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IMPROVED HYGIENIC STANDARDS FOR BARROUALLIE BLACK FISH PROCESSORS

Barrouallie Black Fish processors will soon process black fish under improved hygienic standards when the Bottle and Glass Black Fish Enhancement Project is commissioned. The USD \$1.68 million Project, commenced in the latter part of 2023, suffered several setbacks due to the impact of Hurricane Beryl in 2024.

The Project, financed by the Government of Japan, was inspected, on Monday 19th January, by Japan's Ambassador to St. Vincent and the Grenadines, H.E. Dr. Akima Umezawa, Minister with responsibility for Fisheries, Hon. Conroy Huggins, Chief Fisheries Officer, Jennifer Cruickshank Howard, Fisheries Extension Officer, Lorenzo George, and Fisheries Quality Assurance Officer, Cylena Andrews, among others.

Chief Fisheries Officer, Jennifer Cruickshank Howard, said the facility was built in response to complaints from processors and customers alike, who desired better sanitary conditions under which the black fish was harvested, processed, and dried. Howard added that the facility will raise the standards and productivity of those who ply the trade.

Japan's Ambassador to St. Vincent and the Grenadines, H.E. Dr. Akima Umezawa, is keen to see the opening of the facility. Dr. Umezawa commended Minister Huggins and his team for cleaning and preparing the site for his visit. He said Japan's Government has pledged continuous support to fisheries projects in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Meanwhile, the Minister with responsibility for Fisheries, Hon. Conroy Huggins, extended gratitude to Ambassador Akima for his Government's support on the Black Fish Enhancement Project. Minister Huggins pledged his commitment to have the facility open within six (6) months or sooner, "I ... say to the people of Barrouallie and St. Vincent and the Grenadines that before 2026 is out, this facility will be up and running."

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