. Moreover, this is also an occasion for Muslims to gather and catch up with family on the morning of Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

## What is the meaning and the significance of the Syawal month?

1st Syawal is the day of victory for Muslims who have succeeded in fully observing the fasting month.

## How is the date of Hari Raya Aidilfitri determined each year?

There are two ways to decide the date of Hari Raya Aidilfitri. It can be done through ru'yah (observing the sight of a new moon) and hisab (calculations). If the new moon is not visible on the 29th day of Ramadan, the date can be determined through hisab.

## Why is there a need to observe the new moon?

It is based on the tradition and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and a rule which has been set by Islam, to determine the period of fasting and the beginning of Syawal.

## Why does the Keeper of the Ruler's Seal announce the date of Hari Raya Aidilfitri?

He is the custodian of the Ruler's Seal on behalf of the Conference of Rulers. His position is enshrined within the Federal Constitution to represent the Yang di-Pertuan Agong as the head of Islam to announce the date of Hari Raya Aidilfitri and Hari Raya Aidiladha. Apart from that, it also ensures that there is only one official declaration for the celebration of Hari Raya in Malaysia.

## Why are we encouraged to seek forgiveness and forgive others during the month of Syawal?

Seeking forgiveness and forgiving others is not limited to the month of Syawal but instead required even during the month of Ramadan. The period should also be used to further strengthen silaturrahim (kinship) with one another.

## Why do we have open houses during the Syawal month?

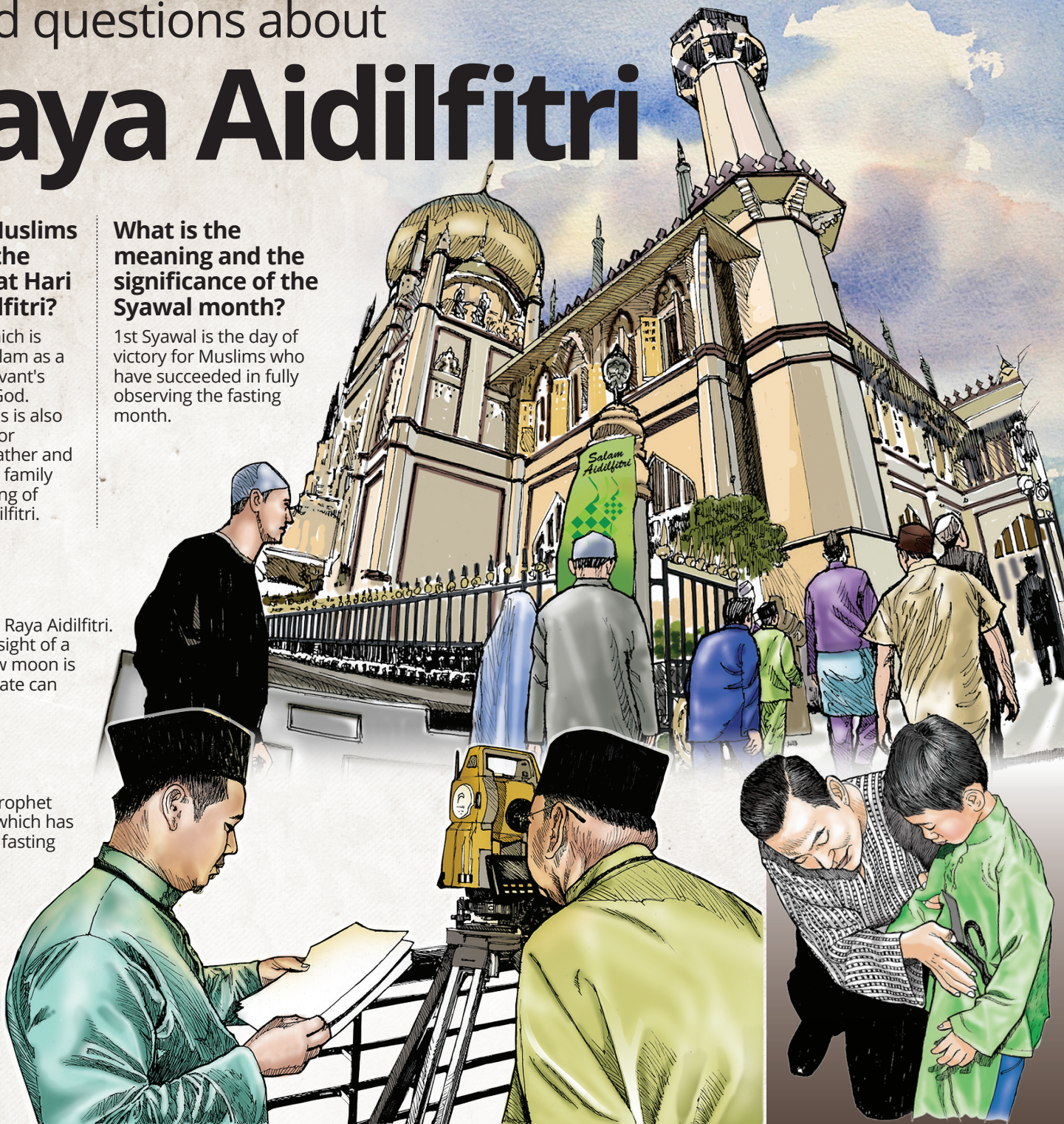
The open house is held to share the joy and happiness after observing the fasting month. Although Hari Raya Aidilfitri is usually celebrated on the first day, Islam does not restrict the festivities to only Muslims, it can be enjoyed by non-Muslims as well.

## What is the etiquette when visiting friends and family during an open house?

We are encouraged to visit at a suitable time and must always be mindful of our manners. The open house must also be in line with syariah principles when enjoying the festivities.

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## What are the usual preparations for Hari Raya Aidilfitri?

It is common to wear nice outfits on the first day and go to the mosque to perform the solat sunat Hari Raya Aidilfitri. It is also common to have a light meal before performing the Aidilfitri prayers. Muslims are also encouraged to visit friends and relatives to strengthen their bond.

