### CORONAVIRUS (Covid-19)

### LIQUOR

# Wine industry in trouble

'The sector lost R400 million every week when the local sale of the alcohol was prohibited'

#### BOSASA

### Agrizziin hospital after bail denied

METRO

### **BALDWIN NDABA**

baldwin.ndaba@inl.co.za

FORMER Bosasa chief operations officer Angelo Agrizzi has been admitted to hospital, a day after he was denied bail by the court.

The Department of Correctional Services confirmed yesterday that this was due to the fact that Joburg Prison did not offer the medical care that Agrizzi required.

Spokesperson Singabakho Nxumalo said Agrizzi was stable. "All inmates are entitled to health-care services in line with correctional provisions. His condition will continue to be monitored," Nxumalo said.

Agrizzi has launched another bail application at the South Gauteng High Court after being denied bail in the Palm Ridge Specialised Commercial Crimes Court on Wednesday, where he appeared alongside Vincent Smith, former ANC MP and former chairperson of the portfolio committee on correctional services, on corruption charges

Smith and his company Euroblitz were also charged with fraud. In that indictment, the State alleged that Agrizzi and former Bosasa chief executive Gavin Watson paid gratifications of more than R800000 to Smith while he serving as chairperson of the portfolio committee on correctional services.

The gratification payments allegedly included payment for security upgrades at Smith's Roodepoort house and more than R395000 for a "car accident settlement". All these funds were apparently paid directly into Euroblitz's account.

Smith made his first appearance on the charges on October 1, and was granted R30000 bail.

On Wednesday, Agrizzi was not so lucky when he made his first appearance in the court following his discharge from hospital. He was denied bail after the prosecution led evidence that Agrizzi did not disclose that he had funds in offshore accounts, including assets beyond South Africa's borders. The court also found that he did not disclose that he was in possession of an Italian passport when he initially appeared in the Specialised Commercial Crimes Court in Pretoria on February 6 last year. In that matter, Agrizzi is facing charges of fraud and corruption totalling R1.9 billion, along with four others, including former national commissioner of Correctional Services Linda Mti.

#### MARVIN CHARLES marvin.charles@inl.co.za

THE wine industry could turn sour, with 13 000 hectares of vineyards lost during the lockdown - and even at level 1, it is running at a R7.5 billion

Southern African Agri Initiative chief executive Francois Rossouw said: "We have predicted this, and the knock-on effect of the national lockdown will be felt, and the losses will be far bigger

"The big problem wine manufacturers are facing is that come next year, they will say they cannot produce any more wine because they don't know where to store it.

"From what we know, some winemakers are sitting with 300 million litres of wine, and can't sell it."

Rossouw said regulations for alcohol sales could have a detrimental impact on the wine industry.

"The regulations do not make any sense because there is no scientific evidence (to support them). The Western Cape is heavily reliant on the wine industry and (its difficulties) will have a significant impact on the local economy and on many jobs. The government must urgently intervene in the matter," he said.

The wine industry is struggling to make up for its losses after nearly seven months of a nationwide lockdown. More than a dozen wine farms have taken the government to court over the lockdown regulations.

Under level 1 the sale of alcohol is allowed during the week at specific times. However, the sale of alcohol is prohibited over weekends, which makes it hard for wine cellars to sell alcohol to visitors.

Vinpro spokesperson Wanda Augustyn said: "The wine industry will never recover from the losses that occurred due to the ban on exports, as well as the ban on the sale of wine in the local market. The three-week ban on exports had a huge direct export revenue loss, but the damage to reputation of consistent supply and future market were also enormous. The industry lost R400 million every

week when the local sale of wine was prohibited."

According to Vinpro, based on projections 60 to 80 wineries faced possible closure and an estimated 22 000 jobs could be lost. "The industry faces significant cash flow challenges across the spectrum and the value chain ... we have already seen some closures," Augustyn said.

"The next 12 to 18 months will remain tough. A significant number of our wineries are extremely small in terms of turnover and rely on direct sales (vs retail). Seventy-five percent of the 533 wineries have a turnover of less than R10 million per year. This is why tourism (especially foreign) is so important."

## Retail food wastage a big help for poor

### SUKAINA ISHMAIL

sukaina.ishmail@inl.co.za

PHILANTHROPY

UNSOLD food in supermarkets makes up a high amount of waste and South Africa's first Food Waste Voluntary Agreement allows the retail sector to ensure unused food is distributed to the poor.

The Shoprite Group has made a long-term commitment to reduce the amount of food waste entering landfills by ensuring that items are provided to disadvantaged people before reaching expiry date.

The group has various organisations to which the food is donated, with a significant amount going to the Ark rehabilitation centre in Eerste River.

Shoprite Group sustainability manager Sanjeev Rafghubir said: "The big difference of unused and unsold food is whether it is fit for human consumption.

'We also aim to reduce the amount of food waste going into landfill and there are certain techniques which we follow.

"The Food Waste Voluntary Agreement is the first to be developed on a national level which puts the country in the lead in terms of food waste in the value chain. It allowed partners within the value chain to address food waste collaboratively."



THE Shoprite Group is providing leftover food to disadvantaged people before its expiry date. | ARMAND HOUGH African News Agency (ANA)

role to play in reducing food waste residents at the Ark receive breakfast,

because they are often confused about lunch and supper from the food and

which also gives them something to look forward to.

All of them are accused of having allowed Bosasa to illegally acquire contracts at the Department of Correctional Services between 2004 and 2006. The alleged fraud and corruption was uncovered by the Special Investigating Unit.

### ■ DISPUTE

### Committee seeks guidance

THE portfolio committee on women, youth and people with disabilities is seeking guidance from National Assembly Speaker Thandi Modise on how to handle the disputed selection of the board of the National Youth Development Agency.

In September, the National Assembly sent back the report recommending the candidates to serve on the board to the committee.

This was after Modise had received complaints about the selection process that was followed by the committee amid legal threats in some quarters.

Modise told the National Assembly programme committee yesterday it was public knowledge that she was getting correspondence from South Africans from all walks of life on the matter.

"Some of them are supporting the process as it was done and others are saying the process was flawed ... redo the process," she said.

Modise said they would sit down with the committee and decide how to proceed with the matter. | Mayibongwe Maghina

He said citizens also have a major

what is the difference between the use by, sell by and expiry date.

The Ark's Ashley Pillay said: "The

vegetables donated."

He said the centre's day is structured around the meals they receive,

Shoprite Group has donated more than R53 million in surplus food for the past 185 days.

## Senekal is on high alert before trial

#### LOYISO SIDIMBA loyiso.sidimba@inl.co.za

COURT

POLICE are implementing strict measures to prevent a potentially violent confrontation between the EFF, minority rights group AfriForum and other Afrikaner formations.

The plan is for the EFF, AfriForum members and other Afrikaner groups to be confined to separate areas in Senekal, Free State, today.

Sekwetje Isaiah Mahlamba, 32, and 44-year-old Sekola Piet Matlaletsa, both residents of Takalatse in Fateng-Tse-Ntsho township in Paul Roux, are due to appear before the Senekal Magistrate's Court for the murder of farm manager Brendin Horner, 21, earlier this month.

Police will not allow anyone near the court and all roads around it will be blocked off, according to information obtained by Independent Media.

The three groups will be confined to designated areas around the town and will not be allowed to march or move.

Police set up roadblocks at all entrances to Senekal yesterday, stopping and searching vehicles.

The elder sister of one of the suspects, Dimakatso Mahlamba, 41, said vesterday that she would not be able to attend court hearing because she had high blood pressure and diabetes.

"It would hurt to see my brother in the dock; I'd probably collapse," she said.

Their parents will not be present either as they are attending a relative's funeral in QwaQwa, but two of Sekwetje's six siblings will be in court.

Dimakatso said Sekwetje had

been arrested before for stock theft and assault.

However, she does not believe her brother is capable of murder.

According to Dimakatso, her brother has never served a prison sentence.

She said he had never worked and that the family survived on his parents' old-age grant.

Late yesterday, EFF members in the Free State were driving around Senekal in a vehicle with huge speakers, drumming up support for their planned action.

Leader Julius Malema told 24-hour television news station Newzroom Afrika yesterday that the EFF was going to Senekal to protect democracy and the Constitution, which he said was "under threat by racist, terrorist farmers who go and attack a court of law and attack police stations".

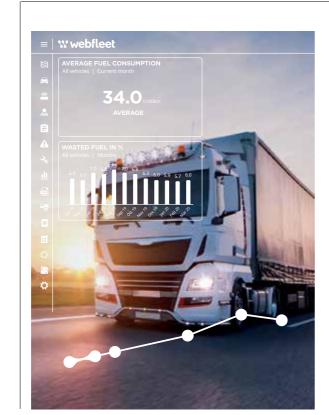
He said the move by farmers to storm the court last week was a declaration of war against the state.

"If the current regime can't defend the state, we have a responsibility as peace-loving South Africans to defend our state against hooliganism, against terrorism," he said.

Minority rights group AfriForum said yesterday it would proceed with its peaceful protest against farm murders and violence today.

Public order police units from the Free State - Bloemfontein, Bethlehem, and Selosesha in Thaba Nchu - and Gauteng have been deployed in Senekal.

A water cannon is on standby and police Nyalas were scheduled to barricade the court precinct with reams of barbed wire.



### From monitoring fuel to reducing fleet operating costs

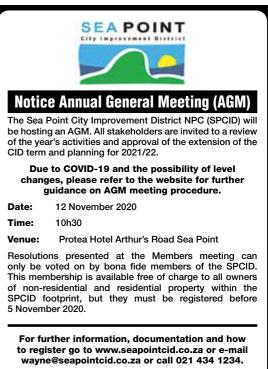
**Discover WEBFLEET - Europe's number** one fleet management solution

Cut fuel costs. Be safe on the road. Stay compliant with regulations. WEBFLEET helps you do it all. That's why more than 50,000 companies worldwide trust our solution to get their trucks, drivers and businesses where they need to go.

Let's drive business. Further,

webfleet.com





ACM/1132