Supermoon rises today

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Supermoon

The moon will look larger & brighter as it gets close to earth

The 'supermoon' will rise on Saturday evening, when it comes closest to the earth in about two decades. The fact that it is a full moon makes the event more special.

Amid rumours of the event leading to chaos, astronomers, have ruled out any such thing.

They also say there was no relation between the moon getting closer to the earth and last week's earthquake-triggered tsunami in Japan.

Also, with the sunset time on Saturday night being 6:45pm and the moonrise at 6:25pm, both the sun and the moon will be visible together.

On Sunday, the sunrise is at 6:39am and moonset is expected at 6:41am, so again, both will be visible together. The moon on Saturday evening would be a spectacle to watch. It would look around 15 percent larger then usual. Although the moon approaching closer to the earth and then getting farther is a phenomenon that occurs every day because of the elliptical orbit, this is the first time in around two decades that it's coming so close.

Amateur astronomer Harshad Abhyankar said, "It is a phenomenon that takes place every month. The moon usually comes about 3,60,000 km close to the earth, the range of the minimum distance between the moon and the earth. What is remarkable is that tomorrow, the distance will be about 3,56,000 km, which is happening after 20 years. A distance of about 3,57,000 km or 3,58,000 km is very common."

Arvind Paranjpye, scientific officer, Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), said that being a full moon and being so close to the earth, the moon will be very bright. "However, it may be harsh

to the eyes when observed through a telescope after 7:30pm, though it will not be as dangerous as looking at the sun. Using a binocular should be fine," said Paranjpye.

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