



TEXT AND PHOTO: NEEHARIKA SATYAVADA

WEEKEND GETAWAY

WOW! tells you why **Pakhal Lake** is an ideal camping destination during this time of the year

Camping in Nature's Lap

It's that time of year when one last road trip to the outdoors becomes mandatory before the scorching summer of Telangana sets in. Pakhal Lake in Warangal makes for an ideal destination. Enclosed by a dense canopy of forest which is today the Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary, the Pakhal Lake is undoubtedly the most picturesque lake in Telangana.

This 13th century lake built by a Kakatiya king for the farmers in his kingdom serves as a resting place for migratory birds today, making it the perfect setting to go camping. So pitch a tent

by its beautiful blue waters and spend a leisurely afternoon under the sun, picnicking in the backdrop of birds' song. If you are a birding enthusiast or a nature lover, get here early in the morning and walk along the jungle trails in the Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary. You are sure to sight a nilgai or a sloth bear.

There are plans to develop Pakhal Lake as an eco-tourism destination by the State Department of Tourism. While a resort has already been built and is functional, work is to begin on building a treetop walkway along the forest cover. ■

Best time to visit: October – February, after the rains, when it is cooler.

Getting there: Pakhal Lake is around 205 kilometers from Hyderabad. Take the NH163 and head right via Warangal. It is an hour's drive to the lake from Warangal city.

Midway halt: Warangal. Telangana's heritage city is a treasure trove for architecture lovers. There are numerous temples that are a fine example of the legacy of the Kakatiya art and architecture.

Detour: You can take a detour to Bheemuni Paadam Waterfalls. This waterfall is said to descend from a rock shaped like the foot of Bheema from the Mahabharata. Hence the name, *Bheemuni Paadam*, which is Telugu for Bheema's foot. The waterfall is 28 kilometers from Pakhal Lake.

