being a disciplined force, it was not possible for them to express their views. Some former senior army officers however have questioned the necessity of the premier's remarks.

After more than one and a half months, Hasina's archrival BNP chief Khaleda Zia has gone one step further. Addressing a roadside party rally at Bogra on March 24, the opposition leader said the army would not play the role of "a silent spectator while people are getting killed" and that it would "play its role in due time".

She said members of the armed forces would not be picked for peacekeeping missions if there was unrest in Bangladesh. "But if there was no peace in Bangladesh, foreigners would then say that the army is not capable of maintaining peace in other countries."

She further said, "The army is a part of our country and therefore it has responsibilities towards it." Some former senior army officials and eminent citizens have expressed surprise over the BNP chief's comment and said that the comment was "tantamount to provocation."



Will the police be able to tackle the violence ahead? PHOTO: STAR FILE

Below

Broken bricks, raging flames and youths with lethal weapons - a common scene in the streets these days. PHOTO: STAR FILE

