

Project to buy EVMs would be approved soon: Mannan

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The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk: The Election Commission's project worth Tk8,711 crore to procure 2 lakh new electronic voting machines (EVMs) for the next general elections would be approved as soon as possible, Planning Minister MA Mannan has said. He told journalists following a meeting with Swiss Ambassador to Bangladesh Nathalie Chuard held at his office in Dhaka on Tuesday.

The Planning Minister said, "We are talking about EVM within the rules. All requirements of the Election Commission will be considered as per the law. The project of purchasing EVMs would be approved as soon as possible. We will try to do it soon." He further said, "Only ECNEC could approve projects, this is not the fact only. We are communicating with them (Election Commission). EC secretary is talking with our secretary. January 15 is not a red line, and it could be on January 18 or 20. Even tomorrow, the EVM project may be approved."

Regarding the proposal of the EVM project, the Planning Minister further said, "How many EVMs we would purchased is discussed in the Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) meeting before ECNEC meeting. Members of Planning Ministry, EC remain present in the meeting. We will approve it after discussion." Pointing to the next general election, the minister said, "Elections must be held. It is mentioned in the constitution that EC should be given full cooperation. We are working accordingly as per the direction of the constitution." "Whatever we do, we will do it through mutual discussion," he added.