



THE NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA

“Use of War Rockets by the Sinhalese during the 18th Century”

by

Anandalal Nanayakkara

The Monthly Lecture Series No: 168 of the National Trust

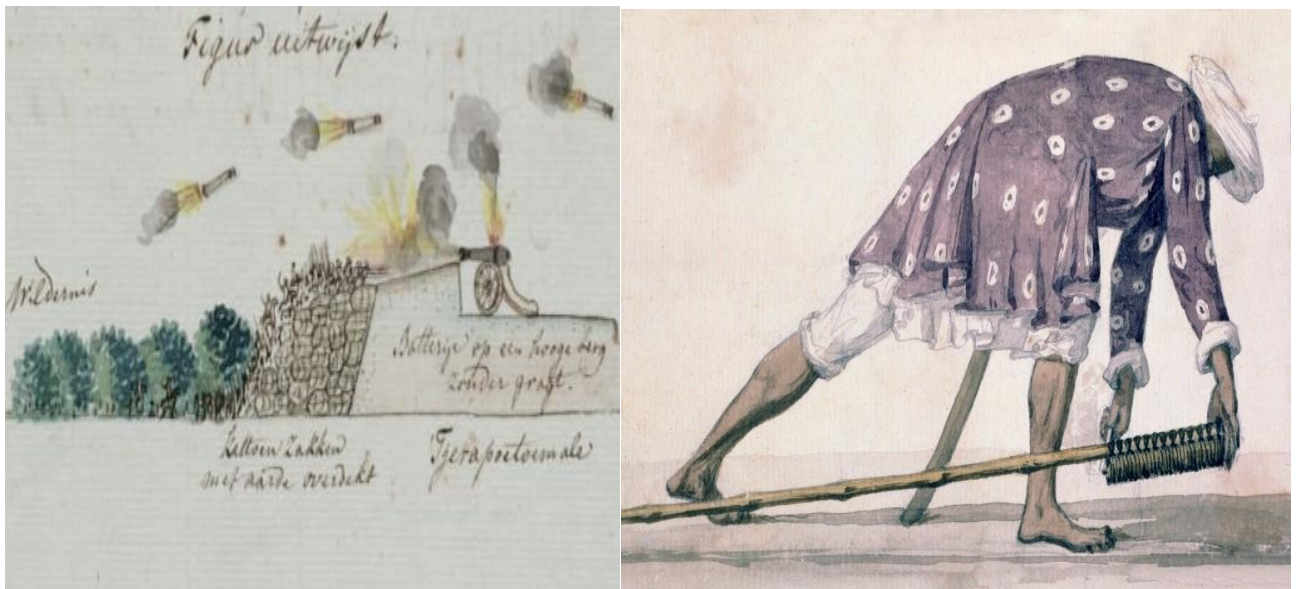
Friday 28th February 2025 at 6.00 pm

at the Auditorium of the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka,

No. 6, Independence Avenue, Colombo 7.

(For those who join online: <https://youtube.com/live/fPC4VOXnE5c?feature=share>)

Rockets were some of the earliest forms of gunpowder weapons used in warfare. However, with the advance in artillery weapons, rockets fell into disuse. The resurgence of interest in war rockets is generally credited to their use by the Mysorean army against the British in the 18th century leading to the development of Congreve Rockets and several other forms of rockets. It is a little known fact that the Sinhalese too were employing improved war rockets in their battles against the Dutch forces in Ceylon. Examining Dutch and French contemporaneous accounts of the 18th century, this presentation traces the available evidence demonstrating that the locals were aware of the strengths and weaknesses of rockets in warfare and were employing them when the occasion demanded it.



Anandalal Nanayakkara is a legal professional with over three decades in the practice of law. His spare time is gainfully employed in the pursuit of study of the historical development of firearms and other weapons in Sri Lanka. He has previously addressed the National Trust on swords and edged weapons and the use of armour and made presentations on the history of Sri Lanka firearms to the Royal Asiatic Society and the Ceylon Society of Australia – Colombo Chapter.

The National Trust – Sri Lanka conducts monthly lectures generally on the last working Thursday of each month. The lectures are open to the members and the general public.

Further information can be obtained from the Trust Office Tel.0112682730/ 0719566929