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Hockey turf for city soon, another on anvil

Michael Joseph | TNN

Pune: Pune, once the cradle of Indian hockey, is set to get a fillip with the laying of two new artificial turfs. While one of the turfs has been identified for the National Defence Academy (NDA) at Khadakwasla — in fact, this one is set to be laid within the next fortnight — the other has been sanctioned for the Bombay Engineer Group (BEG), Khadki.

Presently, the city has two artificial hockey surfaces — one at Nehrunagar in Pimpri and the other at the Balewadi sports complex. A third turf has been under the consideration of the Khadki Cantonment Board (KCB) since long and has only just received the nod from the ministry of defence.

The city is, therefore, expected to have five artificial surfaces in the near future, far more than what most major cities in the country have.

Hockey official Ikram Khan told TOI on Sunday that the poligras material for the NDA surface is already with the academy. He said the NDA authorities have agreed to allow players from the local circuit to practise on this turf. "It will be a boon for players as well as organisers of



The Pimpri surface, which presently hosts the most tournaments

hockey tournaments in the city," he added.

According to a source, the turf was sanctioned for the NDA's diamond jubilee celebrations held this year.

Meanwhile, the sanction for the BEG turf was given by Army headquarters recently, an army source said. "However, the turf will be laid only in the next financial year. The project would cost around Rs 4 crore," the source added.

As for the Khadki turf, the sanction recently came from the ministry of defence, KCB vice-president Manish Anand said. The project will come up on eight acres of land near the Khadki Post office, he added.