

Taiwan is a country prone to typhoons, and Taiwanese often get a day off when a strong typhoon strikes. In a typhoon break, there may be two different scenarios just as the pictures depict. When the weather is not that bad, people will go to movie theaters just as the left picture shows. They will enjoy their popcorns and movies inside the cinema. Other than the theaters, places indoor like KTVs and department stores will also be crowded with people happily enjoying the unexpected break. However, things are quite the opposite in the other picture. Heavy rain pouring down from the cloudy sky renders riders' rain jackets useless. They have to bend their body to face the strong winds blowing from seemingly every direction. Drivers have to slow down when crossing flooded areas so that their vehicles won't shut down because of the water. Road users must be careful of falling trees and muddy water. These are the hazards people encounter when a typhoon strikes hard and they have to be outside.

Being born and raised in Taiwan, I also get to experience some typhoon breaks during my seventeen years of life. I used to enjoy the break like most children do because it's another school day gone, but now, I'm not quite sure. I can understand the need for typhoon breaks for some areas where it can get really dangerous when a typhoon strikes, like the mountains. However, us people living in the big cities don't have mudslides to worry about. In recent years, the weather on a typhoon break is often agreeable. Take the breaks in October and September last year for example, when I was sitting in front of my desk studying at home, all I saw was some normal downpour and occasional strong gusts of wind. It was nowhere close to being called a typhoon, not to mention even having a day off. In my opinion, typhoon breaks are gradually becoming a political tool. When some areas got the break, people in other areas will start complaining to the officials. For fear of failing the voters' expectations, mayors agree to give a typhoon break even the case is not that worse. Furthermore, Taiwan loses a substantial amount of GDP only in one day because of the typhoon break when most business stop operating, and that can harm Taiwan's economy since we have numerous typhoon breaks in a year. Maybe we can learn from Hong Kong that once the rain and wind subsidize, people get back to work, instead of having a whole day off. Also, officials should introduce a stricter criteria for typhoon breaks so that it can't be called so easily. All in all, typhoon breaks are essential in some parts of Taiwan, but should be evaluated more seriously in other areas where the weather is not that bad.