

December 19, 2025



Site visit at Salvacion Multi-Purpose Evacuation Center, one of Bayugan City's playing venues, with (L-R) SDS Maria Teresa Real, RD Maria Ines Asuncion, Usec Malcolm Garma, Usec Peter Irving Corvera, and Lead Secretariat Marivic Tolitol. December 16, 2025

Palarong Pambansa 2026 preparations in full swing

DepEd Central Office and Agusan del Sur inspect sites and conduct high-level coordination meeting

SAN FRANCISCO, Agusan del Sur— Preparations for the 2026 Palarong Pambansa gained strong momentum as the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur, conducted a two-day high-level Coordination Meeting combined with extensive venue inspections to ensure the province's readiness to host the country's premier national sporting event.

The coordination meeting formally opened in Bayugan City on December 16 with the arrival of the DepEd Central Office top officials led by Undersecretary for Operations Malcolm Garma and Undersecretary of the Office of the Secretary Peter Irving Ervin Corvera, together with the Palarong Pambansa Secretariat headed by Marivic Tolito. The team engaged

the various Palaro working committees to provide guidance, technical assistance, and alignment of operational plans and standards.

The Agusan del Sur Palaro Executive Committee is chaired by Agusan del Sur Governor Santiago B. Cane Jr. and co-chaired by DepEd Caraga Regional Director Maria Ines C. Asuncion, CESO IV.

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As part of Day 1 activities, the delegation conducted on-site inspections of key playing venues in Bayugan City, including the Salvacion Evacuation Center, Bayugan Central Elementary School, and Agusan del Sur College.

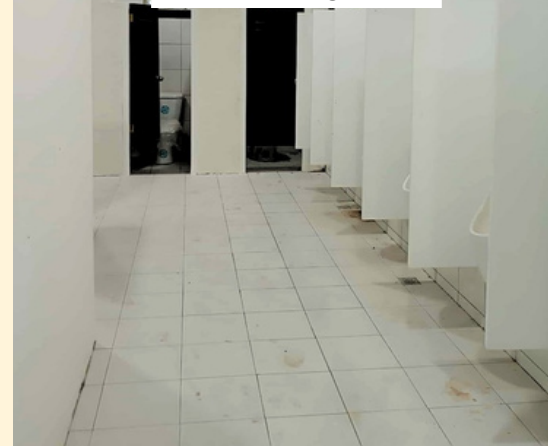
Bayugan City Mayor Kirk Asis, local government officials, DepEd Bayugan City SDS Maria Teresa M. Real, and regional office personnel joined the inspectors from the DepEd Central Office.



Bayugan Central Elementary School,
Bayugan City



Salvacion Multi-purpose Evacuation
Center, Bayugan City



Agusan del Sur College



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The team later proceeded to Patin-ay, Agusan del Sur to inspect the ongoing construction of additional sports facilities at the Datu Lipus Makapandong D.O. Plaza Sports Complex, where they also observed swimmers undergoing intensive training—highlighting the importance of athlete welfare and early preparation.

The engagement culminated in a welcome dinner hosted by Governor Cane, reaffirming the strong partnership between DepEd and the Provincial Government in hosting the national games

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Mapping Out Readiness for 2026 Palarong Pambansa

Following the site visits, the preparations for the 2026 Palarong Pambansa gained further momentum as a high-level Coordination Meeting was jointly presided over by Agusan del Sur Governor Santiago B. Cane Jr. and Department of Education (DepEd) Undersecretary for Operations Malcolm Garma, with DepEd Caraga Regional Director Maria Ines C. Asuncion co-presiding.

Held on December 17, 2025, at the Madigun Hotel and Events Center, San Francisco Agusan del Sur, the meeting brought together key committees and technical personnel to assess readiness, address gaps, and align strategies for the successful hosting of the country's premier national sporting event.



Venue Readiness and Infrastructure Updates

Provincial Engineer Engr. Linda Buquir presented the status of competition venues, reporting that several facilities are already completed, while others are undergoing repairs or are still under construction. Governor Cane emphasized the need for strict compliance with Palarong Pambansa standards, particularly on oval size and measurements, and ordered immediate re-inspections of critical areas. Engr. Buquir assured the body that a comprehensive maintenance plan is in place. *To Page 5*



Provincial Engineer Linda M. Buquir

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Usec Garma commended the province for its early start, assuring the body that lessons from previous Palarong Pambansa hosts are being studied and considered in the planning stage. He expressed readiness to work closely with engineering and logistics teams to anticipate and address potential challenges.

Malcolm S. Garma
DepEd Undersecretary for Operations
Undersecretary, DepEd-DO

Billeting Quarters Assessment

DepEd Caraga Medical Officer IV and Regional Sports Coordinator Dr. Jumer Carlon reported that the readiness of billeting quarters currently ranges from 50% to 80%, based on the assessment tool used as of the last week of November. A second round of assessments is scheduled for January. Undersecretary Garma recommended further refinement to the assessment tool to ensure all essential requirements are consistently met across billeting quarters, a proposal supported by RD Asuncion.



Jumer C. Carlon, MD
DepEd Caraga Regional Sports Coordinator



SANTIAGO B. CANE, JR.
Governor, BACODI

USEC. MALCOLM S. GARMA
Undersecretary, DepEd-DO

Maria Ines C. Asuncion, CESO IV
DepEd Caraga Regional Director

S.C. ASUNCION
Director, DepEd CARAGA

Environmental Sustainability Initiatives

Governor Cane proposed innovative measures to transform waste generated during the Palarong Pambansa into useful by-products such as fertilizers and other derivatives, underscoring the province's commitment to environmental sustainability.



Hon. Santiago B. Cane Jr.
Agusan del Sur Governor

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Security and Traffic Management

Col. Alex Luna presented the Security and Traffic Management Plan, describing it as a work in progress. He outlined a detailed calendar of activities, a clear security organizational structure, and comprehensive security coverage for all lodges, hotels, playing venues, billeting quarters, and medical institutions.



PCol. Alex Luna
Philippine National Police

The plan also calls for the strategic deployment of traffic enforcers in critical areas, with 72 PNP personnel assigned during the opening and closing ceremonies, supported by crowd-counting systems and the deployment of the Philippine Army. In total, authorities will mobilize 2,258 security and traffic management personnel. Governor Cane also informed the body of the ongoing efforts to secure additional airline flights to accommodate the influx of delegates and officials.

Health, Medical, and Emergency Response Preparedness

The Provincial Health Office, through Franco Olaer, detailed the Health Risk Assessment and Emergency Response Plan. He outlined in-game medical response, the setup of advanced medical posts, hospital response procedures, and the establishment of medical stations in all billeting quarters.

Governor Cane directed that all billeting quarters be provided with trained rescuers and ambulances, particularly for physically demanding sports. He also pushed for the allocation of dedicated rooms and hospital wards for delegate-patients, as well as the provision of air ambulance services, to be coordinated with the Department of Health (DOH).

Undersecretary Garma further emphasized the need to interface all operational structures, including the integration of group chats and the establishment of standardized protocols. *To Page 7*



Franco Olaer
Provincial Health Office



HON. SANTIAGO R. CANE JR.



Prospero Jean V. dela Peña
Agusan del Sur Provincial Public Information Officer

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Media Operations and Partnerships

Prospero Jean V. dela Peña, Provincial Public Information Officer, presented updates on the proposed Media Center, which will serve as the hub for livestream broadcast operations and provide wellness services for accredited media practitioners covering the games. He reported that several pieces of equipment have already been procured and delivered.

In response, Undersecretary Garma clarified that comprehensive media coverage will require partnerships with local, national, and international media organizations. He added that the DepEd Central Office–Public Affairs Service will issue the necessary guidelines and lead further coordination with the concerned committees. To Page 8



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Food Supply and Price Stability

Armando G. Valiente updated the body on the status of the local food suppliers. Governor Cane emphasized the need to maintain an adequate and uninterrupted supply of rice and other essential food items throughout the event, as RD Asuncion encouraged the Food Supply Committee to have a direct and sustained engagement with suppliers.

In line with this, Governor Cane proposed the use of online delivery mechanisms to serve the billeting quarters. Undersecretary Garma further suggested tapping local food caterers to strengthen food supply stability.

Transport Operations

Jave Nhoriel N. Bordaje outlined the Transport Operations Plan, identifying entry and exit points for each regional delegation and the provision of transport vehicles, including 191 bus trips and 61 public vans, to be augmented as needed. Governor Cane inquired about parking areas outside playing venues and confirmed that each delegation will be provided with three vans for the entire duration of the games. *To Page 9*



Armando G. Valiente
Provincial Agriculturist



Jave Nhoriel N. Bordaje
Provincial Budget Officer



Hon. Edwin Elorde
Provincial Board Member



Dannah Rufalyn M. Buquir
Provincial Tourism Officer

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Water Supply Assurance

Hon. Edwin Elorde presented a proposal for partnerships with local water suppliers to ensure a sufficient water supply, including the installation of water pumps and reservoirs.

Branding and Calendar of Activities

The presentations concluded with Dannah Rufalyn M. Buquir unveiling the approved logo of the 2026 Palarong Pambansa and presenting the tentative calendar of activities, covering events from the opening to the closing ceremonies.

The coordination meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment of the Provincial Government of Agusan del Sur, DepEd, and partner agencies to deliver a safe, well-organized, and world-class 2026 Palarong Pambansa, anchored on early preparation, inter-agency coordination, and continuous improvement. *(Text and photos by the DepEd Caraga Public Affairs Unit).* **END**



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