

Turkish House passes law to keep repentant 'terrorists' out of jail

ANKARA, Aug 27: The Turkish parliament late Thursday voted into law a bill that conditionally allows some members of terror groups to avoid prison sentences if they turn themselves in, reports AFP.

Putin visits Dagestan

MOSCOW, Aug 27: Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin on Friday made a surprise visit to Dagestan to "see the situation" for himself after nearly three weeks of fighting there between Islamic insurgents and Russian forces, the government press service said, reports AFP.

India snaps last air links with Afghanistan

NEW DELHI Aug 27: India has frozen commercial flights to Kabul, snapping the main lifeline for thousands of Afghan refugees here who regularly travelled back home to tend to family and business, reports AFP.

Nepal's flood, mudslide death toll hits 165

KATHMANDU, Aug 27: Twenty-five more people have died in floods and mudslides in Nepal bringing the death toll to 165, a home ministry source said Friday, reports AFP.

Bin Laden is renegade CIA agent: Gaddafi

CAIRO, Aug 27: Suspected international terrorist leader Osama bin Laden is a renegade former employee of the US Central Intelligence Agency, Libyan leader Moamer Gaddafi alleged in an interview published today, reports AP.

Such people, who were "a fabrication of the American intelligence services", later turned against the United States and began attacking its interests, he said.

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Pak police detain hundreds of PPP, MQM activists

KARACHI, Aug 27: Pakistan police Friday continued a crackdown against two opposition parties for a second day, arresting hundreds of workers from the two parties which are waging a campaign against the government, political sources said, reports AFP.

Police officials said around 200 workers, mostly from the PPP, had been detained as part of preventive measures to maintain law and order.

The PPP is politically the largest party in Sindh, followed by the MQM which is protesting against the government over alleged persecution of the Mohajir community.



Women give sweets and fruits to boys in gala dresses wearing painted moustaches on the occasion of the 'Gai Jatra' festival in Kathmandu Friday.

UN slams Jakarta's handling of militia violence in E Timor

DILI, East Timor, Aug 27: The United Nations on Friday led international condemnation of Indonesia's handling of militia violence in East Timor as an exiled separatist leader called for a UN peacekeeping force, reports AFP.

ponents and supporters of independence on the final day of the vote campaign on Friday.

Indian bus disaster 41 bodies recovered

NEW DELHI, Aug 27: Rescuers had pulled out 41 bodies Friday from a bus that plunged into an abandoned reservoir in southern India with some 80 passengers on board, the Press Trust of India said, reports AFP.

Explosives seized from Tigers: Trader burnt to death in India

Police seized 42 kilograms (92 pounds) of high explosives from a suspected hideout of Tamil Tiger rebels in a tea-growing area near Colombo, thus averting an attack on the capital, a senior police official said Friday, AP reports from Colombo.

The trader, after being set ablaze by the miscreants, was rushed to the sub-divisional hospital at Karanjia in a critical condition where he succumbed to his injuries, the sources said.

Blast in coal mine kills 19 in China: An explosion in a coal mine in central China on Tuesday killed 19 people and left 36 missing and feared dead, a newspaper report said Friday, AP reports from Beijing.

The gas explosion occurred during a power outage at a state-owned mine in Hanzhuang village near the city of Pingdingshan in Henan province, the Workers Daily reported.



A Cessna 206 light aircraft has penetrated a roof of a house Thursday in the Langata district, near a Nairobi airport.

Yeltsin accused of accepting bribes

ROME, Aug 27: A man named as a key figure in a probe into a Kremlin financial scandal has accused Russian President Boris Yeltsin of accepting bribes, the Italian daily Corriere della Sera reported Friday, reports AFP.

Indian troops rush to set up winter posts in Kashmir

DRASS, India, Aug 27: Indian troops are racing against time to build snow bunkers and stockpile enough food to survive their first winter in the mountains along the disputed Kashmir border with Pakistan, reports AFP.

Kashmiri rebels issue election warning to state employees

SRINAGAR, India, Aug 27: Muslim separatist rebels fighting Indian rule in Kashmir have threatened to punish state employees doing official election work during next month's national polls, a daily said today, reports AFP.

Militant violence has escalated in the disputed state of Kashmir, administered in part by India's arch-rival Pakistan, since the dates for the upcoming elections were announced.

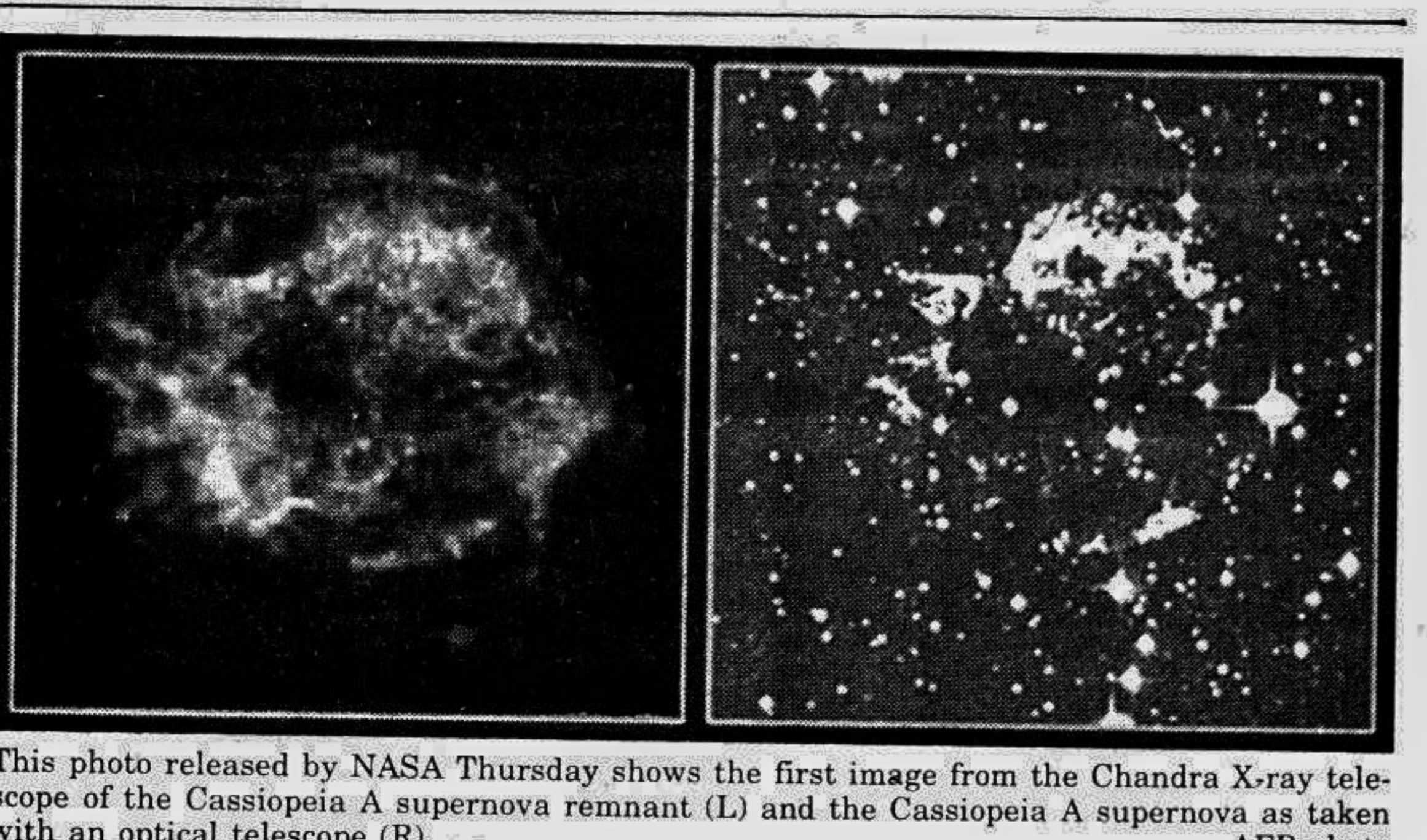
forces into their pre-election debates on the recent Kashmir crisis.

I can't express my love for India in words: Sonia

BELLARY, India, Aug 27: Indian opposition leader Sonia Gandhi said Friday she was "tied to the Indian soil" as she opened her campaign in the rural seat where she will contest next month's general elections, reports AFP.

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This photo released by NASA Thursday shows the first image from the Chandra X-ray telescope of the Cassiopeia A supernova remnant (L) and the Cassiopeia A supernova as taken with an optical telescope (R).

US Coast Guard rescue 75 migrants from Pacific

WASHINGTON, Aug 26: More than 75 Asian migrants, many of them malnourished and dehydrated, were found adrift in the Pacific on a 140-foot (43-meter) fishing vessel that had been at sea at least 30 days, the US Coast Guard said Thursday, reports AFP.

The ship was disabled and adrift about 560 kilometers (350 miles) north of Midway when it sent a high frequency radio distress call early Monday morning, Chief Petty Officer David Santos told AFP.

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'270,000 N Koreans died from famine'

SEOUL, Aug 27: Around 270,000 people have starved to death in the past four years in North Korea because of a severe famine, South Korean officials said Friday.

North Korea also denies reports that up to three million people have died of starvation and related illnesses, but has conceded that the figure stands at around 220,000.

Reliable figures and information are however notoriously difficult to obtain from secretive Stalinist North Korea.