

Puncak Jaya

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Puncak Jaya (Malay: [ˈpuntʃaʔ ˈdʒaja]) or **Carstensz Pyramid** (4,884 m) is the highest summit of **Mount Jayawijaya** or **Mount Carstensz** /ˈkɑːrstəns/ in the Sudirman Range of the western central highlands of Papua Province, Indonesia (within Puncak Jaya Regency). Other summits are *East Carstensz Peak* (4,808 m), *Sumantri* (4,870 m) and *Ngga Pulu* (4,863 m). Other names include **Nemangkawi** in the Amungkal language, **Carstensz Toppen** and **Gunung Soekarno**.^[2]

At 4,884 metres (16,024 ft) above sea level, Puncak Jaya is the highest mountain in Indonesia, on the island of New Guinea (which consists of the Indonesian West Papua region plus Papua New Guinea), on the continent of Australasia (which consists of New Guinea, the country of Australia, Timor, other islands, and submerged continental shelf), and in Oceania, as well as the 5th highest mountain in political Southeast Asia.

It is also the highest point between the Himalayas and the Andes, and the highest island peak in the world. Some sources claim Papua New Guinea's Mount Wilhelm, 4,509 m (14,793 ft), as the highest mountain peak in Oceania, on account of Indonesia being part of Asia (Southeast Asia).^[3] The massive, open Grasberg mine is within 4 kilometers of Puncak Jaya.

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History

Puncak Jaya
Carstensz Pyramid
<div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div><div>Peak of Puncak Jaya.</div></div></div></div><div></div></div></div></div>
Highest point
<div><div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div><div>Elevation</div></div></div></div><div></div>4,884 m (16,024 ft) ^[1]</div></div><div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div><div>Prominence</div></div></div></div><div></div>4,884 m (16,024 ft)</div></div><div>Ranked 9th</div></div><div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div><div>Isolation</div></div></div></div><div></div>5,262 kilometres (3,270 mi)</div></div><div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div><div>Listing</div></div></div></div><div></div>Seven Summits</div></div><div>Country high point</div><div>Ultra</div><div>Ribu</div></div><div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div><div>Coordinates</div></div></div></div><div></div>04°04′44″S 137°9′30″E﻿ / ﻿</div></div><div><div><div><div><div><div></div><div><div>Geography</div></div></div></div><div></div></div></div></div></div></div></div></div>

Discovery

The highlands surrounding the peak were inhabited before European contact, and the peak was known as **Nemangkawi** in Amungkal. Puncak Jaya was named "Carstensz Pyramid" after Dutch explorer Jan Carstenszoon who first sighted the glaciers on the peak of the mountain on a rare clear day in 1623.^[4] The sighting went unverified for over two centuries, and Carstensz was ridiculed in Europe when he said he had seen snow near the equator.

The snowfield of Puncak Jaya was reached as early as 1909 by a Dutch explorer, Hendrik Albert Lorentz with six of his Dayak Kenyah porters recruited from the Apo Kayan in Borneo.^[5] The predecessor of the Lorentz National Park, which encompasses the Carstensz Range, was established in 1919 following the report of this expedition.

Climbing history

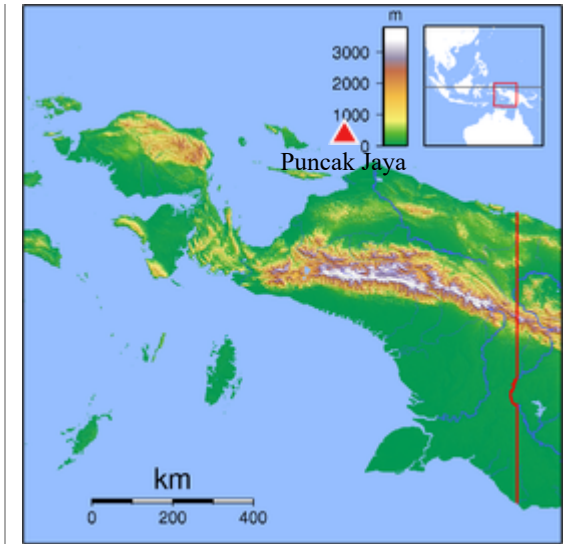
In 1936 the Dutch Carstensz Expedition, unable to establish definitely which of the three summits was the highest, attempted to climb each. Anton Colijn, Jean Jacques Dozy and Frits Wissel reached both the glacier covered East Carstensz and Ngga Pulu summits on December 5, but through bad weather failed in their attempts to climb the bare Carstensz Pyramid. Because of extensive snow melt Ngga Pulu has become a 4,862 m subsidiary peak, but it has been estimated that in 1936 (when glaciers still covered 13 square km of the mountain; see map) Ngga Pulu was indeed the highest summit, reaching over 4,900 m.^[6]

The now highest Carstensz Pyramid summit was not climbed until 1962, by an expedition led by the Austrian mountaineer Heinrich Harrer (of *Seven Years in Tibet* fame, and climber of the Eiger North Face) with three other expedition members – the New Zealand mountaineer Philip Temple, the Australian rock climber Russell Kippax, and the Dutch patrol officer Albertus (Bert) Huizenga. Temple had previously led an expedition into the area and pioneered the access route to the mountains.^[7]

When Indonesia took control of the province in 1963, the peak was renamed 'Poentja Soekarno' (Simplified Indonesian: Puncak Sukarno) or Sukarno Peak, after the first President of Indonesia; later this was changed to Puncak Jaya. *Puncak* means peak or mountain and *Jaya* means 'victory', 'victorious' or 'glorious'. The name Carstensz Pyramid is still used among mountaineers.^[8]

Geology

Puncak Jaya is the highest point on the central range, which was created in the late Miocene Melanesian orogeny,^[9] caused by oblique collision between the Australian and Pacific plates and is made of middle Miocene limestones.^[10]



Papua Province, Indonesia

Parent range		Sudirman Range
		Climbing
First ascent	1936 by Colijn, Dozy, and Wissels 1962 by Harrer, Temple, Kippax and Huizenga	
Easiest route	rock/snow/ice climb	

Access

Access to the peak requires a government permit. The mountain was closed to tourists and climbers between 1995 and 2005. As of 2006, access is possible through various adventure tourism agencies.^[11]

Glaciers



Puncak Jaya icecap 1936, see also 1972.

While Puncak Jaya's peak is free of ice, there are several glaciers on its slopes, including the Carstensz Glacier, West Northwall Firn, East Northwall Firn and the recently vanished Meren Glacier in the Meren Valley (*meren* is Dutch for "lakes").^[12] Being equatorial, there is little variation in the mean temperature during the year (around 0.5 °C) and the glaciers fluctuate on a seasonal basis only slightly. However, analysis of the extent of these rare equatorial glaciers from historical records show significant retreat since the 1850s, around the time of the Little Ice Age Maximum which primarily affected the Northern Hemisphere, indicating a regional warming of around 0.6 °C per century between 1850 and 1972.



Animated map of the extent of the glaciers of the Carstensz Range from 1850 to 2003

The glacier on Puncak Trikora in the Maoke Mountains disappeared completely some time between 1939 and 1962.^[13] Since the 1970s, evidence from satellite imagery indicates the Puncak Jaya glaciers have been retreating rapidly. The Meren Glacier melted away sometime between 1994 and 2000.^[14] An expedition led by paleoclimatologist Lonnie Thompson in 2010 found that the glaciers are disappearing at a rate of seven metres thickness per year and should have vanished by 2015.^[15]

Climbing

Puncak Jaya is one of the more demanding climbs in one version of the Seven Summits peak-bagging list, despite having the lowest elevation. It is held to have the highest technical rating, though not the greatest physical demands of that list's ascents. The standard route to climb the peak from its base camp is up the north face and along the summit ridge, which is all hard rock surface.^[16] Despite the large mine, the area is highly inaccessible to hikers and the general public. The standard route to access base camp as of 2013 is to fly into the nearest major town with an airport, Timika, and then take a small aircraft over the mountain range and onto an unimproved runway at one of the local villages far down from the peak. It is then typically a five-day hike via the Jungle route to the base camp through very dense jungle and with regular rainfall, making the approach probably the "most miserable" of the Seven Summits. Rain during most days of the hike inbound and out are not uncommon. Also, unlike the other Seven Summits, if one sustains an injury at any point on the inbound hike, there is little or no ability to get rescued via helicopter so anyone injured must evacuate by foot over very difficult and slippery terrain.

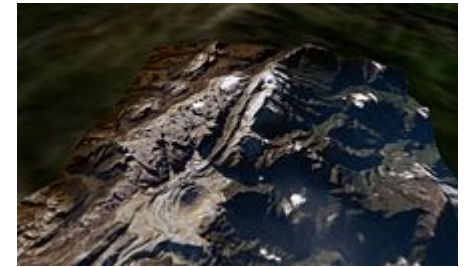
An additional complication is relatively common strikes by the climbing porters that accompany most expeditions, occasionally halting their work to demand (and usually receive) higher pay before agreeing to continue. The one-day summit bid is technically challenging for those with little rock climbing experience, and it can be quite cold with temperatures at or below freezing near the summit. Patches of snow sometimes appear on the route up or on the ropes of the Tyrolean traverse just below the summit. The descent from the peak's base camp can take three to four days. Anecdotaly, it appears most injuries occur during the descent due to a combination of exhaustion and difficulty controlling hiking speed on the wet and slippery terrain.

See also

- Seven Summits
- List of highest mountains of New Guinea
- List of Southeast Asian mountains
- List of elevation extremes by country

References

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The highland area in 2005, with the Grasberg copper mine pit in the foreground. Its summit is at the far end of the central rib.

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External links

- "Mountains of the Indonesian Archipelago" (<http://peaklist.org/WWlists/ultras/indonesia.html>)- Peaklist.org
- Racing Time on Oceania's Highest Peak (<http://blogs.ei.columbia.edu/blog/tag/indonesia-puncak-jaya/>) by The Earth Institute
- Puncak Jaya on Peakware (<https://www.peakware.com/peaks.php?pk=333>)
- Puncak Jaya on Peakbagger (<http://www.peakbagger.com/peak.aspx?pid=11360>)
- Carstensz Expedition Report (<http://www.travelthewholeworld.com/carstenszpyramid.html>) – 90+ Photos
- Aerial photos from the Puncak Jaya region (<http://www.oysteinlundandersen.com/new-guinea-west-papua/puncak-jaya-mountain/>)

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