'Nine Gems' in the court of Indian ruler Vikramaditya. This was the beginning of Ayurveda – the science of life.

Whatever the story of origin may be, Ayurveda was clearly a product of India while Unani, a similar branch of natural healing, was originally based on the teachings of Greek physician Hippocrates, who struggled all his life to free medicine from the clutches of superstition and magic to give it the status of science. It was then developed as a modern healing system by Hakim Ibn Sina, and became a fully operational and flourishing medical system under the patronage of the Mughal Empire in India.

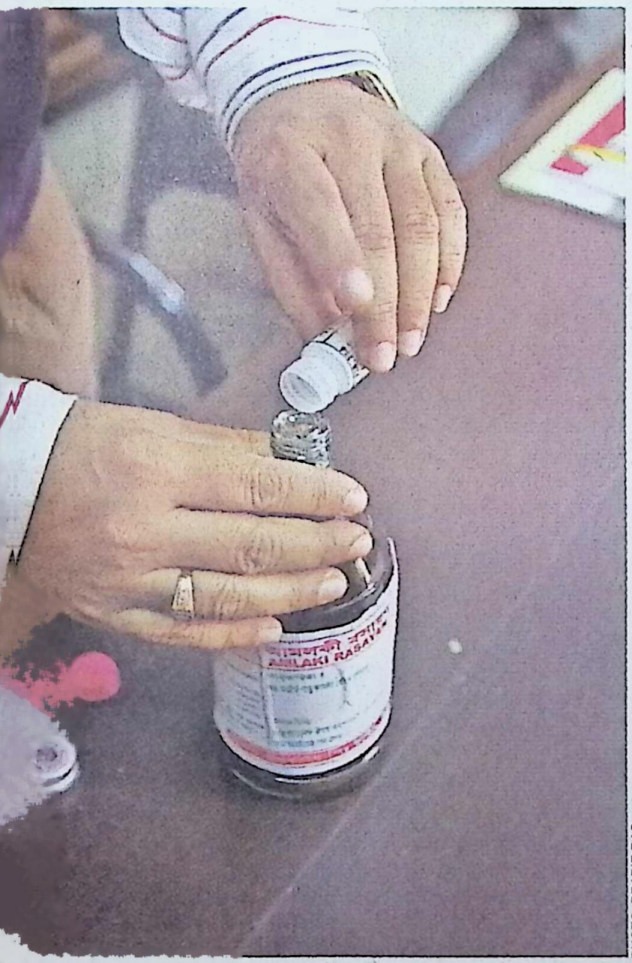


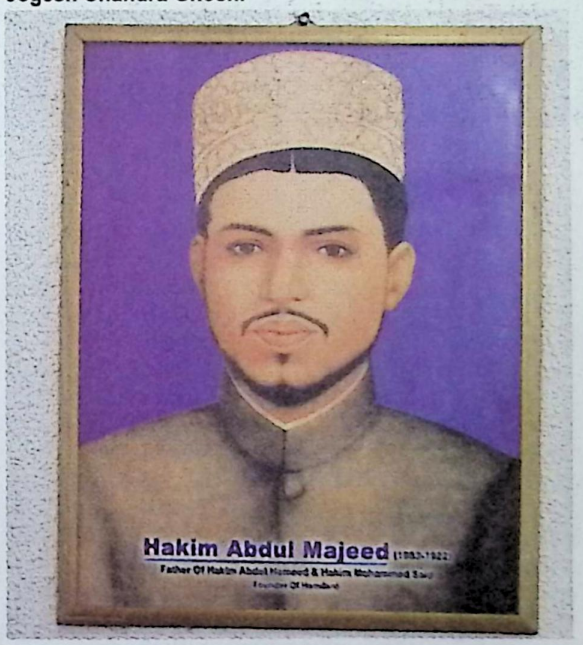
PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Different kinds of herbs and spices like cardamom and cloves are used to make ayurvedic tonics at Sadhana.

Over time, the two medical practices have almost become interchangeable. Both Unani and Ayurveda use herbs and plants in healing patients. Both focus on the four elements of nature – earth, water, fire, and air – which affect the human body in different ways. Both Ayurveda and Unani use natural forces of the body to maintain the symmetry of the different spheres of a person's life, and bring back proper health.



Founder of Sadhana Aushadhalaya, Jogesh Chandra Ghosh.



Hakim Abdul Majeed, Founder of Hamdard.

From Generation to Generation

Even on a hartal day, Sadhana Aushadhalaya has a steady stream of customers coming in to consult the in-house *kobiraaj* or ayurvedic practitioners, to ask advice on complaints ranging from a simple toothache to heart ailments. There's never an off-day for the flagship Shadhana medicine store in Old Dhaka, situated next to the factory of the famous herbal medicine manufacturers, says practitioner Chitta Ranjan Das.