take charge of various ministries and departments, including the police, but this was a very unpopular decision that the Indian government withdrew soon. Indians are nationalists, too.

The Fourth Amendment and fragile loyalties

Indians had a major issue with the refugees and the Hindu population, as expected. It had to ensure the differentiation between the old and the new state and this was best achieved by "secularism," which meant it was replacing the "Islamic" part of the older state of Pakistan.

Indira Gandhi was a socialist and a secularist of the old-fashioned variety, something akin to Tajuddin Ahmed, who played a prominent role in constitution framing. So the Hindus of Bangladesh were given some reassurance through the constitution, as well as from the fact that India stood as their friend next door, which in the end didn't help much.

Records show that AL leaders were leading property grabbers of Hindus after 1971. The constitution never protected them, though it won their undying loyalty.

So Mujib didn't turn socialist overnight. Very little in the management system changed and "nationalisation" of industries owned by Pakistanis was equated with socialism, which became synonymous with looting unaccountable state owned enterprises.

Mujib and the military

Mujib's lack of concern about human rights, torture of the politically arrested, and the general introduction of retail level violence as a substitute for rule of law, was partly instigated by the weak or unformed state institutions, threats of counter political parties, including the JSD and the Sharbohara Party of Siraj Shikder and other extreme variations.

Mujib's response to the call of sharing state power was a standard response of exclusionary politics, where all political truth lay with the party that led the war. This is a typical response, which the Muslim League also showed after 1947, when opposing the party in power was considered opposition to Pakistan. Mujib did what any chauvinist would have done. Everyone outside the party became the enemy, and he acted accordingly. The state and the party was one.

To this must be added Mujib's systematic weakening of state institutions while the one institution that bothered him -- the army -- grew in strength. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora, the man who received the surrender of the Pakistan forces at Dhaka, told me at his Delhi residence that Mujib should not have "messed with the army." He paid a steep price for doing so. Where was the messing, I asked. Well, he set up a bahini, didn't he?

That Mujib was a great champion of rights, but after 1971 he never considered them important, is another charge -- but being a nationalist leader doesn't come with a pro-democracy clause built in.

I have heard this complaint from the few army officers I have talked to about the topic. The Rakhi Bahini didn't just repress the people, but also acted as a guard against the army as a takeover agent. Sadly, it did not succeed, but the man who had built the Mujib Bahini for Indira and the Rakhi Bahini for Sheikh Mujib, General Oban, created a tradition of repression that lives with us today.

The Indian Maoists are also fighting the state, but did they go and join hands with the state intelligence agencies, as our venerable leaders of the Left did to bring Mujib down? Maybe the warnings of a Mujib in power may have been partly true, but the practice in East Pakistan and Bangladesh doesn't resemble what has happened in India. It seems much closer to what is on in Pakistan.

Pakistan's shadow and the rest

Although East and West Pakistan were hostile to each other, the institutions of political and cultural management were installed in varying degrees in both wings.

Although the two wings almost immediately began journeys towards their own imaginations of their statehood, both showed similarities in the system of managing the administration, politics, society, dissent, rule of law or its absence, role of intelligence agencies in civilian affairs, use of bribes to manipulate politics and the rest of public life, executive control over the judiciary, wealth making as a form of reward for supporting the state, elevated position of the executive as a cadre of non-accountable servants of the state, and independent status and growth of the army as an institution to act as guarantor of the state, especially in the absence of or not establishing by choice a system of regular constitutional politics.

This is still what Pakistan is, and over the years this phenomenon has grown, while a reading of Bangladesh would not show any major deviation from this paradigm either. The Bangladesh state has absorbed the socio-political culture of Pakistan which was produced by the supremacy of the elite class and their non-accountability. Pakistan has influenced our ideas regarding