

**Swollen Budget:** The 2026 election features prominently in the Shs8.1 trillion supplementary Budget Parliament passed yesterday, just five months after the Shs72 trillion 2025/2026 Budget was read.

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# Election-inspired supplementary



**Shs565b**

**Beneficiary.** Classified expenditure, welfare, logistics, infrastructure, and special operations by the President.



**Shs460b**

**Electoral Commission.** Money for ballot papers, biometric systems, and creation of 15,256 polling stations.



**Shs80.4t**

**Total.** The national Budget has now swollen to a record high.

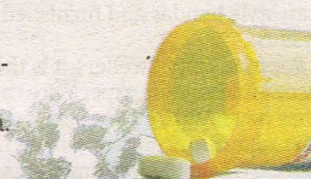
**Shs4.182b**

**NAADS.** Payment to service providers for apple seedlings to 19 districts, under the defunct National Agriculture Advisory Services (Naads).



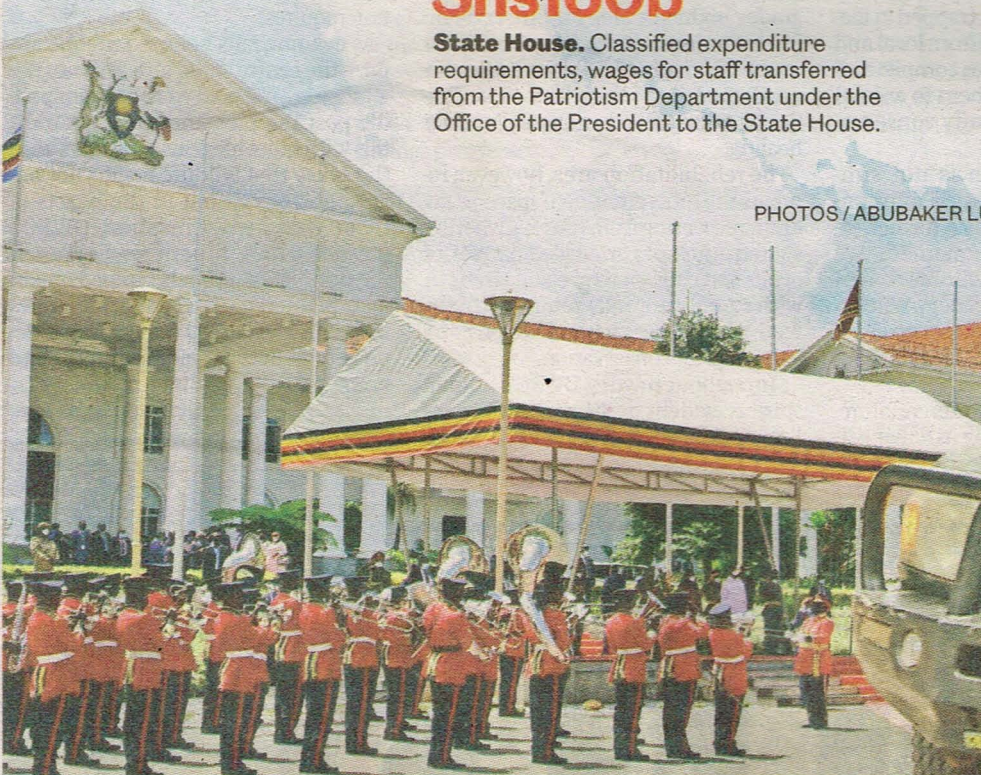
**Shs59.693b**

**Essential health services.** To cater for short-falls created by the withdrawal of the USAID funding to essential health services in Uganda.



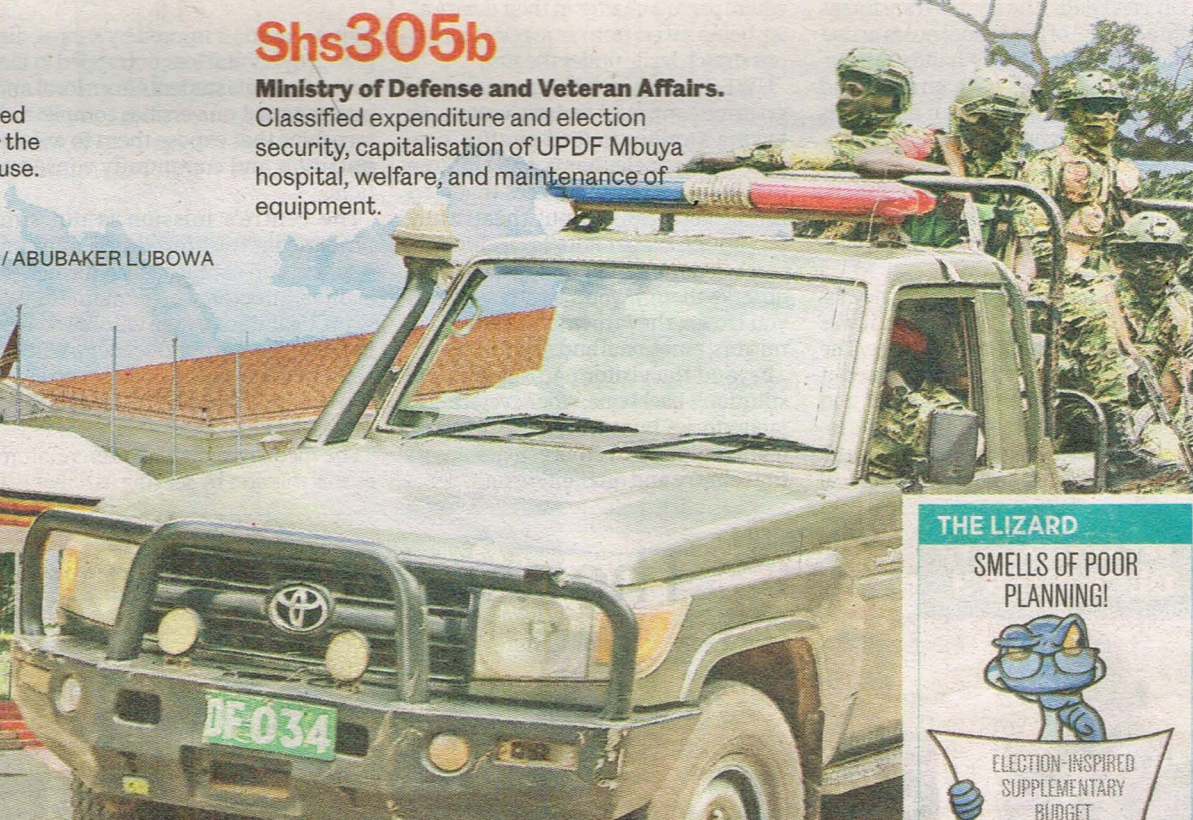
**Shs160b**

**State House.** Classified expenditure requirements, wages for staff transferred from the Patriotism Department under the Office of the President to the State House.



**Shs305b**

**Ministry of Defense and Veteran Affairs.** Classified expenditure and election security, capitalisation of UPDF Mbuya hospital, welfare, and maintenance of equipment.



PHOTOS / ABUBAKER LUBOWA

THE LIZARD

SMELLS OF POOR PLANNING!



ELECTION-INSPIRED SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET

# Govt pushes MPs to give more Shs8t



The approved supplementary Budget now lifts up the total FY2025/2026 Budget to a record Shs80.4 trillion.

BY BUSEIN SAMILU

**T**he government side, backed by Parliament Speaker Anita Among, yesterday dismissed Opposition claims that a portion of the approved Shs8.1 trillion supplementary Budget would be gifted to fund the ruling party's 2026 election campaigns.

In the supplementary Schedules Number 1, 2, 3, the government seeks additional funding for what the Finance Minister called "unforeseen spending" pressures that have emerged only five months into the new financial year.

The approved supplementary Budget now lifts up the total FY2025/2026 Budget to a record Shs80.4 trillion.

The Opposition, led by Shadow Finance Minister Ibrahim Ssemujju Nganda, and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament (LoP) Joel Ssenyonyi, expressed concerns about potential abuse in the supplementary Budget.

They pointed to significant allocations, including billions of shillings designated for buying hand-held hoes for seven million households, funds aimed at youth mobilisation under the State House budget, and Shs1.6 trillion earmarked for repairing the country's deteriorating roads and bridges, among other emergent expenditure items.

Mr Ssemujju, a three-term legislator, in a minority report, warned: "Right Honourable Speaker and Honourable Members, in all my 14 years in this House, I have never seen a supplementary request that casually rewrites the national Budget the way this one does. A revision of Shs8 trillion above what we approved is nothing short of excessive."

"...with Shs459 billion requested under State House, including allocations for youth mobilisation for the NRM presidential candidate and other items disguised as classified, suddenly, the political discomfort among young people who are not supporting President Museveni has been turned into an emergency that must be funded at once," he stressed.

Mr Ssemujju's claims didn't go well with the Speaker, who promptly dismissed the alleged use of the supplementary cash to finance campaigns as a figment of his imagination and a campaign gimmick.

"This money is not for mobilisation by NRM... there is no evidence. I wouldn't allow any statements that make this House dirty," Ms Among said.

She dispelled any fears of "procedural irregularities" in the supplementary, and defended what she called administrative referral of the rules to allow Par-



Leader of Opposition Joel Ssenyonyi.



Speaker Anita Among



Shadow Finance minister Ibrahim Ssemujju Nganda.



Finance State minister in charge of General Duties Henry Musasizi

liament to pass the supplementary before she asked the House Budget Committee chairperson, Mr Patrick Isiagi Opolot, to clarify on the youth mobilisation claim.

Mr Isiagi explained that the government pays a lot of attention to youth issues, and that they need affirmative action, through skills development and that the allocation of funds for youth mobilisation in the supplementary Budgets is not irregular.

The Speaker then chipped in and asked Mr Ssemujju to stop bringing

NRM into the supplementary debate.

In the same breath, junior Finance minister Henry Musasizi, who presented the motion, accused Mr Ssemujju of blackmail and flatly rejected that "this is not money for NRM youth mobilisation."

When Mr Ssenyonyi rose to submit on the matter, he asked the government side to come clean and questioned the planned procurement of hand-held hoes for seven million households and the creation of 15,256 new polling stations in one-and-half months to the

polling day.

"How can this be okay? He asked, adding that "even when we want good roads, let's tick all the boxes... buying hand-held hoes is problematic, we should be advancing... we have been talking about modernising agriculture," Mr Ssenyonyi said.

But Ms Among quickly reminded the LoP that she had consulted him before the matter came to the floor of Parliament.

"LoP, we do consultation, and you remember I told you we received urgent requests and I did an administrative referral of the supplementary Budget requests to enable us to move faster," Ms Among said.

But Mr Ssenyonyi shot back, saying he was drafted into the matter at the last minute, and the finer details of the government supplementary were never brought to his attention.

## Road to 2026 polls

In the new government supplementary request, the Ministry of Works and Transport took the lion's share as the majority of a handful of MPs from the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party, their Independent counterparts, amid protests from some of their Opposition colleagues, passed the Shs8.1 trillion Supplementary Budget yesterday.

Supplementary schedule No.1 amounting to Shs1.65 trillion, Schedule Two totaling Shs1.69 trillion, and Schedule Three with Shs4.75 trillion, were passed yesterday amid protests from the members of the Opposition, who queried the legality and lack of quorum since the House was attended by a few members from both the ruling and Opposition camps.

Mr Musasizi, while defending the expenditure, said the Supplementary Schedule falls under the three percent threshold, which the government can request without prior request from Parliament, while the remaining two needed the House's prior approval.

Under Schedule one, Shs1.6 trillion was passed under the recurrent expenditure, Shs534.1 billion under devel-

opment expenditure, and the rest for statutory purposes. The entire Second Schedule is for development expenditure, while Shs1.2 trillion under the Third Schedule is for recurrent expenditure, Shs1.5 trillion for development, and Shs1.9 trillion for statutory.

Ssemujju in his minority report said supplementary budgets are becoming a replica of the main Budget. He warned: "If this continues, we will soon reach a point where the annual Budget is treated as a ceremonial event while the real spending happens through supplementary schedules."

His observations were bolstered by Mr Ssenyonyi, who questioned the legality of some of the procedures followed during the processing and passing of the supplementary budgets and also warned of the low quorum, which would affect the House in the future.

The Ministry of Works was given the Shs1.69 trillion contained in the Second Schedule to cater for the construction of roads and bridges across the country. It received an additional Shs696.5 billion part of Schedule Three, to cater for the importation of aircraft to boost the country's fleet. This implies that the ministry has taken Shs2.3 trillion, which translates into 28 percent of the total Supplementary expenditure.

Mr Ssemujju, in the minority report, rejected the Shs400b supplementary to purchase new aircraft for Uganda Airlines, saying the country has not recovered from the Bombardier deal, where the government purchased aircraft that were already being phased out.

"We are now being asked to buy more aircraft before conducting any due diligence on viability, maintenance, costs, routes, and long-term sustainability," he said.

Some of the major roads that have been earmarked in this spending are Fort Portal-Bundibugyo (103km), Gulu-Atiak-Nimule (105km), Mubende-Kyenjojo (89.3km), and Ntungamo-Rukungiri (50km), among others.

The government will also compensate people affected by 29 roads that are under construction, and eight that have al-

## Schedule 3 Budget

| Vote   | Amount (Billions) UGX |
|--|-----------------------|
| State House                                    | 159.9                 |
| Ministry of Defense                            | 305.4                 |
| Ministry of Public Service                     | 85.4 million          |
| Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs | 7.95                  |
| Ministry of Finance                            | 42.03                 |
| Ministry of Agriculture                        | 10.29                 |
| Ministry of Local Governments                  | 37.5                  |
| Ministry of Health                             | 69.69                 |
| Ministry of Trade                              | 37                    |
| Ministry of Works                              | 696.5                 |
| Uganda Railway Corporation                     | 100                   |
| Ministry of Energy and Mineral Devt            | 188.65                |
| Ministry of Water and Environment              | 52.96                 |
| Ministry of Tourism                            | 6                     |
| Electoral Commission                           | 469.5                 |
| Uganda Heart Institute                         | 40                    |
| National Medical Stores                        | 269.8                 |
| National Information and Technology Authority  | 185.2                 |
| Uganda National Examination Board              | 28.5                  |
| Treasury Operations                            | 1,850                 |
| Office of Auditor General                      | 5.4                   |
| Uganda Prison Service                          | 21.6                  |
| Internal Security Organisation                 | 41.8                  |
| Moroto Regional Referral Hospital              | 249 million           |
| Guangzhou Consulate                            | 14.2                  |
| Various Local Governments                      | 148.2                 |
| Total  | 4,756,105,111,170     |

SOURCE: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGET ON SUPPLEMENTARY EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE NO. 1, 2, AND 3 FOR THE FY2025/2026

# five months after Budget

ready been completed, according to the planned spending under this arrangement.

The Electoral Commission (EC) is the second-largest beneficiary of the Supplementary Budget, having received Shs469 billion, which officials said will aid in facilitating the additional 15,000 new polling stations, running the biometric voter verification machines, producing ballot papers, and paying polling agents during next year's polls.

State House received Shs459.9 billion (Shs300 billion under Schedule One and Shs159.9 billion under Schedule Two), making it the third biggest beneficiary.

The Committee report noted that part of the money will be used to cater for countrywide youth mobilisation tours and re-modelling of the Youth Livelihood Fund.

Mr Ssemujju, queried the State House expenditure, which he said is continuously increasing unnecessarily, wondering why it is requesting more money yet it has spent more money under the three percent that doesn't require prior Parliament approval.

He also accused the government for using the supplementary to purchase T-shirts that he claimed would be distributed by the NRM presidential candidate during the ongoing campaigns amid mismatch with development priorities.

"Considering that we are spending Shs1 trillion on Parish Development Model per year, the money we are



A section of the Mubende-Kyenjojo road. It is one of the roads that has been earmarked in this spending. PHOTO/FILE

## WHY OPPOSITION REJECTED SHS8 TRILLION SUPPLEMENTARY

- Procedural irregularity of supplementaries to the committee before being tabled in Parliament
- The overall size and character of the supplementary request completely undermine the intention of the three percent limit under the Public Finance Management Act.
- Repeated supplementary financing for long-standing, predictable obligations in Agriculture, Works, Energy, Health, and Defence.

- Unequal allocation of development funds, where some districts appear every year while others are permanently absent.
- Political risks surrounding some allocations, particularly those linked to cotton, Fine Spinners, and election management.
- Excessive reliance on classified expenditure to conceal ordinary government spending and failure to plan for donor exits, which

- are now presented as sudden emergencies.
- Recurrent bailouts of entities such as Uganda Airlines and Soroti Fruit Factory, which show no path to self-sustainability. Persistent lack of documentation for key infrastructure projects under Water and Energy.
- Major election spending without proper disclosure by the Electoral Commission.

spending on the residence of our dear leader is equal to that we are spending on fighting poverty in the country," he said.

But Speaker Among dismissed Mr Ssemujju's allegations that the supplementary request for State House would be sunk into NRM party mobilisation tours.

Parliamentarians also queried the Shs311.1 billion allocated to the Ministry of Defence and Veteran Affairs, which they said is another wastage of the resources.

The government also boosted the National Medical Stores (NMS) with Shs296 billion, which the Budget Committee chairperson, Mr Isiagi, said will help to close the funding gap that was created by the exit of GAVI and USAID. It will also cater for the supply of medical and health supplies for the newly constructed UPDF Referral Hospital in Mbuya, Kampala.

The Uganda Police Force also received Shs183 billion, which Mr Isiagi said will help in providing security during the ongoing election period.

Another winner in this supplementary expenditure is the Uganda Land Commission, which was given Shs108 billion to cater for the compensation of land owners.

The Energy ministry will also spend Shs188.8 billion to extend electricity across the country.

The Ministry of Public Service received Shs85.4 million, making it the lowest beneficiary of this supplementary Budget, while Moroto Regional Referral Hospital also received Shs249 million.

The Uganda Mission in New York was given Shs1b.