

Sivand Dam Threatens Achaemenid Village

Contributed by Akbar Nemati

Iranian and Italian archeologists conducting excavations at Sivand Dam to salvage the cultural heritage of Tangeh Bolaghi have come across an Achaemenid Village along the Shahi Road. The village will be submerged with the commissioning of Sivand Dam. Tangeh (mountain pass) Bolaghi which extends for 18 km is located eight kilometers from Pasargad historical monument in Fars province. It forms a part of the landscape of Pasargad.

Archeologists believe that Tangeh Bolaghi, which is situated along Shahi Road, was a major access road in ancient Iran that built on the order of King Darius of the Achaemenid Dynasty.

Shahi Road linked Takht-e Jamshid (Persepolis) to the ancient city of Shush. There are remnants of cave dwellers and human settlements ranging from the pre-Christian era up to the advent of Islam.

Head of Irano-Italian team of archeologists Alireza Asgari said that experts initially believed that the village located on Tangeh Bolaghi may have dated back to the pre-Achaemenid era. However with the unearthing of 5,000 pieces of pottery from the area under the alluvial layer, the architectural remnants of the village proved that it belonged to the Achaemenid period.

"It was surprising to unearth a village in its entirety. Initial presumption was that it was used as a temporary habitat, but, we came across a one-hectare village. We believe that since it was located along the Shahi Road, the village was a center for civilization and that further explorations are needed to establish the facts," he said.

The official regretted that the archeologists have only two weeks to continue with the excavations and that the Ministry of Energy has put off the deadline for commissioning Sivand dam. The remaining two weeks are not enough for studying the recently discovered village.