Hooper feels a little sorry

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados. May 2: All-rounder Carl Hooper, who stunned West In dies cricket by announcing his retirement on the eve of the World Cup, has admitted his timing was poor, reports Reuters.

"Looking at it, I should have done it (retire) after the last Test (against Australia) and given the selectors a chance probably to play someone in the seven one-days and then take him on to the World Cup," Hooper told the Barbados Advocate newspaper on Friday.

"But I was hoping to get involved in the seven one-dayers and go on to the World Cup and call it quits after the World Cup but I just couldn't hold it."

Hooper, 32, retired last weekend after playing in the sixth one-day international against Australia. He has been replaced in the 15-man squad by young Jamaican all-rounder Ricardo Powell.

He believes West Indies are still capable of winning the World Cup even though his sudden retirement could affect the team and the plans of captain Brian Lara.

"He will have to change plans and if I put myself in his shoes and I had somebody like Brian retiring on me, it would have been disappointing," he

"But at the end of the day I had to weigh that up against somebody going out there and being one hundred per cent totally committed to West Indies cause and I decided to retire."

Hooper, who made his debut for West Indies in 1987 and played 80 tests and 182 one-day internationals, said he still hoped to attend some of the matches during the World Cup which opens in England on May

"I will be there for a little while and I will go to the dressing rooms and support them and hopefully they can go all the way. There is no reason for me to stay away," Hooper said.

"These are fellows that have probably spent more time with than my family in the last 12 years, so there's no reason for me just to totally shut out and walk away. It is something that I can't really do, you

Big wins for Mirpur Bangla, Wills Little

ANZ Grindlays National School Cricket

Eight teams won their respective matches in the ANZ Grindlays Bank 17th national schools cricket championship at different city venues yesterday, reports UNB.

Green Herald International beat Radiant International by 3 wickets at the Orient Club ground.

Green Herald scored 216 for 7 in 33.2 overs, replying to Radiant's 211 for 9 in 35 overs

At the Uttara Friends Club ground, Motijheel Govt. Boys outplayed Hammadia High by 7 wickets.

in 35 overs.

Hammadia scored 141 for 9

In replay, Motifheel made 142 for 3 in 21.3 overs.

New Light High beat Bidyaniketon Pre-Cadet by 5 wickets at the Kalabagan Člub ground. Bidyaniketon scored 150 for

all in 32.4 overs. In reply, New Light reached

their target of 151 in 28.5 overs losing 5 wickets. At the Mirpur Outer Sta-

dium, Shaheed Lt Selim Shikkhalaya beat Kadamtala Purbo Basabo High by 35 runs. Selim Shikkhalaya made 191 for all in 33.2 overs.

In reply, Kadamtala were all out for 156 in 34.5 overs. Nabakumar Institution defeated Wari High by 22 runs at

the Mohammadpur Eidgah ground. Nabakumar made 206 for all in 34 overs. In reply, Wari scored 184 for all in 32.1 overs.

At the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, Mirpur Bangla High crushed Rashid Adarsha High by 9 wicket. Rashid Adarsha scored paltry 72 for all in 22.5

overs. In reply, Mirpur Bangla reached their target scoring 74 in 8.4 overs losing only one wicket.

South Bridge defeated Oxford International by 6 runs at the City Club ground. Oxford Int'l were all out for 164 in 34.3 overs in reply to South Bridge's

170 runs for all in 32.5 overs. At the Kalindi ground, Wills Little Flower earned a massive 9 wickets victory over Udayan Bidyalaya. Udayan made 137 for all in 29.1 overs.

In reply, Wills Little Flower reached their target of 138 in 20.1 overs for the loss of one wicket.

Botham sings for Mullally

LONDON, May 2: Leicestershire and England fast bowler Alan Mullally has been given a World Cup boost by lan Botham. reports AFP.

The former England great described Mullally as "the most improved bowler in the country over the last 12 months by a country mile".

Mullally has confirmed his fitness for the World Cup which starts in two weeks by playing in the current County Championship game against Lancashire at Grace Road.

"I think the England selectors have got it pretty much right because the seamers will play an important part in our conditions.

"He seems okay although he did complain of a bit of stiffness after his first bowling spell," said Leicestershire manager Jack Birkenshaw.

'83: Teamwork did the trick



et's World Cup finally came of age in 1983, its third edition providing all the drama, shocks and surprises that the

LONDON, May

2 (AFP): Crick-

previous tournaments had lacked. The fact that India took the trophy, thus depriving Clive Lloyd and the West Indies of a glorious hat-trick, was perhaps

the biggest upset of them all. With five defeats and only one previous World Cup victory to their name - and that against lowly East Africa - India had begun the event as 66-1 outsiders.

The so-called lesser sides, however, were beginning to develop strategies to give them a greater say in the 60-over oneday game, an evolution reflected in the fact that, for the first time, each of the eight nations taking part in 1983 recorded at least one victory.

This was to be a World Cup based not so much on largerthan-life heroes than on canny team work.

Once again, there were two groups of four, but this time they played each other twice before the semi-finals.

The drama began from the very start. On the opening day of the tournament, Kim Hughes' Australians lost to Zimbabwe, the only non-Test side in the field and making their debut in the Cup, by 13 runs.

That result - perhaps matched only by the West Indies' defeat to Kenya in 1996 remains the greatest upset in World Cup history.

Austrana's topsy-turvy form they beat Kapil Dev's India in group B by 162 runs at Trent Bridge, then lost the Chelmsford return match by 118 - saw them crash to their greatest humiliation, with just two wins out of six.

The West Indies, however, with most of their 1979 stars still in harness and strengthened by such newcomers as Malcolm Marshall and Jeffrey Dujon, appeared as powerful as ever.

They won five out of their six group games - significantly, the one side to trip them up was India, with no front-line West Indian batsman reaching 30 in the 34-run defeat - while England topped their group with an identical record.

The Indians highlight, however - 175 not out by Kapil Dev against Zimbabwe after his side had been reduced to a desperate 17 for five - sadly did not get the coverage it deserved after BBC camera crews went on strike. The tournament took a

breath in the semi-finals, with India comfortably seeing off England at Old Trafford and the West Indies breezing past Pakistan by six and eight wickets respectively. The final on June 25, however, made up for the pause in

excitement. Not that many people would have favoured India after 54.4 overs of the match.

By then, the West Indian quicks had skittled them for 183, with Andy Roberts, the pick of the bowlers with three for 32 - including the prize scalp of Sunil Gavaskar - off 10 fiery overs.

When Mohinder Armanath the semi-final hero against England with 46 and two wickets for 27 against England trapped Michael Robert leg before with one of his slow floaters, the West Indies had been bowled out for 140, 43 short with eight overs still remaining.

While the hugely talented Kapil Dev, one of the game's greats, was clearly the cornerstone of India's 1983 side - he averaged 60.60 with the bat and



off the coveted 1983 World Cup on the balcony at Lord's. — Star file photo

Every top order batsman had made a start but failed to progress, the top score of 38 coming from Krishnamachari Srikkanth.

The game seemed as good as decided as the West Indies reached 50 for one wicket in reply when Kapil Dev suddenly set off to catch Vivian Richards in the deep. The dismissal proved the

turning point, the innings unravelling in the face of neat. tight bowling and intelligent field placement.

took 12 wickets at 20.41 - it was Armanath, a batsman who bowled a bit, who again won the man-of-the-match award.

His 26 runs and three lowerorder wickets for 12 off seven overs might not have compared with the heroics of previous final match-winners Clive Lloyd in 1975 (102 not out) and Vivian Richards (138 not out) in 1979.

But it confirmed a trend that outsiders have a chance against the one-day greats if they can counter brazen ability with intelligence.



NEW DELHI, May 2 (AFP): Mohammad Azharuddin's Indians, struggling to find the winning

touch, find themselves under unwanted pressure at the World Cup - all because of the country's triumph in the tournament 16

years ago. When the cup was last held in England in 1983, Kapil Dev's men snatched the title from the West Indies to signal India's greatest sporting achievement.

As Azharuddin's team prepare for the upcoming edition in England starting on May 14. they are regularly reminded of that win with a stern warning:

'We will not settle for less.' Millions of dollars have been spent on television spots highlighting the achievements of 'Kapil's Devils'. The present squad was even made to play a

day-night friendly against the 1983 team prior to their depar-"The success of 1983 should serve as a morale-booster to Azhar's men," said business tycoon Pawan Kant Munjal, the

brain behind the "Good Luck India" campaign. "Kapil's team showed the way. If they could do it, so can

the current team." But the hype over the 1983 triumph has not gone down well with some of the present crick-

"It was undoubtedly a great achievement, but these are different times, different opponents," said one player, who did not want to be identified. "It's crazy to believe that In-

dia will win once again just because the tournament is being held in England. "We will, of course, try our

best, but it is so difficult to predict one-day cricket. Anything can happen.

India go into the World Cup on the back of embarrassing one-day losses to arch-rivals Pakistan at home and at Sharjah. Their last title came a year ago, when they beat Zimbabwe

and New Zealand. So disenchanted has the media become with Azharuddin that they wanted him replaced as captain by his deputy Ajay

Jadeja. "All this loose talk does not bother me, but it is putting unnecessary pressure on the rest of the team," said Azharuddin, captain for a third successive

World Cup. The gloom, however, has a significant silver lining - the return of star batsman Sachin Tendulkar, fully recovered from a back injury which has sidelined him for several

weeks. India's fortunes in the tournament will be determined by how well the 26-year-old bats. India have rarely won important matches recently without a major contribution from the little master.

"We were not half the side without Sachin." Azharuddin admitted. "The entire team will be lifted by his presence."

The skipper believes batting holds the key to success at the World Cup.

"In conditions which favour swing bowlers, the team which bats well will win the Cup - 230-240 could well be winning

scores. India have included seven specialist batsmen in their 15man squad. Alot hinges on good starts by the opening pair of

Tendulkar and Saurav Ganguly. "Unlike in the sub-continent where you can get 100 runs in the first 15 overs, in England one needs to build the innings,

Azharuddin said. "It's not all slam-bang at the start. You will need to have wickets in hand towards the end of the innings.

Seamers Javagal Srinath, Venkatesh Prasad and Ajit Agarkar will find the heavy English conditions to their liking, but leg-spinner Anil Kumble also needs to come good to restrict the opponents.

India find themselves in a tough preliminary pool that includes hosts England, favourites South Africa, defending champions Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe and Kenya. Three teams from the group will advance to the super-six stage. "It's good to be in a difficult

group, you can't afford to relax," Azharuddin said. "I'm positive we will make it."



Titi Camara (R) of Olympique Marseille and Lyon's Jean-Christophe battle for possession during their French First Division match at Marseille on April 30. - AFP photo

Rixon has high hopes

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand, May 2: New Zealand cricket coach Steve Rixon wants his team to be the quiet achievers of this year's World Cup, reports AP.

When Rixon's three-year term as coach began he was, at times, given to making bold predic-tions for the side which they could not match.

Before the team's departure from Christchurch on Sunday, he expressed a quiet confidence in his charges' ability to challenge for cricket's ultimate prize.

"I'm happy with the players and the preparation we have," said Rixon. "This is perhaps the most open World Cup and it will take a pretty good punter to pick the top six." Rixon expects other teams to

be wary of New Zealand after having shown the ability to beat the top-ranked sides. "What we will do we when get over there is lift the intensity level. We want to up the ante with the fielding because that is

a vital area. A brilliant piece of fielding can turn a game. "Now we have everybody fully fit, we have got aggressive toporder batsmen and some quality players the likes of (Chris) Cairns, (Adam) Parore and (Dion) Nash in the middle."

While admitting the side did not have a strike bowling weapon in the Glenn, McGrath mould, Rixon said he was again comfortable with the team's bowling resources.

He said a key factor of the campaign was the team's flexibility - having many bowling and batting options available for various conditions and situations.

uddin does not know, it is probably not worth

The Indian captain has played more one-day internationals and scored more runs than any other player in history, but he would trade those records for an Indian victory at the World Cup.

"Records are meant to be broken but there's nothing like a World Cup win," says the 36-year-old, who leads India in a third successive World Cup and plays in his fourth. it's a meat previously

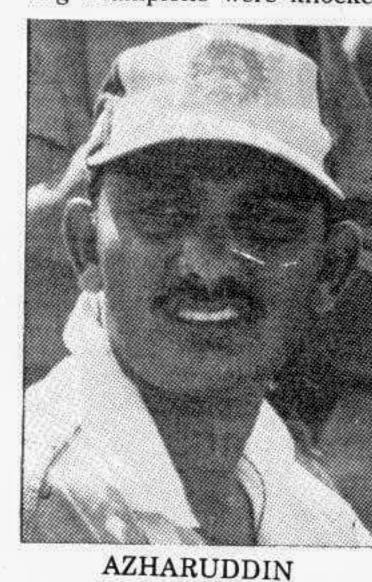
achieved only by West Indian Clive Lloyd, who led victorious campaigns in the first two World Cups in 1975 and 1979, only to be denied a hat-trick in 1983 by India. Azharuddin, who made his

international debut a year after India's shock triumph, remembers India's finest cricketing hour clearly. "I will never forget that moment when Kapil lifted the

World Cup on the Lord's balcony," Azharuddin said. "It was a very emotional moment and made us proud to be Indians." With the World Cup returning to England, Azharuddin

hopes luck will once again favour the Indians. The wristy batsman was referred to as "God's gift" to the national game when he burst onto the world stage in 1984 with centuries in his first three

the World Cup and that hurts. because it's the stage everyone wants to do well on," Azharuddin says.



out by England in the semi-final at home in Bombay.

Under Azhar's leadership Down Under in 1992, India failed to pass the league stage and four years later made a shameful exit from the semi-final at Calcutta when crowd trouble forced the match being awarded to the dominant Sri Lankans.

Azharuddin's decision to field that day, despite being forewarned that the wearing Eden Gardens wicket would favour the side batting first,

cost him the captaincy. The worst, however, was yet to come as Azharuddin was dropped from the team for the Independence Cup at home in 1997 after a poor tour of the

West Indies. "That was the lowest point of my career," he said. "I had served my country for so long and to be omitted from the celebrations of India's 50 years of independence hurt badly."

Yet he not only fought back to regain his place in the team but was made skipper once again last year after the selec-tors decided that the burden of captaincy was affecting Sachin Tendulkar's batting.

Azharuddin's second innings as skipper has been rewarding, with India winning five of their eight one-day series in 1998 besides a 2-1 Test win over Mark Taylor's Australians at

But he knows that nothing short of victory this time will satisfy India's fanatical fans and the selectors. Even before the tournament, there have been rumblings that he should make way for a more attacking captain.

If India fail to win the World Cup, Azharuddin may again be forced to give way to Tendulkar.

"I don't care if I stay captain or not," Azharuddin says. "But if we don't win the World Cup, it will not be because of lack of effort on my part. A captain is only as good as the team under

TEAM TRACK RECORD

LONDON, May 2 (AFP): India's World Cup track record: 1975-1996: Played 36, won 18, lost 17, no result 1 Winners: 1983 Semi-finalists: 1987, 1996

Eliminated after group stage: 1975, 1979, 1992

Played 3, won 1, lost 2

Group matches Lord's, London, June 7 - England bt India by 202 runs. England 334-4 (Amiss 137, Fletcher 68, Old 51 not), India 132-3 Leeds, June 11 - India bt East Africa by 10 wkts. East Africa 120 (Bedi 12-8-6-1), India 123-0 (Gavaskar 65 not, Engineer 54 not) Manchester, June 15 - New Zealand bt India by 4 wkts. India 230 (Abid Ali 70, McKechnie 3-49), New Zealand 233-6 (Turner 114 not)

1979 Played 3, lost 3

Group matches Birmingham, June 9 - West Indies bt India by 9 wkts. India 190 (Viswanath 75, Holding 4-33), West Indies 194-1 (Greenidge 106 not) Leeds, June 13 - New Zealand bt India by 8 wkts. India 182 (Gavaskar 55, Cairns 3-36, McKechnie 3-24), New Zealand 183-2 (Edgar 84 not)

Manchester, June 16, 18 - Sri Lanka bt India by 47 runs, Sri Lanka 238-5 (Wettimuny 67, Dias 50, Mendis 64, Amarnath 3-40), India 191 (Opatha 3-31, de Silva 3-29)

Played 8, won 6, lost 2

Group matches Manchester, June 9, 10 - India bt West Indies by 34 runs. India 262-8 (Sharma 89), West Indies 228 (Binny 3-48, Shastri 3-26) Leicester, June 11 - India bt Zimbabwe by 5 wkts. Zimbabwe 155

(Lal 3-27), India 157-5 (Patil 50) Nottingham, June 13 - Australia bt India by 162 runs, Australia 320-9 (T. Chappell 110, Hughes 52, Yallop 66 not, Kapil Dev 5-43), India 158 (MacLeay 6-39) Oval, London, June 15 - West Indies bt India by 66 runs. West Indies

282-9 (Richards 119, Binny 3-71), India 216 (Amarnath 80, Holding Tunbridge Wells, June 18 - India bt Zimbabwe by 31 runs. India 266-8 (Kapil Dev 175 not, Rawson 3-47, Curran 3-65). Zimbabwe 235 (Curran 73, Lal 3-42)

Chelmsford, June 20 - India bt Australia by 118 runs. India 247 (Hogg 3-40, Thomson 3-51), Australia 129 (Lal 4-20, Binny 4-29) Semifinals Manchester, June 22 - India bt England by 6 wkts. England 213

(Kapil Dev 3-35), India 217-4 (Sharma 61, Patil 51) Final Lord's, London, June 25 - India bt West Indies by 43 runs. India 183 (Roberts 3-32), West Indies 140 (Lal 3-31, Amarnath 7-0-12-3)

Played 7, won 5, lost 2 Group matches

Madras, October 9 - Australia bt India by 1 run. Australia 270-6 (Marsh 110), India 269 (Srikkanth 70, Sidhu 73, McDermott 4-56) Bangalore, India, October 14 - India bt New Zealand by 16 runs. India 252-7 (Sidhu 75, Kapil Dev 72 not out, Patel 3-36), New Zealand 236-8 (Rutherford 75, Jones 64) Bombay, October 17 - India bt Zimbabwe by 8 wkts. Zimbabwe 135

(Pycroft 61, Prabhakar 4-19, M. Singh 3-21), India 136-2 New Delhi, October 22 - India bt Australia by 56 runs. India 289-6 (Gavaskar 61, Sidhu 51, Vengsarkar 63, Azharuddin 54 not, McDermott 3-61), Australia 233 (Boon 62, Azharuddin 3-19) Ahmedabad, India, October 26 - India bt Zimbabwe by 7 wkts. Zimbabwe 191-7 (Arnott 60), India 194-3 (Gavaskar 50, Sidhu 55) Nagpur, India, October 31 - India bt New Zealand by 9 wkts. New Zealand 221-9 (Sharma 3-51), India 224-1 (Srikkanth 75, Gavaskar 103 not) Semifinals

Bombay, November 5 - England bt India by 35 runs, England 254-6

TEAM TRACK RECORD

(Gatting 56, M. Singh 3-54), India 219 (Azharuddin 64, Foster 3-47, Hemmings 4-52)

1992 Played 8, won 2, lost 5, abandoned 1

Preliminary round

Perth, February 22 - England bt India by 9 runs England 236-9 (Gooch 51, Smith 91), India 227 (Shastri 57, Reeve 3-

Mackay, Australia, February 28 - India v Sri Lanka match abandoned Brisbane, March 1 - Australia bt India by 1 run Australia 237-9 (Jones 90, Kapil Dev 3-41, Prabhakar 3-41) India 234 (after target revised to 235 off 47 overs, Azharuddin 93, Moody

Sydney, March 4 - India bt Pakistan by 43 runs India 216-7 (Tendulkar 54 not out, Mushtaq 3-59), Pakistan 173 (Sohail 62)

Hamilton, New Zealand, March 7 - India bt Zimbabwe by 55 runs India 203-7 (Tendulkar 81, Traicos 3-35, Burmester 3-36) Zimbabwe 104-1 (after set 158 in 19 overs) Wellington, March 10 - West Indies bt India by 5 wkts

India 197 (Azharuddin 61, Cummins 4-33), West Indies 195-5 (after set 194 in 46 overs, Arthurton 58 not out) Dunedin, March 12 - New Zealand bt India by 4 wkts India 230-6 (Azharuddin 55, Tendulkar 84), New Zealand 231-6

(Greatbatch 73, Jones 67 not out, Prabhakar 46-3) Adelaide, March 15 - South Africa bt India by 6 wkts India 180-6 (Azharuddin 79), South Africa 181-4 (Hudson 53, Kirsten 84)

Played 7, won 4, lost 3

Group matches Cuttack, India, February 18 - India bt Kenya by 7 wkts. Kenya 199-6 (Tikolo 65, Kumble 3-28), India 203-3 (Jadeja 53, Tendulkar 127 not)

Gwalior, India, February 21 - India bt West Indies by 5 wtks. West Indies 173 (Prabhakar 3-39, Kumble 3-35), India 174-5 (Tendulkar Bombay, February 27 - Australia bt India by 16 runs, Australia 258 (M. Waugh 126, Taylor 59), India 242 (Tendulkar 90, Manjrekar 62,

Fleming 5-36) New Delhi, March 2 - Sri Lanka bt India by 6 wkts. India 271-3 (Tendulkar 137, Azharuddin 72 not), Sri Lanka 272-4 (Jayasuriya 79, Tillekeratne 70 not) Kanpur, India, March 6 - India bt Zimbabwe by 40 runs. India 247-

5 (Sidhu 80, Kambli 106), Zimbabwe 207 (Raju 3-30 Quarterfinal Bangalore, India, March 9 - India bt Pakistan by 39 runs. India 287-8 (Sidhu 93), Pakistan 248-9 (Aamer Sohail 55, Prasad 3-10)

Semifinal Calcutta, March 13 - Sri Lanka bt India by default (game abandoned after crowd trouble). Sri Lanka 251-8 (de Silva 66, Mahanama 58, Srinath 34-3), India 120-8 (Tendulkar 65, Jayasuriya 3-12)

RECORDS AGAINST OTHERS

v Australia: Played 6, won 2 (1983, 1987), lost 4 (1983, 1987,

v England: Played 4, won 1 (1983), lost 3 (1975, 1987, 1992) v New Zealand: Played 5, won 2 (1987 x2), lost 3 (1975, 1979,

v West Indies: Played 6, won 3 (1983 x2, 1996), lost 3 (1979, 1983,

Others: v East Africa: Played 1, won 1 (1975). v Kenya: Played 1,

v Zimbabwe: Played 6, won 6 (1983 x2, 1987 x2, 1992, 1996)

v Pakistan: Played 2, won 2 (1992, 1996) v South Africa: Played 1, lost 1 (1992) v Sri Lanka: Played 4, lost 3 (1979, 1996 x2), abandoned 1 (1992)

Bordeaux's slip keeps Marseille

in front PARIS, May 2: Rennes beat Paris St Germain 2-1 to stay on course for France's third European Champions League berth yesterday as the top flight reclaimed St Etienne and looked set to hail Olympique Marseille | bonanza in India, where the as champions, reports Reuters.

Second Division leaders St Etienne, European Cup finalists in 1967 and France's top side in the 1960s and 1970s, secured one of the three promotion places with a 2-2 home draw against Ajaccio.

Rennes, who scored an 89thminute winner through striker Cedric Bardon, are one point behind third-placed Olympique Lyon. Lyon held Marseille to a

points in their last two games. Marseille, who squandered a string of chances against Lyon and ultimately had to thank goalkeeper Stephane Porato for two crucial saves, went two points clear with three games to go as Girondins Bordeaux lost their second successive game.

Bordeaux, who surrendered

picked up only one point out of a possible nine and not scored in three games. France striker Sylvain Wiltord, top scorer in the First Division with 19 goals, has not found the net in five games after hitting two in a 3-2 win at Nancy seven weeks ago.

India, advertisers' heaven NEW DELHI, May mass appeal in India. This year, there is nothing to compete cricket World Cup

2: The upcoming World Cup has unleashed a multi-milliondollar advertising

sport's quasi-religious status ensures two weeks of unprecedented market reach, reports AFP. India Inc. plans to splurge 10 billion rupees (235 million dollars) on advertising and promotions before and during

the tournament, which begins

in England on May 14. "Since most Indians are cricket-crazy, companies consider it savvy to jump onto the cricket bandwagon to promote their brands," said Rajat Banerjee of New Delhi-based advertising firm, Iris India Ltd.

Media buying agencies say

Indian companies have already

committed 4.3 billion rupees

(101 million dollars) to advertise on television, radio and in print during the Cup. State-run television network Doordarshan and satellite broadcaster Star-ESPN, which will carry the matches, say 50odd Indian companies have already snapped up all their

advertising slots.

"We sold out all our advertising space by end-February. A good ten weeks before the event," said Sidharth Ray. chairman of Doordarshan's marketing agent Stracon. "The World Cup outstrips any other sporting event in its

with it as a revenue earner." said Ray. Indian Test cricketers enjoy the sort of public attention lav-

ished on Hollywood film stars.

and the deep-rooted passion for

the game means upwards of 80 million Indians will be tuning into the Cup. "We have already sold advertisement slots for 570 million rupees (13.47 million dollars) to 25 Indian companies," said Ray. Castrol India, Pepsi, Coca-

and Hero Honda account for a significant chunk of the latest rush of cricket-led advertising. Star-ESPN has paid 16 million dollars to the England and Wales Cricket Board for telecasting all the matches during

Cola, Samsung, LG Electronics

the 42-day cricket tournament. "We will book handsome profits," said an ESPN official. This confidence stems from the fact that the main sponsors on Star-ESPN have already put up 90 million rupees [2.1 million dollars) each, while 25 companies have snapped up all the available 30-second spots being hawked at 315,000 rupees

(7,400 dollars) a pop. Indian companies have also drawn up a budget for carrying out product launches during the World Cup.

Soft drink concentrate maker Rasna Enterprise is launching a new concentrate called "Yorker." to be promoted by India's 1983 World Cup hero Kapil Dev.

tronic manufacturer Videocon International Ltd. is launching 11 new products ranging from televisions to refrigerators during the Cup. "We will up production by

80,000 units in May to take our

television production capacity

Similarly, consumer elec-

to 200,000 television sets per month. This should enable us to meet the spurt in demand," said a company official. Videocon is spending 250 million rupees (6.0 million dollars) on an advertising blitzkrieg. It is also wooing cus-

tomers by giving them refunds on their purchases if they win a cricket quiz. Japanese electronic firm Aiwa is making sure that its rival Videocon doesn't bowl it out

of the World Cup. Aiwa is offering customers refunds on music systems and television sets for every step India takes to the final, up to a maximum 6,000 rupees off if it wins the Cup.

Aiwa expects monthly sales of its low-priced television sets to leapfrog to 168,000 units during the April to June cricketing period. "We are hoping to better our monthly sales average of 35,000

units by offering customers this

unique cricket-led discount," said an Aiwa marketing execu-Aiwa has also promised a

Mercedes car to each of the Indian players if they win the



