

tyre industry has been removed from the banned list with a view to establishing further capacity for the manufacture of automobile tyres and tubes, including tractor tyres and tubes. The existing tyre manufacturing units have also been assured of Government's assistance in the matter of procurement of moulds and other balancing equipment required for the manufacture of tyres presently in short supply.

#### CLOSURE OF TEXTILE MILLS IN BOMBAY

\*863. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of textile mills in Bombay closed by their owners during the last five years and the reasons for their closure;

(b) the number of workers involved in these closures;

(c) how many of these mills have since been reopened, and what are the new arrangements under which they are functioning; and

(d) whether any of these mills are proposed to be administered by the new Corporation to be set up by Government?

THE DEPUTY-MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI): (a) During the five year period ended December 31, 1967 six mills in Bombay closed down—five on account of financial difficulties/uneconomic working and one due to labour troubles.

(b) and (c). The number of workers involved in the closure of these mills was about 19,277, including 2,082 workers of the mill which reopened in June, 1964 and 5,379 workers of the other mill which reopened in April 1966 but closed down again in June, 1967 affecting about 3,735 workers. Information regarding the arrangements, if any, under which the former mill, reopened is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

(d) It will be for the Corporation to consider these matters when it is formed.

#### BURNING OF BALES OF COTTON AT COIMBATORE STATION

\*864. SHRI MAHANT DIGVIJAI NATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Five hundred bales of cotton were burnt at the Coimbatore Railway Station on the 10th March, 1968;

(b) if so, whether an enquiry has been conducted to find the causes thereof;

(c) whether some arrests have been made in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA): (a) and (b). No Sir. Presumably the honourable Member is referring to the case of out-break of fire on 9-3-68 at Periyayanakanpalaiyam Railway Station near Coimbatore involving cotton bales. A Departmental Enquiry Committee has been ordered to enquire into the matter and the proceedings are awaited.

(c) Government Railway Police, Coimbatore had registered a case, crime No. 120/68 under section 435 IPC which is under investigation. No arrests have so far been made.

(d) 550 bales of cotton received and unloaded at Periyayanakanpalaiyam Railway Station on different dates (from 25-2-68 to 8-3-68) were stacked on the open ground for want of space. At about 11.10 hours on 9-3-68 fire was noticed in the stack of cotton bales after the departure of a passenger train at 11.02 hours. Immediate action was taken to put out the fire with the available resources at the Station. Local Fire Service and Fire Brigade from Coimbatore were requisitioned and pressed into service. The fire was brought under control at 17.30 hours on 9-3-68 and completely put out at 18.30 hours on 10-3-68.

#### IMPORT OF POLYURETHANE FOAM

\*865. SHRI R. K. AMIN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the import of polyurethane foam is banned;