

## CAG report on defence purchases was false and baseless: George

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Times News Network

PATNA: Defence minister George



G. Fernandes

Fernandes on Wednesday continued his tirade against the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) saying that his audit report on defence purchases was false and

baseless.

Mr Fernandes said he had done nothing wrong and unethical in writing a letter to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament for setting the record straight, and also for exposing CAG's wrong and baseless audit report.

Speaking to a select group of mediapersons here at Jayaprakash Narayan International Airport on his return from Rajgir, Mr Fernandes brushed aside the stand of PAC chairman Narayan Dutt Tiwari that he had done an unethical act by writing a letter to the PAC casting aspersions on the CAG, adding that "the CAG has

indulged in an unethical action, not me".

Mr Fernandes was here on a day's visit, along with over half a dozen senior defence ministry officials, to review the ongoing work for the formal laying of the foundation stone of the ordnance factory at Rajgir in his Nalanda parliamentary constituency.

He said the formal work on the ordnance factory would begin in April as all preliminary work in this regard, including the acquisition of land, had been completed. The defence ministry, he said, had also cleared a proposal, awaiting the approval of the Union cabinet, for setting up an engineering college at Bihta station for giving advance training to air force personnel. The college would be the first of its kind in the country, he claimed.

Mr Fernandes said that the Indian government had provided some strategic assistance to the Nepal government for containing extremists' activities in that country. "The Nepal government has demanded assistance from us and we have made available some strategic assistance to contain

Maoists and other extremists' activities in that country," he said, but denied that the Indian government had provided military assistance to Nepal. Mr Fernandes, however, declined to comment on the actual assistance and type of help given to the Nepal government.

According to him, the defence ministry has also cleared a proposal for creating at least two military stations in north Bihar, on the Indo-Nepal border, to maintain a strict vigil on the smuggling of arms and ammunition from across the border. He said the military stations were being created in view of the tension caused by extremists activities on the Indo-Nepal border in the recent past.

Mr Fernandes said arms and ammunition would be manufactured for the army not only in the private sector but also in joint collaboration with Russia, the U.S., Israel and France.

This apart, sophisticated weapons would be purchased from various countries to upgrade the army. "Various measures are being initiated to modernise the army," he said.