



The New York Times

INTERNATIONAL EDITION | WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2017

Jacob Zuma and a stolen South Africa

Ivor Chipkin

OPINION

JOHANNESBURG South Africa's ruling African National Congress will meet on Dec. 16 to elect a new party president. It will do so in the throes of a debilitating crisis. A decade of President Jacob Zuma's leadership has seen Africa's oldest liberation movement become a caricature of corruption and factionalism.

The A.N.C.'s electoral support is in steep decline. In the 2016 municipal elections it lost control of the capital city Pretoria, as well as South Africa's economic powerhouse, Johannesburg. Its historical alliance with the South African Communist Party is all but dead. The Congress of South African Trade Unions, its other partner, is in deep crisis. It is unlikely that the A.N.C. will win the 2019 national and provincial elections outright.

At the center of the party's troubles is a business family, the Guptas. Led by three brothers — Ajay Gupta, Atul Gupta and Rajesh Gupta — the family moved to South Africa in 1993 from Saharanpur, a small, impoverished town in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh.

When the Guptas arrived in South Africa, they astutely acquired citizenship as naturalized "blacks" to benefit from the country's black economic empowerment laws. The Guptas, who started their South African life with a computer business, befriended and employed President Zuma's son, Duduzane Zuma, and eventually appointed him a director of one of their companies.

In this way they positioned their various enterprises as black businesses, waging a relentless battle against "white monopoly capital." They even started a newspaper and a television channel to advance the cause. It earned them generous support from President Zuma, who has been ruling South Africa since 2009. The Guptas rose to be among the wealthiest people in South Africa.

Under the Zuma administration, the Guptas have become part of a shadow state, where political power is often exercised from their private residence in Johannesburg rather than through constitutional bodies, the South African cabinet or the A.N.C. itself. As their influence has grown, they have treated the country as their private estate. They used the country's main military airport to land guests for a family

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Technology workers in Beijing. Many educated and ambitious white-collar workers drawn to the city's new economy complain of being treated like second-class citizens.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIAN DEKOSTER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

In Russia, the political fight is who follows Putin

MOSCOW

With president's reelection assured, a bare-knuckled fight over 2024 succession

BY NEIL MACFARQUHAR

Ask Russian analysts to describe the coming campaign for the March 2018 presidential election and their answers contain a uniform theme: a circus, a carnival, a sideshow.

With the victory of President Vladimir V. Putin assured, the real contest, they say, is the bare-knuckled, no-holds-barred fight to determine who or what comes after him by the end of his next six years in office, in 2024. What might be called the Court of Putin — the top 40 to 50 people in the Kremlin and their oligarch allies — will spend the next presidential term brawling over that future.

When Mr. Putin confirmed last week that he would run again, he might as well have been firing the starting gun for the race toward his succession. He is barred by the Constitution from seeking a third consecutive term, his fifth total, in 2024.

"The election itself does not matter at all," said Gleb O. Pavlovsky, a political analyst and former Kremlin consultant. The people around the president, he added, "are deciding the question of who they themselves will be after Putin. That is the main motive behind this fight: It is a struggle for a place in the system after Putin is gone."

While no one can be certain what Mr. Putin, 65, will do when his next term ends, those in his inner circle are already preparing for the day he leaves the presidency, eager to preserve their power and to avoid any fallout that could follow a change in leadership. With an expiration date on the horizon, his court is beginning to focus more on self-preservation than on serving Mr. Putin.

This jockeying for power is expected to offer all the drama that next year's presidential race will sorely lack. Mostly cloistered for now behind the Kremlin walls, the intrigues are expected to burst into public view with increasing frequency in coming years.

Several internal battles have already erupted publicly, including the dismantling of a respected research university and a startling corruption trial in which a former minister accused of soliciting bribes said he was set up by a former spy who has been a close Putin ally. It is the kind of fight the president would have managed privately in previous years.

"You cannot hide the enormous tension, the enormous degree of uncertainty within the Russian elite," said Konstantin Gaaze, who contributes political analysis to the website of the Carnegie Moscow Center, a policy research

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Sweeping out the strivers

BEIJING

Tech workers are among educated migrants caught up in Beijing's crackdown

BY CHRIS BUCKLEY, SUI-LEE WEE AND ADAM WU

With coding skills, a foreign degree, fluent English and an apartment barely big enough for his espresso maker and two cats, Si Ruomu thought he was the kind of go-getting young tech worker that Beijing needs to thrive in the 21st century.

That was before the police arrived at his apartment building and ordered him and hundreds of others to vacate within 48 hours. Like most of his fellow tenants, Mr. Si is a so-called migrant who had come from elsewhere in China to find work in the capital, which often treats migrants virtually as second-class citizens.

"One minute you're drinking espressos, the next you're being evicted," said Mr. Si, 28, a bespectacled programmer who grew up in northern China and studied computer science in New Zealand.

"I'm starting to think whether people like me have a future in Beijing."

As Beijing has launched its most aggressive drive in decades to rid itself of unwanted migrants, the brunt of the crackdown has fallen on laborers originally from the countryside. But it has also hurt a different kind of migrant: educated and ambitious white-collar workers drawn to the city's new economy of tech, finance and the hospitality industry.

Beijing is a cultural, technological and commercial capital as well as a political one, and the tenements on its outskirts are home to tens of thousands of hopeful young college graduates who have moved here seeking better jobs and better lives.

These job seekers are treated as migrants in their own capital because China's biggest cities are fortresses of official privilege, especially Beijing. The government gives inhabitants who hold permanent residence papers, called hukou, more generous access to housing, schools and health care. Migrants must pay more for many services, but many live on the edges of Beijing, where rents are lower.

Now whole swaths of these neighborhoods have been emptied out and in many cases reduced to rubble as the au-



The word "demolish" was painted, left, of a small restaurant on the outskirts of Beijing, one of the areas hit as the authorities condemn buildings as unsafe or illegal.

thorities have condemned buildings as unsafe or illegal.

That has ignited debate about how Beijing can function without the blue-collar migrants who serve as its cooks, cleaners and vendors, but there are also

worries the campaign might harm the city's fast-growing tech sector, which employs armies of white-collar migrants who work for relatively low pay. "You can find this new displaced class

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The arts and the opioid epidemic

Gifts tied to drug sales invite question: Should museums vet donors?

BY COLIN MOYNIHAN

Visitors to the Victoria and Albert Museum's white porcelain plaza in London commonly walk past a wall that says "The Sackler Courtyard." About a mile away, the words "Serpentine Sackler Gallery" appear above a colonnade running along the front of a gunpowder repository turned art space.

And across the Atlantic, the Sackler family's name is attached to centers and programs at institutions like the Dia Arts Foundation, the Guggenheim and the American Museum of Natural History.

Since the 1970s, the Sackler family has donated millions of dollars to prominent museums and cultural institutions. The name has become nearly synonymous with the arts.

But two recent magazine articles, in



The Sackler Courtyard at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The museum has received millions from the Sackler family, which has ties to the opioid drug Oxycodone.

CARL COURT/CORBIS OUTLINE

The New Yorker and Esquire, have highlighted several family members' connection to something else: Oxycodone, a powerful painkilling narcotic that public officials say is among the most common drugs involved in prescription opioid overdose deaths.

The reports focused on members of the Sackler clan who can trace part of their fortunes to Purdue Pharma, the privately held company that produces the drug. In 2007, the parent company of Purdue pleaded guilty to a United States felony charge of misbranding Oxycodone with the intent to defraud or mislead. (The Sacklers personally were not accused of wrongdoing.) Now Purdue faces new lawsuits by state authorities as well as another federal investigation.

But few institutions seem concerned that the money they have received may be tied, in some way, to a family fortune partly built on the sale of opioids. The New York Times surveyed 21 cultural organizations listed on tax forms as having received significant sums from foundations run by two Sackler

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