Minister for more powers to panchayats

Special Correspondent

JAIPUR: Rajasthan Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Bharat Singh on Saturday emphasised the need for strengthening village panchayats as the “smallest ingredients” of Panchayati Raj to render the devolution of powers at the grassroots meaningful and effective.

For Gram Swaraj

Addressing a State-level workshop here, Mr. Singh said the Gandhian concept of Gram Swaraj could be accomplished in its true spirit only through the village panchayats enjoying the powers of governance. “Panchayati Raj structure has the potential to bring about a change in the lives of villagers through these bodies,” said the Minister.

The workshop was organised jointly by the State Government’s Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sansthan and the Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi. Zila Pra-
mukhs and two Pradhans and two Sarpanches each from all districts of the State attended the event.

Mr. Singh said elections to Panchayati Raj institutions were being held regularly in Rajasthan and the State Government was planning to devolve more powers on them.

Institute of Social Sciences director George Mathew said Rajasthan was the leading State in northern India taking steps for strengthening of Panchayati Raj institutions.

He said the elected representatives of panchayat bodies should work diligently for rural development.

State Planning Board deputy chairman V. S. Vyas, Principal Panchayati Raj Secretary C. S. Rajan, Panchayati Raj Commissioner J. P. Chandelia and Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sansthan Director-General Giriraj Singh also addressed the workshop.