Amazing Facts on Total Lunar Eclipse or Blood Moon on 27th July 2018

On Friday, 27th July 2018, we witnessed a rare celestial phenomenon - Total Lunar Eclipse. This was the century's longest lunar eclipse. On the day of the total lunar eclipse, the moon appeared to be deep red in colour, known as the blood moon. People in Asia and Africa got the best views of the eclipse. Those in Europe, South America and Australia saw partial views. It was not visible in North America and Antarctica. Read this article to know in detail about the Total Lunar Eclipse on 27th July 2018 which is an important topic from the exam point of view & can be asked in SBI PO, SBI Clerk etc.

What is Total Lunar Eclipse?

A total lunar eclipse takes place when the Earth comes between the Sun and the Moon and covers the Moon with its shadow. When this happens, the Moon can turn red, earning it the nickname of Blood Moon. Total eclipses of the Moon happen at Full Moon when the Sun, Earth, and Moon are aligned to form a line. The astronomical term for this type of alignment is *syzygy*, which comes from the Greek word for *being paired together*.

What is Blood Moon?

Even though Earth blocks sunlight from directly reaching the surface of the Moon during a total lunar eclipse, the Moon is still visible to the naked eye. This is because Earth's atmosphere bends sunlight and indirectly lights up the Moon's surface.

When sunlight passes through the Earth's atmosphere, it gets refracted towards the Earth's surface, and part of it - the colours with shorter wavelengths - gets scattered and filtered out, while the rest, colours with longer wavelengths like orange and red, passes through the atmosphere. This light is once again refracted towards the surface of the fully eclipsed Moon, thus illuminating it in a reddish-orange glow. Because of this, a total lunar eclipse is sometimes colloquially called a Blood Moon.

5 Interesting Facts about Total Lunar Eclipse

1. This eclipsed Moon appeared much smaller than a typical full Moon.
2. During maximum totality, the moon became unusually, evenly red all around.
3. The full eclipsed Moon was so dim that Mars outshined it.
4. The Sun was close to its smallest as seen from Earth.
5. Binoculars or a telescope allowed you to see incredible features of the Moon with no additional filters.

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Where could we see it?

The total lunar eclipse was clearly visible in Asia and Africa. It was partially visible in South America and Australia. It was not visible in North America and Antarctica. **In India, the eclipse commenced at 22:42 on 27th July and ended at 05:00:05 on 28th July.** In India, Total Lunar Eclipse was seen in cities including Delhi, Pune, Bengaluru and Mumbai among others.

Previous and Next Total Lunar Eclipse

- The long duration of total lunar eclipses had earlier occurred on July 16, 2000 for totality duration of 1 hour 46 minutes and another one on June 15, 2011 for totality duration of 1 hour 40 minutes.

- You can witness the next total lunar eclipse on December 31, 2028.

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Kargil Vijay Diwas

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