

NASA photo error puts Everest in India

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An aerial view of the Mount Everest range taken in February 2012. The world's highest mountain should not be hard to spot but American space agency NASA has admitted it mistook a summit in India for Mount Everest, which straddles the border of Nepal and China.

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The agency said on its website that Russian cosmonaut Yuri Malenchenko's snap from the [International Space Station](#), 230 miles (370 kilometres) above Earth, showed Everest lightly dusted with snow.

The picture spread rapidly via [Twitter](#) and was picked up by media around the world, including the US-based magazine The Atlantic, astronomy website Space.com and US cable news channel [MSNBC](#).

But Nepalis smelt a rat and voiced their suspicions on social media. Journalist Kunda Dixit, an authority on the Himalayas, tweeted: "Sorry guys, but the tall peak with the shadow in the middle is not Mt Everest."

NASA confirmed on Thursday that it had made a mistake and removed the picture from its website.

"It is not Everest. It is Saser Muztagh, in the Karakoram Range of the Kashmir region of India," a spokesman admitted in an email to AFP.

"The view is in mid-afternoon light looking northeastward."

He did not explain how the picture from the space station, a joint project of the US, Russia, Japan, Canada and Europe, had been wrongly identified.

Everest, which is 8,848 metres (29,028 feet) high, is a sought-after photographic target for astronauts in orbit but is tricky to capture, according to astronaut Ron Garan, who lived on the International Space Station last year.

"No time is allotted in our work day normally for Earth pictures. So if we want to capture a specific point on the ground we have to first know exactly when we will fly over that spot," he told The Atlantic.

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