



#HOBBIES

TOKEN OF PASSION

Collecting cricket memorabilia

How often did you imagine meeting one of your favourite players and maybe get a signed jersey from them? That really would have been something. While most people can only dream of such things, there are those who dare to pursue that dream and make it a reality.

The story of Zunaid Paiker is one such story that will make you believe that anyone can achieve such a feat should they be passionate enough.

"It all started when I was very little. I'll have to thank my father for the special opportunity — he arranged for me to be a ball boy for the Wills International Cup, back in 1998. It was a chance to meet the players up close and interact with them. And this is where I started my journey of collecting memorabilia — with autographs," reminisced Paiker, while fiddling with a pair of gloves of Shakib-Al-Hasan, that he wore while scoring the century against



West Indies (2019). He seemed to be very fond of this piece. And why not? It's been marked by Shakib himself and it's one of the recent additions in his huge collection that includes all sorts of things.

Caps, gloves, cricket balls, coins, jerseys, coat pins, keyrings, books, tie, autographs, signed photos, replica trophies, signed bats — you name it. Anything you can think of, he's probably got it in his collection.

The best way to support your team is by showing up at the stadium, but Zunaid Paiker doesn't just show up, he even keeps the match tickets. There are bundles of tickets in his collection that include those for tawdry matches of the domestic league to high voltage matches of the World Cup. His passion is not just reflected in his collection, it's well recognised worldwide.

As the Co-founder and President of BCSA (Bangladesh Cricket Supporter's Association) he thinks it is very important for younger people to have hobbies since it channels your time into something that you enjoy and offers an opportunity to learn new things. You could really tell how much he loves his collection as he picked up one after another object from his collection and told a story.

"One of my fondest memories is with Mohammad Ashraful. I asked for an autograph and he was nice enough to invite me to his hotel room where he arranged for me to get the autograph of the whole team. It was just a few days before the 2011 world cup



and players were very busy but he still managed it and that was very nice." And that's just one story, of a hundred more.

Another sagacious person who's spent over fifty years after his

