

# M EXPRESS

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Landslide had occurred near Sikkim Rehabilitation Centre at Mile 32, which brought the national highway traffic to a

stand still for nearly two hours. Commuters had to queue up for several hours in the morning for the traffic to return to normalcy at 11 am.

A tree that was uprooted at Rangpo IBM area also blocked the Rangpo-Singtam stretch for six hours.

The Rangpo-Melli road was also disturbed for an hour. Duga, Cheuribotey and Singtam remained disturbed for two hours. However, local residents played an active role to clear the debris.

The landslides near Rorathang Bridge disrupted the Rangpo-Rhenock road for four hours while another landslide at Sirwani brought the Singtam-Mangan road to a standstill. It is suspected that the Singtam-Mangan stretch may take another two days for the traffic to resume.

## US company makes presentation on artificial grass turf for Paljor Stadium

Staff Reporter

**GANGTOK, October 8:** In a first sign of hope for the football pitch of Paljor Stadium which has been disintegrating into a wetland lately during rainfall, a US based multinational company made a presentation today in front of concerned stakeholders here at the conference hall of the stadium for evolving the pitch into the next generation artificial grass, FieldTurf.

State sports minister NK Pradhan, Gangtok MLA Dorjee Namgyal Bhutia (who had highlighted the need for artificial turf at Paljor Stadium during this year's budget session in the Assembly) and executive members of Sikkim Football Association including working president BK Roka and general secretary Menla Ethenpa witnessed the 15 minute presentation by Rupesh Tiku, national sales manager of FieldTurf Tarkett.

The company is a global leader in artificial grass and sports surfaces and boasts a clientele of NFL

from English Premier League and Spanish La Liga. The company is also recommended by FIFA.

Top clubs like Arsenal, Liverpool and Barcelona have artificial grass in their football stadiums.

The company has already delivered the first artificial football turf of SAARC nations at Goa in 2004 and recently completed the Salt Lake Stadium football turf project. The artificial turf at Salt Lake Stadium fetched great appreciation during the recent IFA Shield tournament as the pitch stood firm and impervious against the monsoon onslaught.

Highlighting the success of artificial turf for sporting events especially American football and soccer, Mr. Tiku said that the company's patented artificial grass 'FieldTurf' is the second generation of artificial grass in the world after astro turf. The 'FieldTurf' is non-allergic, non-toxic and above all requires zero-maintenance during its stipulated life of 15 years cutting down maintenance costs.

ball pitch at Paljor Stadium costs Rs. 15 lakhs for maintenance.

Another big advantage of the 'FieldTurf' is that it's unmatched water drainage prowess at the rate of 14 inches per hour. You need a flood of Biblical proportions to stop a match in a 'FieldTurf' pitch.

No weather can stop FieldTurf, said Mr. Tiku. He added that the 'FieldTurf' pitch can withstand temperatures up to 150 degree Celsius and the pitch remains lush green even after extensive use daily.

Mr. Tiku said that a FieldTurf stadium can be used for commercial ventures and rented out for conventions or other ground based sports like hockey and cricket can be played.

After the presentation, sports minister Pradhan enquired about the timeframe and costs to install artificial grass into a stadium like Paljor Stadium.

It was replied that that it will take five months to install the artificial grass in Paljor Stadium at a cost of around Rs. 3.5 crore.