Vijender hopes Indian boxing gets back on track soon

NEW DELHI: Vijender Singh looks battle-ready. Only, he does not have any battle to fight.

Vijender, the first-ever Indian boxer to claim an Olympics medal in Beijing five years ago, is “training without a goal” at NIS Patiala even as the Indian Amateur Boxing Federation (IABF) stands suspended by the International Boxing Association (AIBA) and the Indian pugilists are debarred from participating in international events.

Vijender cannot help resolve the situation. He hopes that Indian boxing gets back on track sooner than later. “I hope the problem gets sorted out before it is too late. The World championship will be held later this year. Next year, we have the Asian Games and the Commonwealth Games. The problem should end as soon as possible,” said Vijender at the YMA Meet, organised by TIBFI here on Tuesday.

Chief National coach G.S. Sandhu, who is in charge of training around 50 boxers at the National camp in Patiala, was cautious in his comments. “There is no problem as of now. The boxers are training the way they prepare for a competition. But if they do not get to take part in competitions it will be difficult to keep them motivated. Hopefully, it will be sorted soon,” Sandhu said.

Following advice

Vijender, who is planning to jump from 75kg to 81kg weight class, said he preferred to heed Sandhu’s advice and focus on his training. “Our coach has told me that we should not bother about all this and continue with our training. We are just following his advice.”

The 27-year-old boxer, the first man from the country to win a World championship medal, was a little emotional while speaking about his quartefinal loss to Abbas Aivaz of Uzbekistan in the London Olympics. “That was the biggest shock of my life. I had beaten the same boxer before. I still get disturbed when I think about it. I console myself by saying: Whatever happens, happens for the good. I am a boxer.”

“The thrill I get out of punching my opponents is incomparable,” Vijender said on his passion for the sport. — Pradeep Correspondent