

## Amir has to grow up: Vijender

The Indian pugilist hopeful of having a shot at the world title in 2020

### BOXING

UTHRA GANESAN  
NEW DELHI

His professional fight with Amir Khan may still be uncertain but the verbal blows between the two seem unceasing and on Thursday, it was Vijender Singh's turn.

At a felicitation function here, the Indian, who won his 11th professional boxing bout on his US debut said he was willing to fight any time but first Amir had to 'grow up'. "I have repeatedly said I am ready at any time, anywhere. But he is picking up kids as opponents. The latest was Neeraj Goyat, who is very talented but quite young compared to me, but that did not materialise because of Goyat's injury. Let him first stop playing around with kids, then we can have a bout of grown-ups," Vijender said.

Amir had earlier claimed that Vijender was scared of fighting him although any such face-off is unlikely any time soon given that they



**Amazing run:** Vijender Singh, who won his 11th consecutive professional bout, addresses the media with JK Lakshmi Cement Ltd.'s director Shailendra Chouksey. •PTI

fight in different weight categories. While Amir is a welterweight boxer, Vijender contests in super-middleweight. The Indian, though, said both could work on their weights and agree on a mid point.

"He has done it before," Vijender said. Amir has only once competed in the middleweight division before where he was knocked out by Mexican Canelo Alvarez

in the sixth round in 2016.

### Impressive career

About his own targets, Vijender said he was hopeful of getting a shot at the world title in 2020 if things work out in terms of competitions. He knocked out Mike Snider in four rounds in his US circuit debut last Sunday for an impressive 11-0 professional career and holds the WBO Oriental and the Asia Pacific

Super-middle-weight titles.

"It was a long break and both my team and I were getting desperate for a fight. It's been more than a year since I last fought and we wanted to get a bout in US anyhow.

"We plan to have two more fights, one in October-September and next around January-February.

"We are trying to work around the venue and opponent," he said.

## बच्चा है आमिर, कहीं भी लड़ सकता है?

- अमेरिका के माइक स्नाइडर को चार राउंड में हराने के बाद भैरे हॉसले सातवें आसमान पर हैं
- छोटे बॉक्सरों को हराने वाले आमिर को अभी भारतीय मुक्कों का स्वाद नहीं मिला है

नई दिल्ली, (राजेंद्र सजवान) : मेरा लक्ष्य 2020 तक विश्व खिताब जीतने का है और इस अभियान को मैं सप्ते हुए कदमों के साथ पूरा करना चाहता हूँ। लेकिन यदि पाकिस्तानी मुक्केबाज आमिर खान को हराने की जल्दी है तो कभी भी मुझसे लड़ सकता है। अमेरिका के बेहद अनुभवी और तकनीकी रूप से बेहतर मुक्केबाज माइक स्नाइडर को चार राउंड के मुकाबले में ध्वस्त करने वाले विजेंद्र सिंह ने आज यहां एक सवाल के जवाब में लगभग चुनौती भरे स्वर में कहा कि आमिर छोटे और अंजान मुक्केबाजों के साथ लड़ कर वाह-वाह लूट रहा है और सुना है मुझसे लड़ने की इच्छा रखता है। तो फिर देरी किस बात की है? जब चाहें जहां चाहें लड़ सकता हूँ। यदि उसमें दम है तो मेरा सामना कर सकता है। कुछ घंटे पहले लंबे समय बाद रिंग पर उतरे और धमाकेदार जीत अर्जित करने वाले विजेंद्र ने कहा कि स्नाइडर के विरुद्ध मिली जीत ने उनके हॉसले को नई उंचाई प्रदान की है।

लगातार 11-0 का स्कोर और आठ चार नाकआउट जीत दर्ज करने वाले देश के पहले ओलंपिक पदक विजेता मुक्केबाज की नजरें अब विश्व खिताब पर लगी हैं। लेकिन उसके प्रोमोटर नीरव तोमर कहते हैं कि सफ़र लंबा है पर विजेंद्र सहजता से आगे बढ़ रहा है। आम तौर पर विजेंद्र ने अपने सभी मुकाबले आसानी से जीते हैं और 567 दिन बाद रिंग में उतरने के बावजूद उन्हें आसान जीत की उम्मीद थी और आठ राउंड की निर्धारित फाइट को विजेंद्र ने

चार राउंड में तय कर अपनी कैटेगरी के अन्य चुनौतीबाजों को खबरदार कर दिया है। विजेंद्र के अनुसार मैनचेस्टर उनका दूसरा घर है जहां भारतीय समुदाय के लोग अधिकाधिक मात्रा में हैं और उन्हें प्रोत्साहित करते हैं। आज यहां प्लेटिनम सीमेंट द्वार आयोजित सम्मान समारोह में विजेंद्र ने माना कि वह पूरी तरह ओलंपिक अभियान से कटे नहीं हैं और मौके को देखते

हुए फिर से ओलंपिक में भाग लेने का दावा पेश कर सकते हैं। अक्टूबर में वह एक और बड़ी फाइट की उम्मीद कर रहे हैं। राजनीति में उतरने और फिर से मुक्केबाजी में लौटने की विजेंद्र ने गंभीरता से लिया फ़ैसला बताया और कहा कि हार-जीत कोई मायने नहीं रखती। ओलंपिक पदक विजेता के अनुसार उसकी प्राथमिकता मुक्केबाजी है।



नई दिल्ली में आयोजित एक कार्यक्रम में छायाकारों को पोज देते भारतीय बाक्सर विजेंद्र सिंह।



**I am ready to fight with Amir. He picked a junior boxer to fight. Neeraj Goyat is way junior to me. He should stop fighting kids.**  
— VIJENDER SINGH,  
INDIAN PROFESSIONAL BOXER



**Before challenging Amir, I would suggest Vijender to take the ring against Vikas Krishan first as they both have same weight category. Calling me kid is funny.**

— NEERAJ GOYAT,  
ON BEING CALLED A KID

# 'STOP KIDDING AROUND'

By Chetan Sharma in New Delhi

**W**HILE A much-wanted bout between the two star boxers is just limited to customary verbal duels of professional boxing, a face-off between Vijender Singh and Pakistan-origin Briton Amir Khan will surely be a blockbuster in India, and Pakistan as well. So it is hard not to imagine that the idea didn't cross mind of the two pugilists.

That's why when Vijender, who just extended his unbeaten run to 11 with a debut win in USA, learnt that his British counterpart thinks that the Indian poster boy is scared of him, retaliation was inevitable.

"I am ready to fight with Amir. He picked a junior boxer to fight. Neeraj Goyat is way junior to me. I had said before and I am saying it again I am ready to fight whenever he tells me to. He should stop fighting kids," said the fuming 33-year-old on the sidelines of an event organised by Platinum Heavy Duty Cement.

While Khan is a welterweight boxer, Vijender contests in super-middleweight. The Indian though said the bout is still possible as they just need to work on their weight to realise it.

"I can reduce my weight a little and he can increase it and we can agree on a mid point. He has done it before," Vijender said. Khan has only once competed in the mid-

## Vijender challenges British boxing star Amir, asks him to grow up!

dleweight division before, being knocked out by Mexican Canelo Alvarez in the sixth round in 2016.

Vijender's statement, however, has not gone down well with fellow Indian boxer Neeraj. Speaking to MAIL TODAY, Neeraj said Vijender is no doubt his senior but he 'should respect' everybody.

"I am his junior but calling me kid is funny. I am his senior in pro boxing. And if he thinks Amir is fighting with kids then I would suggest Vijender, he should have a fight with Vikas Krishan since Vikas also a professional boxer now. Their fight will be very interesting. But the question is can Vijender challenge Viaks for a fight?" quipped an angry Neeraj.

Vijender prevailed in his US debut against Mike Snider with a

Technical Knockout.

Talking about his US debut and the bout, Vijender said America is the Mecca of boxing. "America is so big, every opponent has some strength. They say everything starts and ends from the US. One of the best boxers work there. I had no idea about Mike before the bout. On the last day, my coach showed a video of his fight. Earlier, I felt he is not such a good boxer but when his first punch connected me, I was shaken I felt yes now I am in the league."

The Haryana boxer also spoke about starting his own Boxing Club. "I want boxing to become popular in the entire country so I am going to start a 'Boxing Club by Vijender Singh'. The youth gets easily distracted by drugs, crime etc so I think this is the right way to keep them on track. We will be starting from Delhi where there will be 150 boxers and we will teach them the sport and provide all the equipment," Vijender said.



Amir Khan



Vijender being felicitated at an event in the Capital on Thursday.

**The kid remark fumes fellow pro boxer Neeraj Goyat, who lambasts the Olympic medallist**

## I am ready for a bout, Vijender tells Amir

**NEW DELHI:** "Stop fighting children, I am ready for a bout," Indian boxing ace Vijender Singh, fresh from his 11th straight pro win, challenged British star Amir Khan here on Thursday.

Khan, the British boxer of Pakistan origin, has expressed a desire to lock horns with Olympic bronze-medallist Vijender a number of times but the bout has not materialised yet.

During the announcement of his last bout, Khan had also claimed that Vijender was scared of him. Replying to his challenge, the Haryana-boxer said it was Khan who picked juniors to fight against. "I am ready to fight with Amir. He picked a junior boxer to fight. Neeraj Goyat is way junior to me. I had said before and I am saying it again I am ready to fight whenever he tells me to. He should stop fighting kids," Vijender said on the sidelines of a felicitation event organised by Platinum Heavy Duty Cement. A bout between the two prolific boxers may, however, be a long shot as Khan

competes in the welterweight category (63.5 kg-66.7 kg) while Vijender contests in the super middleweight division (73 kg-76 kg) but the Indian was quick to come up with a solution for the problem. "I can reduce my weight a little and he can increase it and we can agree on a mid point. He has done it before."

Vijender, who is still unbeaten in the professional arena, prevailed in his US debut against Mike Snider with a Technical Knockout to notch his 11th consecutive victory in the circuit. Talking about his US debut and the bout, Vijender said America is the Mecca of boxing. "America is so big, every opponent has some strength. They say everything starts and ends from the US. One of the best boxers work there. I had no idea about Mike before the bout. On the last day, my coach showed a video of him and how he fights. Earlier, I felt he is not such a good boxer but when his first punch connected me, I was shaken I felt yes now I am in the league." **AGENCIES**