

# **Excavations at Mifsas Bahri (Lake Hashinge) Archaeological Site, Southern Tigray**

**by**

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In continuation of the archaeological investigations since 2013 at the site of Mifsas Bahri, located on the present-day shore of Lake Hashinge in southern Tigray, the Department of Heritage Conservation of the Institute of Paleo-environment and Heritage Conservation of the Mekelle University in collaboration with Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), Tigray Culture and Tourism Agency (TCTA) and Heidelberg University in Germany resumed in-depth excavations for this season of 2015. Eight trenches were laid to ascertain the outline of the rectangular building. The excavation was conducted by a team having expertise in excavation techniques, ceramics, field survey and biological anthropology and was led by Prof. Dr. Paul Yule of the Heidelberg University in Germany.



Figure 1: Northern façade of the building



Figure 2: Skeletal remains

The highlights of this year's excavation are the architectural details of the Aksumite stepped façades on the North and South sides of the building and the corners of the building except the north-western one. Besides, the excavations have brought to light a good amount of pottery with interesting features, human burials structures with skeletal remains, metal objects and stone artefacts which have been documented thoroughly in a computerised database. These archaeological remains are being analysed to have a concrete picture of the people occupying the site. To understand the archaeological features in and around the fenced site, an archaeological survey was conducted by the team, which has provided interesting insights on the settlement history of the area. In view of the piers decorated with interesting motifs, structural remains, pottery, stone artefacts and burials, the site must be protected with conservation measures and preserved for the future generations.

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