

Banda and Neira, overthrowing houses, and destroying ships and nutmeg plantations. The eruptions of Gunung Api are generally accompanied by violent earthquakes and an earthquake wave. In the eruption of 1690 the sea is said to have risen 25 feet above the level of high water at springs, to have swept off every dwelling near the shore, and to have destroyed all the ships in the harbour; a cannon weighing 3500 lbs. was carried away from the quay on which it stood to the distance of 30 feet. In the eruption of 1691 the succession of earthquakes which took place was such as to terrify the inhabitants, many of whom emigrated to Amboina and Celebes. The eruption of 1852 seems to have been as disastrous as that of 1690.

At the time of the visit of the Portuguese to the Banda Islands in 1512, the natives, although few in number, were a spirited and independent people, living under a kind of rude republican government, and Mohammedan in religion. Soon after 1512 the Portuguese established a factory here for the purchase of spices, and remained in possession of the nutmeg trade for nearly a century, when in 1609 the Dutch, with three ships, and seven hundred soldiers, made their appearance, took possession of the islands, and began constructing a fort on the ruins of one which had belonged to the Portuguese. The natives resisted, seduced the Dutch Admiral and forty-five of his companions into an ambush, and massacred them. This led to a war of extermination, which was not closed until 1627. The unfortunate natives in these contests behaved with much courage and perseverance, virtues which would have been successful in the expulsion of the invaders but for the disunion and feebleness incident to their geographical position and to their want of civilization. In 1615 a large fleet and military expedition attempted the conquest of the group, but the Banda men conducting themselves with extraordinary courage, the Dutch were defeated, and the governor-general, who accompanied the troops, died of chagrin on account of the failure. In 1616 the islanders were subdued and forced into treaties more hostile to their prosperity than ever. In 1620 the Banda men again attempted to regain their independence. At this period the Dutch and English were reconciled to each other, and the latter regretted their inability, from want of means, to join the Dutch in a league for the subversion of the natives. The Dutch governor-general piously declared he would undertake the enterprise with the assistance of Heaven, which he boasted had hitherto been so favourable to him. In 1621 all the islands but Great Banda submitted to the rule of the Dutch; but there the natives betook themselves to the mountains, where in time they were starved and hunted down until at length the survivors, a poor remnant of eight hundred persons, surrendered themselves, were transported to Batavia, and in the course of time absorbed into the ranks of the inhabitants of Java, so that now no vestige of the language or customs of the original inhabitants can be traced. In this manner the Dutch became undisputed masters of the nutmeg monopoly, and introduced slaves for the purpose of carrying on the cultivation; when slavery was abolished, convict labour was substituted.